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NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY

Financial Statements

June 30, 2021

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The Officers and Directors
North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority
Research Triangle Park, North Carolina

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority, a nonmajor component unit of the State of North Carolina, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2021, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Authority's financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority, as of June 30, 2021, and the respective changes in financial position and cash flows thereof for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

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Adoption of GASB Statement No. 84, Fiduciary Activities

As discussed in Note 11 to the financial statements, in 2021 the Authority adopted new accounting guidance, GASB No. 84, *Fiduciary Activities*. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

Other Matters

Required Supplementary Information

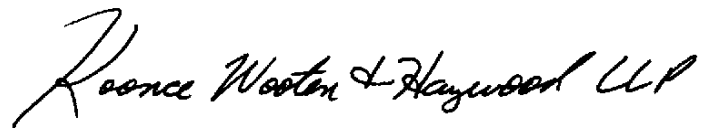
Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that Management's Discussion and Analysis on pages 3 through 8, Schedule of Proportionate Net Pension Liability and Schedule of Authority Contributions (Pension) on pages 44 and 45, and Schedule of Proportionate Net Other Postemployment Benefits Liability (Asset) and Schedule of Authority Contributions (OPEB) on pages 47 and 48 be presented to supplement the financial statements. Such information, although not a part of the financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

Other Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements taken as a whole. The accompanying Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards is presented for purposes of additional analysis as required by Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*, and is not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated November 12, 2021 on our consideration of the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Authority's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the Authority's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.



Raleigh, North Carolina
November 12, 2021

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Management's Discussion and Analysis
June 30, 2021

The Management's Discussion and Analysis of the financial performance of the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority (the Authority) is required supplementary information. This narrative overview and analysis of the financial activities of the Authority is for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021. We encourage readers to consider this information in conjunction with the Authority's financial statements which follow.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Net Position -- The assets of the Authority exceeded its liabilities at fiscal years ending June 30, 2021 and 2020 by approximately \$640.4 and \$616.6 million, respectively, (presented as "net position"). Of this amount, approximately \$106.6 and \$109.2 million, respectively, was reported as "unrestricted net position." Unrestricted net position represents the amount available to be used to administer the State's grant and loan programs.

Increase in Net Position -- The Authority's total net position increased by approximately \$23.8 million (3.86%) in fiscal year 2021 and \$17.4 million (2.91%) in fiscal year 2020.

OVERVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

This discussion and analysis is intended to serve as an introduction to the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority's financial statements. The Authority's financial statements include four components: 1) Statement of Net Position, 2) Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position, 3) Statement of Cash Flows, and 4) Notes to Financial Statements. This report includes additional reports and schedules required by *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and by Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*. Pursuant to the provisions of Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 84, *Fiduciary Activities*, the financial statements also include Fiduciary Fund Statements for the Aubrey Lee Brooks Foundation, a North Carolina not-for-profit organization. Per the criteria detailed in GASB Statement No. 61, *The Financial Reporting Entity: Omnibus – An Amendment of GASB Statements No. 14 and No. 34*, the Authority is presented as a nonmajor component unit in the State of North Carolina Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) by the State Auditor's Office and the Office of the State Controller. The financial statements contained herein report information pertaining to the Authority.

The financial statements provide a broad view of the Authority's operations in a manner similar to private-sector business. The statements provide both short-term and long-term information about the Authority's financial position, which assists in assessing the Authority's economic condition at the end of each fiscal year. These statements are prepared using the flow of economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting. This basically means they follow methods that are similar to those used by most businesses. They take into account all revenues and expenses connected with the fiscal year even if cash involved has not been received or paid.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Management's Discussion and Analysis
June 30, 2021

The Statement of Net Position presents all of the Authority's assets and liabilities, with the difference between the two reported as "net position." Over time, increases or decreases in the Authority's net position may serve as a useful indicator of whether the financial position of the Authority is improving or deteriorating.

The Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position presents information showing how the Authority's net position changed during the most recent fiscal year. All changes in net position are reported as soon as the underlying event giving rise to the change occurs, regardless of the timing of related cash flows. Thus, revenues and expenses are reported in this statement for some items that will not result in cash flows until future fiscal periods.

The Statement of Cash Flows presents a reconciliation of cash and cash equivalents between the beginning of a year and the end of a year. This statement assists in assessing the Authority's ability to generate future net cash flows, ability to meet obligations as they come due, reasons for differences in operating income and cash flows from operations, and the effect of noncash transactions.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

As noted earlier, net position may serve over time as a useful indicator of an entity's financial position. The Authority's net position totaled approximately \$640.4 million as of June 30, 2021, compared to approximately \$616.6 million as of June 30, 2020.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Condensed Statement of Net Position

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Current Assets	\$ 720,520,640	\$ 682,046,980
Noncurrent Assets	4,396,492,281	3,655,751,118
Capital Assets	<u>2,087,899</u>	<u>1,981,557</u>
Total Assets	\$ <u>5,119,100,820</u>	\$ <u>4,339,779,655</u>
Current Liabilities	\$ 355,601,078	\$ 327,969,404
Noncurrent Liabilities	<u>3,998,134,032</u>	<u>3,270,177,146</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>4,353,735,110</u>	<u>3,598,146,550</u>
Deferred Inflows of Resources, Net	<u>124,914,685</u>	<u>124,967,573</u>
Net Investment in Capital Assets	2,087,899	1,981,557
Restricted for Educational Assistance Programs	531,752,171	505,519,522
Unrestricted	<u>106,610,955</u>	<u>109,164,453</u>
Total Net Position	<u>640,451,025</u>	<u>616,665,532</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Position	\$ <u>5,119,100,820</u>	\$ <u>4,339,779,655</u>

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Management's Discussion and Analysis
June 30, 2021

The largest portion of the Authority's net position (83% at June 30, 2021 and 82% at June 30, 2020) represents resources that are subject to external restrictions on how they may be used. An additional portion (.3% at June 30, 2021 and 2020) reflects the Authority's investment in capital assets such as equipment, data processing systems, and intangible assets. The remaining balance of unrestricted net position may be used to meet the Authority's ongoing State grant and loan program management. Internally imposed designations of resources are not presented as restricted net position.

At the end of the current fiscal year, the Authority is able to report positive balances in all three categories of net position. The same situation held true for the prior fiscal year.

The Authority's net position increased by approximately \$23.8 million or 3.86% during the year ended June 30, 2021 and increased by approximately \$17.4 million or 2.91% during the year ended June 30, 2020.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Condensed Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
REVENUES:		
Operating Revenues:		
Interest Earnings on Loans	\$ 27,887,059	\$ 44,650,913
Miscellaneous	<u>18,247,210</u>	<u>18,498,076</u>
Total Operating Revenues	<u>46,134,269</u>	<u>63,148,989</u>
Nonoperating Revenues:		
State Aid	78,481,975	78,481,975
Grants	178,695,232	166,655,984
Investment Earnings	<u>23,606,031</u>	<u>8,141,150</u>
Total Nonoperating Revenues	<u>280,783,238</u>	<u>253,279,109</u>
Total Revenues	<u>326,917,507</u>	<u>316,428,098</u>
EXPENSES:		
Operating Expenses:		
Services	37,511,016	37,553,485
Interest	13,192,012	28,759,887
Student Loan Service Cancellations	20,697,933	19,723,347
Depreciation	435,921	266,170
Other Expenses	<u>2,369,724</u>	<u>7,096,024</u>
Total Operating Expenses	<u>74,206,606</u>	<u>93,398,913</u>
Nonoperating Expenses:		
Grants, Aid and Subsidies	<u>228,925,408</u>	<u>205,569,916</u>
Total Expenses	<u>303,132,014</u>	<u>298,968,829</u>
CHANGES IN NET POSITION	23,785,493	17,459,269
NET POSITION--Beginning of Year	<u>616,665,532</u>	<u>599,206,263</u>
NET POSITION--End of Year	<u>\$ 640,451,025</u>	<u>\$ 616,665,532</u>

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Management's Discussion and Analysis
June 30, 2021

Approximately 14.1% of the Authority's total revenues came from interest earnings and other miscellaneous revenue on resources invested in student loans under various education programs originated by or assigned to the Authority. Approximately 24.0% came from the State of North Carolina Education Lottery and interest earnings on and corpus from escheated monies held by the State. Approximately 54.7% resulted from grants that include federal and State designated funds for student assistance. The State funds were distributed to the Authority pursuant to State law for the purpose of providing education grants to North Carolina residents. Lastly, approximately 7.2% resulted from investment earnings on cash, cash equivalents, and short-term and long-term investments during the fiscal year.

The Authority's expenses cover a range of services. Approximately 12.4% of the Authority's total expenses were for personnel costs, fees paid to others in exchange for administration of education assistance programs, collection costs related to student loans, and fees for professional and specialized services incurred by the Authority to maintain and enhance its information dissemination program on planning, applying, and paying for higher education. Due to the launch of the new College Foundation of North Carolina (CFNC) website, the Authority wrote off the legacy CFNC website in fiscal year 2020. The \$5 million write off was included in other expenses.

Approximately 4.4% of expenses were for interest incurred on bonds issued by the Authority in order to fund student loans, 75.5% were associated with grants, aid and subsidies, and 6.8% were for student loan service cancellations related to certain state sponsored loan programs.

The increase in net position for the year ended June 30, 2021 is primarily attributed to programs that the State has charged the Authority with administering, changing interest rates, and strategic management of the Authority's resources.

DEBT ADMINISTRATION

All long-term indebtedness represents special obligations of the Authority and does not constitute a debt, liability, or obligation of the State of North Carolina. Bond Series 2008-1 and 2020A are secured by certain loans of the Authority which are not insured by the federal government. All other indebtedness is secured by federally insured student loans of the Authority.

The Authority's total bond debt decreased by approximately \$74.3 million (8.5%) and approximately \$155.5 million (15.0%) during the fiscal years 2021 and 2020, respectively. The majority of the 2021 decrease was attributable to the Authority's net repayment of debt.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Management's Discussion and Analysis
June 30, 2021

On July 30, 2020, the Authority issued \$26,450,000 in Tax-Exempt Student Loan Revenue Bonds, Series 2020A. The bonds are dated July 30, 2020 and bear interest from that date. Interest on the bonds is payable semiannually on each June 1 and December 1. The bonds consist of serial bonds that will mature from 2025 to 2029, with an interest rate of 5.00%, and term bonds that will mature on June 1, 2039, with an interest rate of 3.125%. The bonds were issued to provide funds for financing N.C. Student Assist Loans and N.C. Parent Assist Loans.

Additional information on the Authority's debt obligations can be found in Note 7 of the Notes to Financial Statements.

ECONOMIC FACTORS

The Authority is continuing to experience the effects of the discontinuation of the Federal Family Education Program (FFELP) in 2010. The existing FFELP portfolio is maturing through repayment. Accordingly, the revenues associated with the Authority's portfolio of financed student loans and loans under guaranty are subject to fluctuate, and may eventually, decline. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 emergency, the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) has instructed the Authority, as a FFELP guaranty agency, to refund to borrowers all involuntary payments received on defaulted FFELP accounts since March 13, 2020. Additionally, the Authority was instructed to reduce the interest rate on all FFELP loans to 0% retroactively effective March 13, 2020. The Authority is in discussions with the USDE on how to recoup the lost revenue from the COVID-19 mandates.

In recent years, the Authority, in collaboration with College Foundation, Inc., has developed and launched services for colleges and universities and loan products for students and parents. As required by North Carolina General Statute 116-204, the Authority, with the assistance of College Foundation, Inc., administers a coordinated and centralized system for determining residency for tuition and State-funded financial aid. In 2018, the Authority began to offer N.C. Student Assist Loans and N.C. Parent Assist Loans to help students and their families bridge the gap between the cost of attendance and other financial aid. The loans have competitive interest rates with no origination fees. The Authority issued Tax-Exempt Revenue Bonds on July 30, 2020 to provide loan capital for the N.C. Assist Loan Program (see Note 7 of the Notes to Financial Statements). The Authority expects these services and its new loan programs to generate revenue over time.

Meanwhile, the North Carolina General Assembly continues to fund, modify, and assign programs to the Authority that are designed to support nonpublic K12 education. Appropriations for the Opportunity Scholarship Program that provides scholarships to enable low and moderate income families to enroll their children in the nonpublic schools of their choice are slated to increase over the next biennium. The Authority expects the administrative income for these programs to cover the expenses incurred in operating the programs in the foreseeable future.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Management's Discussion and Analysis
June 30, 2021

The Authority, along with Morgan Stanley, created the industry's first Advisory 529 Plan. The Plan launched in October 2020 and is offered through Morgan Stanley Wealth Management Financial Advisors. The financial advisors will provide their clients holistic financial advice on their total assets allowing for active education planning and goal monitoring. The Authority is the sponsor of North Carolina College Savings and Investment Program (Program), which now includes the Morgan Stanley National Advisory 529 Plan (MS 529 Plan). Through June 30, 2021, over \$182 million had been invested through the MS 529 Plan. The Program also includes Vanguard 529 Investment Pools which continue to grow and have a value of over \$3.1 billion as of June 30, 2021. Assets held on behalf of participants in the 529 Plan totaled approximately \$3.3 billion as of June 30, 2021.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This discussion and analysis is intended to provide additional information regarding the activities of the Authority. If you have questions about the report or need additional financial information, contact Elizabeth I. Rozakis, Chief Financial Officer, North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority, P.O. Box 14103, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina 27709, (919) 248-4695, erozakis@ncseaa.edu, or visit the Authority's website at www.ncseaa.edu.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Statement of Net Position
Proprietary Fund
June 30, 2021

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS:

Restricted Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 443,035,753
Restricted Investments	136,525,611
Receivables:	
Accounts Receivable	10,004,812
Intergovernmental Receivables	15,594,020
Interest Receivable	30,533,013
Due From Component Unit	2,600,069
Notes Receivable	82,213,840
Prepaid Items	<u>13,522</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>720,520,640</u>

NONCURRENT ASSETS:

Restricted Cash and Cash Equivalents	134,607,850
Restricted Investments	3,336,834,035
Notes Receivable	<u>925,050,396</u>
Total Noncurrent Assets	<u>4,396,492,281</u>

CAPITAL ASSETS:

Capital Assets	14,103,486
Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(12,015,587)</u>
Net Capital Assets	<u>2,087,899</u>

Total Assets	\$ <u><u>5,119,100,820</u></u>
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The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

LIABILITIES AND NET POSITION

CURRENT LIABILITIES:

Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities:

Accounts Payable	\$ 22,444,023
Accrued Payroll	218,554
Interest Payable	1,055,036
Due to IRC Section 529 Plan Participants	256,394,224
Bonds Payable	75,438,674
Accrued Employee Expenses	27,343
Unearned Income	23,224
Total Current Liabilities	<u>355,601,078</u>

NONCURRENT LIABILITIES:

Due to IRC Section 529 Plan Participants	3,262,242,049
Net Bonds Payable	729,600,867
Accrued Employee Expenses	707,815
Net Other Postemployment Benefits Liability	4,175,748
Net Pension Liability	1,407,553
Total Noncurrent Liabilities	<u>3,998,134,032</u>

Total Liabilities	<u>4,353,735,110</u>
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DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES, NET

Deferred Inflows--Nonexchange Transactions, Net	<u>124,914,685</u>
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NET POSITION:

Net Investment in Capital Assets	2,087,899
Restricted for Educational Assistance Programs	531,752,171
Unrestricted	106,610,955
Total Net Position	<u>640,451,025</u>

Total Liabilities and Net Position	<u>\$ 5,119,100,820</u>
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NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position
Proprietary Fund
For the Year Ended June 30, 2021

OPERATING REVENUES:	
Interest Earnings on Loans	\$ 27,887,059
Miscellaneous	18,247,210
Total Operating Revenues	46,134,269
OPERATING EXPENSES:	
Personal Services	5,410,496
Supplies and Materials	237,326
Services	32,100,520
Interest	13,192,012
Depreciation	435,921
Student Loan Service Cancellations	20,697,933
Other Expenses	2,132,398
Total Operating Expenses	74,206,606
Operating Loss	(28,072,337)
NONOPERATING REVENUES (EXPENSES):	
State Aid	78,481,975
Noncapital Grants	178,032,102
Federal Grants	663,130
Investment Earnings	23,606,031
Grants, Aid and Subsidies	(228,925,408)
Total Nonoperating Revenues (Expenses)	51,857,830
Changes in Net Position	23,785,493
NET POSITION--Beginning of Year	616,665,532
NET POSITION--End of Year	\$ 640,451,025

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Statement of Cash Flows
Proprietary Fund
For the Year Ended June 30, 2021

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:

Receipts from Borrowers and Others	\$ 827,202,499
Collection of Loans from Students	202,178,288
Payments to Employees and Fringe Benefits	(5,881,928)
Payments to Vendors and Suppliers	(28,555,701)
Loans Issued to Students	(96,544,239)
Payments of Operating Interest Expense	<u>(11,168,562)</u>
Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities	<u>887,230,357</u>

CASH FLOWS FROM NONCAPITAL FINANCING ACTIVITIES:

Repayment of Bond Principal (net)	(76,346,280)
State Aid	78,481,975
Noncapital Grants	178,032,102
Federal Grants	663,130
Grants, Aid and Subsidies	<u>(228,925,408)</u>
Net Cash Used by Noncapital Financing Activities	<u>(48,094,481)</u>

CASH FLOWS FROM CAPITAL AND RELATED FINANCING ACTIVITIES:

Acquisition of Capital Assets	<u>(542,263)</u>
Net Cash Used by Capital and Related Financing Activities	<u>(542,263)</u>

CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:

Proceeds from the Sale and Maturities of Investments	368,339,614
Investment Earnings	1,995,088
Purchase of Investments	<u>(1,221,025,560)</u>
Net Cash Used by Investing Activities	<u>(850,690,858)</u>

NET DECREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS (12,097,245)

CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS--Beginning of Year 589,740,848

CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS--End of Year \$ 577,643,603

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Statement of Cash Flows
Proprietary Fund
For the Year Ended June 30, 2021

RECONCILIATION OF OPERATING LOSS TO	
NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES:	
Operating Loss	\$ (28,072,337)
Adjustments to Reconcile Operating Loss to	
Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities:	
Depreciation	435,921
Original Issue Discount Expensed	2,023,450
Student Loan Principal Repayments	151,717,983
Student Loans Issued	(52,678,228)
Student Loan Cancellations and Write-offs	22,079,245
Allowances and Uncollectible Accounts	494,000
Capitalized Interest and Other	(23,168,078)
(Increase) Decrease in Assets:	
Accounts Receivable	(3,699,725)
Intergovernmental Receivables	(15,420,533)
Interest Receivable	3,633,812
Due from Component Unit	37,651
Prepaid Items	11,918
Increase (Decrease) in Liabilities:	
Accounts Payable and Interest Payable	5,902,624
Accrued Payroll, Net Pension and OPEB Liabilities	(477,530)
Due to IRC Section 529 Plan Participants	824,456,974
Accrued Employee Expenses	6,098
Decrease in Deferred Inflows	<u>(52,888)</u>
Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities	<u>\$ 887,230,357</u>
SUPPLEMENTAL DISCLOSURE OF CASH FLOWS INFORMATION:	
Cash Paid During the Year for Interest	\$ 11,862,168
NONCASH INVESTING, CAPITAL AND FINANCING ACTIVITIES:	
Increase in Fair Market Value of Investments	\$ 21,653,593

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Statement of Fiduciary Net Position
Fiduciary Fund
June 30, 2021

ASSETS

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$	5,836
Purchased Interest		6,120
Investments:		
Partnerships		22,154,549
Bonds		5,208,157
Mutual Funds		5,195,685
Stocks		4,594,696
Treasury Notes		<u>715,914</u>
Total Assets	\$	<u><u>37,880,957</u></u>

NET POSITION

Restricted For:		
Individuals/Other Organizations	\$	<u>37,880,957</u>
Total Net Position	\$	<u><u>37,880,957</u></u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Statement of Changes in Fiduciary Net Position
Fiduciary Fund
June 30, 2021

ADDITIONS

Investment Activity:

Investment Income	\$ 8,688,837
Investment Expenses	<u>(336,880)</u>
Net Investment Income	<u>8,351,957</u>

DEDUCTIONS

Withdrawals and Distributions	<u>809,718</u>
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Increase in Fiduciary Net Position	7,542,239
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NET POSITION--Beginning of Year	<u>30,338,718</u>
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NET POSITION--End of Year	<u><u>\$ 37,880,957</u></u>
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The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

A. Organization and Reporting Entity:

Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 61, *The Financial Reporting Entity: Omnibus – An Amendment of GASB Statements No. 14 and No. 34*, clarifies the types of relationships that affect the determination of component units in the financial reporting entity. As a result of GASB No. 61, the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority (the Authority) is presented as a nonmajor component unit in the State of North Carolina Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports (CAFR) by the State Auditor's Office and the Office of the State Controller.

The Authority is a legally separate authority created to provide a system of financial assistance, consisting of grants, loans, work-study or other employment, and other aids, to qualified students to obtain an education. The Authority is governed by a nine-member board of directors, seven of whom are appointed by the Governor and two of whom serve ex officio, by virtue of their respective positions of leadership within the two public sectors of higher education in the State. The State provides program subsidies to the Authority.

The accompanying financial statements present all funds subject to the direct administrative authority and responsibility of the Authority. These funds are as follows:

1. Student Aid Funds
2. North Carolina Student Loan Fund
3. Guaranteed Student Loan Revenue Bond Fund
4. Principal Fellows Program
5. Golden LEAF Scholars Program
6. North Carolina National College Savings Program (529 Plan)
7. Guaranty Reserve Funds
8. Education Lottery Scholarship Fund
9. Child Welfare Postsecondary Support Program
10. National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Loan Program
11. Forgivable Education Loans for Service Program
 - Comprised of the following:
 - Student Loan Program for Health, Science and Mathematics
 - North Carolina Nurse Scholarship Loan Program
 - North Carolina Masters Nurse Scholarship Loan Program
 - North Carolina Nurse Education Scholarship Loan Program
 - Social Workers Scholarship Loan Program
 - Millennium Teacher Scholarship Loan Program
 - Future Teachers of North Carolina Scholarship Loan Program
 - Physical Education/Coaching Scholarship Loan Program
 - Prospective Teacher/Teacher Assistant Scholarship Loan Program
 - Board of Governor's Dental Scholarship Loan Program
 - Board of Governor's Medical Scholarship Loan Program
 - Graduate Nurse Scholarship Loan Program
 - Optometry Scholarship Loan Program
 - Teaching Fellows Scholarship Loan Program
12. North Carolina Teaching Fellows (STEM) Loan Program
13. North Carolina School of Science and Math Tuition Grant
14. Opportunity Scholarship (K-12)
15. Personal Education Savings Account Program (K-12)

A special restricted trust fund is used to insure loans to students by eligible lenders according to the provisions of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

B. Basis of Presentation:

The accompanying financial statements are presented in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America as prescribed by the GASB. GASB Statement No. 34, *Basic Financial Statements – and Management's Discussion and Analysis – for State and Local Governments*, and GASB Statement No. 84, *Fiduciary Activities*, require the presentation of both proprietary and fiduciary fund financial statements. See below for a description of each fund.

Proprietary Fund: This fund accounts for the Authority's primary activities and is presented as a single column on the accompanying proprietary fund financial statements.

Fiduciary Fund: This fund accounts for the Authority's fiduciary activities, which are considered custodial funds. The assets and activities for the Aubrey Lee Brooks Foundations, an endowment that the Authority provides central administration for, are included in this fund.

C. Basis of Accounting:

The financial statements of the Authority have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting. Under the accrual basis, revenues are recognized when earned, and expenses are recorded when an obligation has been incurred, regardless of the timing of the cash flows.

Nonexchange transactions, in which the Authority receives (or gives) value without directly giving (or receiving) equal value in exchange, include state appropriations and certain grants. Revenues are recognized as soon as all eligibility requirements imposed by the provider have been met.

The University of North Carolina - System Office (UNC-SO) provides the secretariat for the Authority. Financial transactions are maintained on the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's ConnectCarolina system, an integrated management system based on Oracle's PeopleSoft.

Accounting records for funds with state appropriated budgets are maintained on the cash basis of accounting. The cash basis records are adjusted as of the end of the fiscal year in order to prepare accrual basis financial statements.

The Statement of Net Position includes a self-balancing set of assets, liabilities, net deferred inflows of resources, and net position that report the financial position of the Authority at the end of the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021. The Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position identifies activities which changed net position balances during the fiscal year.

D. Cash and Cash Equivalents:

This classification includes deposits held by the State Treasurer in the Short-Term Investment Fund (STIF), cash on deposit with trustees/custodians, and cash held within the Fiduciary Fund. The STIF maintained by the State Treasurer has the general characteristics of a demand deposit account in that participants may deposit and withdraw cash at any time without prior notice or penalty. Additional information regarding cash and cash equivalents is provided in Note 2.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

E. Investments:

This classification includes funds invested in an Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 529 Savings Plan, which is maintained by the Authority. The Plan enables residents of any state to invest funds to pay for qualified education expenses of their designated beneficiaries on a flexible basis with certain tax benefits in accordance with federal tax law. Also included are funds invested in the UNC Investment Fund LLC, investments with trustees/custodians, and investments held within the Fiduciary Fund. Additional information regarding investments is provided in Note 2.

All investments are carried at estimated fair values as provided by the respective fund managers of these investments. The fund managers review and evaluate the fair values valuation methods and assumptions used in determining the fair value of the investments. Those estimated fair values may differ significantly from the values that would have been used had a ready market existed for these investments. Such differences could be material. Additional information regarding the fair value measurement of investments is provided in Note 3.

F. Receivables:

Provision for expenses and losses on receivables is made in amounts required to maintain an adequate allowance to cover receivables paid through service cancellations and bad debts. At year end, the allowance is adjusted by management based on review of the receivables.

G. Capital Assets:

Capital assets are stated at cost at date of acquisition. The Authority capitalizes assets that have a value or cost of \$5,000 or greater at the date of acquisition and an estimated useful life of more than one year except for internally generated software which is capitalized when the value or cost is \$1,000,000 or greater and other intangible assets which are capitalized when the value or cost is \$100,000 or greater. Depreciation is computed using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of the assets.

H. Restricted Assets:

Certain resources are reported as restricted assets because restrictions on asset use change the nature or normal understanding of the availability of the asset. The Authority's restricted assets represent assets whose use is restricted by external parties, by law through constitutional provisions, or by enabling legislation of other governments.

I. Accounting and Reporting of Fiduciary Activities:

Pursuant to the provisions of GASB Statement No. 84, *Fiduciary Activities*, custodial funds that are received and disbursed within a 90-day period or otherwise do not meet the fiduciary activity criteria defined by GASB Statement No. 84 continue to be reported in the Statement of Net Position as funds held for others and as operating activities in the Statement of Cash Flows. The IRC Section 529 Savings Plan falls under this provision.

The Aubrey Lee Brooks Foundation endowed funds to a trust to provide scholarships to students in certain counties in North Carolina to attend one of three UNC schools. The Authority provides central administration for managing the trust and determining scholarship eligibility. Pursuant to the provisions of Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 84, *Fiduciary Activities*, the Authority's control over the Brooks Foundation assets requires the activities of the Foundation to be included as a Fiduciary Fund within the Authority's financial statements.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

J. Noncurrent Long-Term Liabilities:

Noncurrent long-term liabilities include principal amounts of long-term debt and other long-term liabilities that will not be paid within the next fiscal year. Debt is defined as a liability that arises from a contractual obligation to pay cash (or other assets that may be used in lieu of cash) in one or more payments to settle an amount that is fixed at the date the contractual obligation is established. Long-term debt is comprised of bonds payable (direct placements and direct public borrowings). Other long-term liabilities include amounts due to participants in the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 529 Savings Plan, accrued employee expenses, net pension liability, and net other postemployment benefits (OPEB) liability.

Original issue discounts and premiums are deferred and amortized over the life of the debt using the straight-line method and are a component of bonds payable.

The net pension liability represents the Authority's proportionate share of the collective net pension liability reported in the State of North Carolina's 2020 *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*. This liability represents the Authority's portion of the collective total pension liability less the fiduciary net position of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System. See Note 8 for further information regarding the Authority's policies for recognizing liabilities, expenses, deferred outflows of resources, and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions.

The net OPEB liability represents the Authority's proportionate share of the collective net OPEB liability reported in the State of North Carolina's 2020 *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*. This liability represents the Authority's portion of the collective total OPEB liability less the fiduciary net position of the Retiree Health Benefit Fund. See Note 9 for further information regarding the Authority's policies for recognizing liabilities, expenses, deferred outflows of resources, and deferred inflows of resources related to OPEB.

K. Compensated Absences:

The Authority's policy is to record the cost of vacation leave when earned. The policy provides for a maximum accumulation of unused vacation leave of 30 days which can be carried forward each January 1st or for which an employee can be paid upon termination of employment. When classifying compensated absences into current and noncurrent, leave is considered taken using a last in, first out method. Also, any accumulated vacation leave in excess of 30 days at year-end is converted to sick leave. Under this policy, the accumulated vacation leave for each employee at June 30th equals the leave carried forward at the previous December 31st, plus the leave earned, less the leave taken between January 1st and June 30th.

In addition to the vacation leave described above, compensated absences include the accumulated unused portion of the special annual leave bonuses awarded by the North Carolina General Assembly. The bonus leave balance on December 31st is retained by employees and transferred into the next calendar year. It is not subject to the limitation on annual leave carried forward described above and is not subject to conversion to sick leave.

There is no liability for unpaid accumulated sick leave because the Authority has no obligation to pay sick leave upon termination or retirement. However, additional service credit for retirement pension benefits is given for accumulated sick leave upon retirement.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

L. Deferred Inflows (Net) of Resources:

Deferred inflows of resources represent an acquisition of net position that applies to a future period(s) and so will not be recognized as an inflow of resources (revenue) until then. The Authority has forward funded state aid and noncapital grants, and net deferred inflows related to pensions and OPEB that are included in this category as follows:

Forward Funded State Aid and Noncapital Grants	\$ 125,930,498
Pensions	(666,522)
OPEB	(349,291)
	\$ 124,914,685

M. Net Position:

The Authority's net position is classified as follows:

Proprietary Fund:

Net Investment in Capital Assets: This represents the Authority's total investment in capital assets.

Restricted for Educational Assistance Programs: This classification includes resources for which the Authority is legally or contractually obligated to spend in accordance with restrictions imposed by external parties.

Unrestricted: This classification includes resources derived from noncapital State grants and related State-supported loan programs. While the funds are considered unrestricted at the State level as the legislature can enact statutes to change the purpose and expenditure of the funds, the Authority is currently required by State legislation to use the funds for specific programs.

Fiduciary Fund:

Restricted: Fiduciary net position is considered restricted as its use is limited to investing on behalf of other organizations and these amounts are not available for alternative use by the Authority.

Restricted and unrestricted resources are tracked using a fund accounting system and are spent in accordance with established fund authorities. Fund authorities provide rules for the fund activity and are separately established for restricted and unrestricted activities. Resources are applied on a transactional basis with unrestricted resources applied to expenses of a general unrestricted nature and to expenses of a restricted nature when restricted resources are unavailable. Restricted resources, when available, are applied to appropriate restricted expenses. Both restricted and unrestricted net position include consideration of deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflow of resources.

N. Revenue and Expense Recognition:

The Authority classifies its revenues and expenses as operating or nonoperating in the accompanying Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position. Operating revenues and expenses generally result from providing services in connection with the Authority's principal ongoing operations. Operating revenues include activities that have characteristics of exchange transactions, such as interest earned on loans and borrower recoveries and fees. Operating expenses are all expense transactions incurred other than those related to capital and noncapital financing or investing activities as defined by GASB Statement No. 9, *Reporting Cash Flows of Proprietary and Nonexpendable Trust Funds and Governmental Entities that Use Proprietary Fund Accounting*.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Concluded)

Nonoperating revenues include activities that have the characteristics of nonexchange transactions. Revenues from nonexchange transactions and State appropriations that represent subsidies to the Authority, as well as investment earnings, are considered nonoperating since these are either investing, capital, or noncapital financing activities.

O. Income Taxes:

The Authority is a political subdivision of the State of North Carolina. Accordingly, exemption from state and local taxation is provided by Chapter 116, Article 23 of the North Carolina General Statutes. IRC Section 115 provides exemption from federal income taxes.

P. Accounting Estimates:

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates. Material estimates that are particularly susceptible to significant change in the near term relate to the determination of allowance for service cancellations and doubtful accounts, and the calculation of current and noncurrent notes receivable, due to IRC Section 529 plan participants, and bonds payable.

2. Deposits and Investments

Unless specifically exempt, the Authority is required by North Carolina General Statute 147-77 to deposit moneys received with the State Treasurer or with a depository institution in the name of the State Treasurer. In addition, General Statute 116-36.1 requires the Authority to deposit its institutional trust funds with the State Treasurer.

At June 30, 2021, the amount shown on the Statement of Net Position as cash and cash equivalents includes \$408,041,587, which represents the Authority's equity position in the State Treasurer's STIF. The STIF (a portfolio within the State Treasurer's Investment Pool, an external investment pool that is not registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission or subject to any other regulatory oversight and does not have a credit rating) had a weighted average maturity of 1.3 years as of June 30, 2021. Assets and shares of the STIF are valued at fair value. Deposit and investment risks associated with the State Treasurer's Investment Pool (which includes the State Treasurer's STIF) are included in the North Carolina Department of State Treasurer Investment Program's separately issued audit report. This separately issued audit report can be obtained from the Department of State Treasurer, 3200 Atlantic Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27604 or can be accessed from the Department of State Treasurer's website at <https://www.nctreasurer.com/> in the Investment Management section.

Cash on hand at June 30, 2021 was \$577,649,439. The carrying amount of the Authority's and its fiduciary's deposits not with the State Treasurer at June 30, 2021 was \$169,607,852. Custodial credit risk is the risk that in the event of a bank failure, the Authority's deposits may not be returned to it. The Authority has a deposit policy for custodial credit risk. As of June 30, 2021, none of the Authority's deposits were exposed to custodial credit risk.

North Carolina General Statutes 147-69.1(c) and 147-69.2, which are applicable to the Authority, authorize the State Treasurer to invest in the following: obligations of or fully guaranteed by the United States; obligations of certain federal agencies; repurchase agreements; obligations of the State of North Carolina; certificates of deposit and other deposit accounts of specified institutions; prime quality commercial

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

2. Deposits and Investments (Continued)

paper; asset-backed securities with specified ratings, specified bills of exchange or time drafts, and corporate bonds/notes with specified ratings; general obligations of other states; general obligations of North Carolina local governments; and obligations of certain entities with specified ratings.

In accordance with bond resolutions, bond proceeds and debt service funds are invested in obligations that will by their terms mature on or before the date funds are expected to be required for expenditure or withdrawal.

Investments totaled \$3,511,228,647 at June 30, 2021. The majority of these investments, \$3,349,087,978 as of June 30, 2021, related to the IRC Section 529 Plan.

At June 30, 2021, the Authority's investments include \$ 72,897,595, which represents the Authority's equity position in the UNC Investment Fund, LLC (UNC Investment Fund). The UNC Investment Fund is an external investment pool that is not registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, does not have a credit rating, and is not subject to any regulatory oversight. Investment risks associated with the UNC Investment Fund are included in audited financial statements of the UNC Investment Fund, LLC which may be obtained from UNC Management Company, Inc., 1400 Environ Way, Chapel Hill, NC 27517.

Non-Pooled Investments:

Non-Pooled Investments are subject to the following risks as defined by GASB Statement No. 40, *Deposit and Investment Risk Disclosures – An Amendment of GASB Statement No.3:*

Interest Rate Risk: Interest rate risk is the risk the Authority may face should interest rate variances affect the fair value of investments. The Authority does not have a formal investment policy that addresses interest rate risk.

The following table presents investments by type and investments subject to interest rate risk at June 30, 2021, for the Authority's non-pooled investments:

	Total	Investment Maturities (in Years)			
		Less Than 1	1 to 5	6 to 10	More Than 10
Investments Subject to Interest Rate Risk:					
Debt Mutual Funds	\$ 82,808	\$	\$ 82,808	\$	\$
U.S. Treasuries	715,914		110,495	605,419	
Money Market Mutual Funds	51,850,691	51,850,691			
Marketable Debt Securities	<u>5,208,157</u>	<u>274,347</u>	<u>3,854,749</u>	<u>1,079,061</u>	
Total Investments Subject to Interest Rate Risk	<u>57,857,570</u>	\$ <u>52,125,038</u>	\$ <u>4,048,052</u>	\$ <u>1,684,480</u>	\$ <u>0</u>
Investments Not Subject to Interest Rate Risk:					
Exchange Traded Funds	1,364,161				
Common Stock	4,594,696				
Investments in Limited Partnerships	22,154,549				
Other Mutual Funds	<u>3,272,097</u>				
Total Investments Not Subject to Interest Rate Risk	<u>31,385,503</u>				
Total Non-Pooled Investments	\$ <u>89,243,073</u>				

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

2. Deposits and Investments (Continued)

Credit Risk: Credit risk is the risk that an issuer or other counterparty to an investment will not fulfill its obligations. The Authority has formally adopted investment policies for credit risk stating that certain investment obligations shall bear one of the two highest ratings by nationally recognized rating services.

As of June 30, 2021, the Authority's non-pooled investments had the following credit quality distribution for securities with credit exposure:

	Amount	AAA Aaa	AA Aa	A	BBB Baa	BB/Ba and Below	Unrated
Debt Mutual Funds	\$ 82,808				\$ 82,808		
U.S. Treasuries	715,914	715,914					
Money Market							
Mutual Funds	51,850,691		476,618				51,374,073
Marketable Debt							
Securities	<u>5,208,157</u>	<u>594,785</u>	<u>47,966</u>	<u>729,670</u>	<u>3,508,496</u>	<u>327,240</u>	
Total	<u>\$ 57,857,570</u>	<u>\$ 1,310,699</u>	<u>\$ 524,584</u>	<u>\$ 729,670</u>	<u>\$ 3,591,304</u>	<u>\$ 327,240</u>	<u>\$ 51,374,073</u>

Custodial Credit Risk: Custodial credit risk is the risk that, in the event of the failure of the counterparty, the Authority will not be able to recover the value of its investments or collateral securities that are in the possession of an outside party. The Authority does not have a formal policy that addresses custodial credit risk.

At June 30, 2021, the Authority's non-pooled investments were exposed to custodial credit risk as follows:

Investments Not Categorized:	
Money Market Mutual Funds	\$ <u>51,850,691</u>

Concentration of Credit Risk: Concentration of credit risk is the risk of loss attributable to the magnitude of an investment in a single issuer. The Authority does not have a formal policy that addresses concentration of credit risk. The Authority places no limit on the amount that may be invested in any one issuer. As of June 30, 2021, the Authority had no non-pooled investments in any one issuer that equaled more than 5% of the Authority's total non-pooled investments.

Foreign Currency Risk: Foreign currency risk is the risk that changes in exchange rates will adversely affect the fair value of an investment. The Authority has formally adopted investment policies for foreign currency risk stating that foreign investments must be denominated in U.S. dollars or the securities must be traded solely on an exchange based in the United States. As of June 30, 2021, the Authority had no non-pooled investments exposed to foreign currency risk.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

2. Deposits and Investments (Concluded)

Total Non-Pooled Investments:

The following table presents the fair value of the Authority's total investments not invested in pooled investments:

Debt Securities:		
Debt Mutual Funds		\$ 82,808
U.S. Treasuries		715,914
Money Market Mutual Funds		51,850,691
Marketable Debt Securities		<u>5,208,157</u>
Total Debt Securities		<u>57,857,570</u>
Other Securities:		
Exchange Traded Funds		1,364,161
Common Stock		4,594,696
Investments in Limited Partnership		22,154,549
Other Mutual Funds		<u>3,272,097</u>
Total Other Securities		<u>31,385,503</u>
Total Non-Pooled Investments		<u>\$ 89,243,073</u>

Reconciliation of Deposits and Investments:

A reconciliation of deposits and investments for the Authority as of June 30, 2021 is as follows:

	Proprietary Fund	Fiduciary Fund	Total
Amount of Deposits with Private Financial Institutions	\$ 169,602,016	\$ 5,836	\$ 169,607,852
Deposits in the Short-Term Investment Fund	408,041,587		408,041,587
Non-Pooled Investments	51,374,073	37,869,001	89,243,074
Pooled Investments:			
529 Plan Investments	3,349,087,978		3,349,087,978
UNC Investment Fund	<u>72,897,595</u>		<u>72,897,595</u>
Total Deposits and Investments	<u>\$ 4,051,003,249</u>	<u>\$ 37,874,837</u>	<u>\$ 4,088,878,086</u>
Deposits:			
Current:			
Restricted Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 443,035,753	\$ 5,836	\$ 443,041,589
Noncurrent:			
Restricted Cash and Cash Equivalents	<u>134,607,850</u>		<u>134,607,850</u>
Total Deposits	<u>577,643,603</u>	<u>5,836</u>	<u>577,649,439</u>
Investments:			
Current:			
Restricted Investments	136,525,611		136,525,611
Noncurrent:			
Restricted Investments	<u>3,336,834,035</u>	<u>37,869,001</u>	<u>3,374,703,036</u>
Total Investments	<u>3,473,359,646</u>	<u>37,869,001</u>	<u>3,511,228,647</u>
Total Deposits and Investments	<u>\$ 4,051,003,249</u>	<u>\$ 37,874,837</u>	<u>\$ 4,088,878,086</u>

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

3. Fair Value Measurements

To the extent available, the Authority's investments are recorded at fair value as of June 30, 2021. GASB Statement No. 72, *Fair Value Measurement and Application*, defines fair value as the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. This statement establishes a hierarchy of valuation inputs based on the extent to which the inputs are observable in the marketplace. Inputs are used in applying the various valuation techniques and take into account the assumptions that market participants use to make valuation decisions. Inputs may include price information, credit data, interest and yield curve data, and other factors specific to the financial instrument. Observable inputs reflect market data obtained from independent sources. In contrast, unobservable inputs reflect the entity's assumptions about how market participants would value the financial instrument. Valuation techniques should maximize the use of observable inputs to the extent available.

A financial instrument's level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement. The following describes the hierarchy of inputs used to measure fair value and the primary valuation methodologies used for financial instruments measured at fair value on a recurring basis.

- Level 1: Investments whose values are based on quoted prices (unadjusted) for identical assets in active markets that a government can access at the measurement date.
- Level 2: Investments with inputs – other than quoted prices included with Level 1 – that are observable for an asset, either directly or indirectly.
- Level 3: Investments classified as Level 3 have unobservable inputs for an asset and may require a degree of professional judgment.

The following tables summarizes the Authority's proprietary and fiduciary investments, including deposits in the Short-Term Investment Fund, within the fair value hierarchy at June 30, 2021:

	Fair Value	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Investments by Fair Value Level:				
Debt Securities:				
Debt Mutual Funds	\$ 82,808	\$ 82,808		\$
U.S. Treasuries	715,914	715,914		
Money Market Mutual Funds	51,850,691	51,850,691		
Common Stock	4,594,696	4,594,696		
Mutual Funds	3,272,097	3,272,097		
Exchange Traded Funds	1,364,161	1,364,161		
Marketable Debt Securities	5,208,157	5,208,157		
Investments in Limited Partnerships	<u>22,154,549</u>	<u>16,479,015</u>	<u>5,675,534</u>	
Total Investments Leveled by Fair Value	<u>89,243,073</u>	<u>\$ 83,567,539</u>	<u>\$ 5,675,534</u>	<u>\$</u>
Investments as a Position in an				
External Investment Pools:				
Short-Term Investment Fund	408,041,587			
Vanguard 529 Plan	3,166,137,206			
Morgan Stanley 529 Plan	182,950,772			
UNC Investment Fund	<u>72,897,595</u>			
Total Investments in External Investment Pools	<u>3,830,027,160</u>			
Total Investments Measured at Fair Value	<u>\$ 3,919,270,233</u>			

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

3. Fair Value Measurements (Continued)

Ownership interest in the STIF is determined on a fair market valuation basis as of fiscal year end in accordance with the STIF operating procedures. Valuation of the underlying assets is performed by the custodian. Pool investments are measured at fair value in accordance with GASB 72. The Authority's position in the pool is measured and reported at fair value and the STIF is not required to be categorized within the fair value hierarchy.

Vanguard 529 Plan investments consist of 15 separate investment Portfolios, each of which is invested in one or more Vanguard mutual funds and/or the Vanguard Short-Term Reserve Account, an internal investment pool.

Morgan Stanley 529 Plan investments consist of 11 investment Options, consisting of portfolios representing different risk-level models, ranging from conservative allocations (Conservative Fixed Income) to aggressive allocations (Opportunistic Growth). Each MS 529 Fund in turn invests its assets in one or more of nine Morgan Stanley Pathway Funds ("Pathway Funds"). The Pathway Funds provide exposure to different asset classes utilizing various investment managers selected by an affiliate of Morgan Stanley to create a diversified portfolio.

Ownership interest in the UNC Investment Fund is determined on a market unit valuation basis each month and in accordance with the UNC Investment Fund's operating procedures. Valuation of the underlying assets is performed by the custodian. Pool investments are measured at fair value in accordance with GASB 72. The Authority's position in the pool is measured and reported at fair value and the UNC Investment Fund is not required to be categorized under the fair value hierarchy.

4. Receivables

The gross receivables and related allowances for service cancellations and doubtful accounts on student loans at June 30, 2021 were:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Noncurrent</u>
Gross Student Loan Receivables	\$ 1,115,815,884	\$ 190,765,488	\$ 925,050,396
Allowance for Service Cancellations and Doubtful Accounts	<u>(108,551,648)</u>	<u>(108,551,648)</u>	
Net Receivables	<u>\$ 1,007,264,236</u>	<u>\$ 82,213,840</u>	<u>\$ 925,050,396</u>

5. Capital Assets

A summary of capital assets for the year ended June 30, 2021 is presented as follows:

Capital Assets	\$ 14,103,486
Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(12,015,587)</u>
Net Capital Assets	<u>\$ 2,087,899</u>

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

6. Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities at June 30, 2021 were as follows:

Accounts Payable	\$ 22,444,023
Accrued Payroll	<u>218,554</u>
	<u>\$ 22,662,577</u>

7. Noncurrent Liabilities

A. Changes in Noncurrent Liabilities:

A summary of changes in noncurrent liabilities for the year ended June 30, 2021 is presented as follows:

	Balance July 1, 2020	Additions/ Adjustments	Reductions	Balance June 30, 2021	Current Portion
Due to IRC Section 529 Plan Participants	\$ 2,694,179,299	\$ 1,020,775,081	\$ 196,318,107	\$ 3,518,636,273	\$ 256,394,224
Net Bonds Payable:					
Direct Placement	141,114,932		18,514,924	122,600,008	1,800,000
Direct Borrowing	738,247,439	28,297,270	84,105,176	682,439,533	73,638,674
Accrued Employee Expense	729,060	6,098		735,158	27,343
Net Pension Liability	1,357,035	50,518		1,407,553	
Net OPEB Liability	<u>4,735,285</u>		<u>559,537</u>	<u>4,175,748</u>	
Total Noncurrent Liabilities	<u>\$ 3,580,363,050</u>	<u>\$ 1,049,128,967</u>	<u>\$ 299,497,744</u>	<u>\$ 4,329,994,273</u>	<u>\$ 331,860,241</u>

B. Net Bonds Payable:

	Balance July 1, 2020	Additions	Reductions	Balance June 30, 2021
Direct Placement:				
Taxable Guaranteed Student Loan Revenue Private Placement Bonds 2008-1 Series:				
LIBOR Indexed:				
Series A-2				
Due 9/01/37 (Variable Rate)	\$ 89,300,000		\$ 13,500,000	\$ 75,800,000
Original Issue Discount	<u>(2,122,543)</u>		<u>(164,538)</u>	<u>(1,958,005)</u>
	<u>87,177,457</u>		<u>13,335,462</u>	<u>73,841,995</u>
Tax-Exempt Student Loan Backed Notes, Private Placement Bonds, 2015-1 Series:				
LIBOR Indexed:				
Series A-1				
Due 11/25/25 (Variable Rate)	40,737,475		4,879,462	35,858,013
Series A-2				
Due 11/25/28 (Variable Rate)	<u>13,200,000</u>		<u>300,000</u>	<u>12,900,000</u>
	<u>53,937,475</u>		<u>5,179,462</u>	<u>48,758,013</u>
Total Direct Placement	<u>141,114,932</u>		<u>18,514,924</u>	<u>122,600,008</u>

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7. Noncurrent Liabilities (Continued)

	Balance July 1, 2020	Additions	Reductions	Balance June 30, 2021
Direct Borrowing:				
Taxable Student Loan Backed Notes, 2010-1 Series:				
LIBOR Indexed:				
Tranche A-1 (Sold at 97.4%)				
Due 7/25/41 (Variable Rate)	\$ 141,728,926		\$ 14,893,365	\$ 126,835,561
Original Issue Discount	<u>(5,957,524)</u>		<u>(564,694)</u>	<u>(5,392,830)</u>
	<u>135,771,402</u>		<u>14,328,671</u>	<u>121,442,731</u>
Taxable Student Loan Backed Notes, 2011-1 Series:				
LIBOR Indexed:				
Tranche A-3 (Sold at 93.9%)				
Due 10/25/41 (Variable Rate)	159,366,636		19,811,618	139,555,018
Original Issue Discount	<u>(7,561,018)</u>		<u>(758,630)</u>	<u>(6,802,388)</u>
	<u>151,805,618</u>		<u>19,052,988</u>	<u>132,752,630</u>
Taxable Student Loan Backed Notes, 2011-2 Series:				
LIBOR Indexed:				
Tranche A-2 (Sold at 97.5%)				
Due 7/25/25 (Variable Rate)	24,298,078		15,113,235	9,184,843
Tranche A-3 (Sold at 94.1%)				
Due 7/25/36 (Variable Rate)	113,000,000			113,000,000
Original Issue Discount	<u>(4,582,699)</u>		<u>(787,856)</u>	<u>(3,794,843)</u>
	<u>132,715,379</u>		<u>14,325,379</u>	<u>118,390,000</u>
Taxable Student Loan Backed Notes, 2012-1 Series:				
LIBOR Indexed:				
Tranche A (Sold at 99.8%)				
Due 7/25/39 (Variable Rate)	166,920,005		16,170,331	150,749,674
Original Issue Discount	<u>(478,505)</u>		<u>(117,185)</u>	<u>(361,320)</u>
	<u>166,441,500</u>		<u>16,053,146</u>	<u>150,388,354</u>
Taxable Student Loan Backed Notes, 2013-1 Series:				
LIBOR Indexed:				
Due 12/26/39 (Variable Rate)	<u>151,513,540</u>		<u>17,150,542</u>	<u>134,362,998</u>
Tax-Exempt Student Loan Revenue Bonds, 2020A Series:				
Fixed Rate:				
Due 6/01/25 (5.0%) (Sold at 113.7%)		750,000		750,000
Due 6/01/26 (5.0%) (Sold at 115.5%)		2,000,000		2,000,000
Due 6/01/27 (5.0%) (Sold at 117.1%)		2,700,000		2,700,000
Due 6/01/28 (5.0%) (Sold at 118.7%)		3,000,000		3,000,000
Due 6/01/29 (5.0%) (Sold at 120.2%)		2,800,000		2,800,000
Due 6/01/39 (3.125%) (Sold at 98.9%)		15,200,000	2,825,000	12,375,000
Original Issue Premium		<u>1,847,270</u>	<u>369,450</u>	<u>1,477,820</u>
		<u>28,297,270</u>	<u>3,194,450</u>	<u>25,102,820</u>
Total Direct Borrowing	<u>738,247,439</u>	<u>28,297,270</u>	<u>84,105,176</u>	<u>682,439,533</u>
Total Net Bonds Payable	<u>\$ 879,362,371</u>	<u>\$ 28,297,270</u>	<u>\$ 102,620,100</u>	<u>\$ 805,039,541</u>

NORTH CAROLINA
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7. Noncurrent Liabilities (Continued)

C. Pledged Revenues:

The Agency has collateralized \$910,539,367 in student loans receivable and \$5,848,062 in reserves to repay \$821,871,107 bonds payable at June 30, 2021. These guaranteed bonds payable were issued between fiscal years June 30, 2006 through June 30, 2021. Proceeds from the bonds issued were utilized to finance student loans. The bonds are payable through fiscal year 2040 and are paid down from cash collections on student loans receivable, interest earnings on loans and investments, and unexpended bond proceeds. In addition to cash collections on student loans receivable, all net available revenues are expected to be pledged to meet annual principal and interest payments on the bonds. For the current fiscal year, principal and interest paid and total net available revenues were \$116,505,722 and \$131,983,986, respectively. The total principal and interest remaining to be paid on the bonds is \$911,045,507.

D. Annual Requirements:

The annual requirements to pay principal and interest on bonds outstanding at June 30, 2021 are as follows:

Year	Direct Placement		Direct Borrowing	
	Principal	Interest	Principal	Interest
2022	\$ 1,800,000	\$ 2,889,409	\$ 73,638,674	\$ 7,202,461
2023	1,800,000	2,869,925	69,422,735	6,451,350
2024	1,800,000	2,850,440	65,528,045	5,737,462
2025	1,800,000	2,830,956	61,928,100	5,062,882
2026	30,158,013	2,707,401	58,598,712	4,409,586
2027-2031	11,400,000	12,113,298	212,056,919	12,891,120
2032-2036		11,527,917	67,740,885	5,177,063
2037-2041	<u>75,800,000</u>	<u>2,702,656</u>	<u>88,399,024</u>	<u>1,750,474</u>
Total Requirements	\$ <u>124,558,013</u>	\$ <u>40,492,002</u>	\$ <u>697,313,094</u>	\$ <u>48,682,398</u>

E. Terms of Debt Agreements:

All long-term indebtedness represents obligations of the Authority and is not deemed to constitute a debt, liability, or obligation of the State of North Carolina. The Authority's debt agreements are secured by the following collateral:

Notes from Direct Placement: The 2008-1 Series Bonds are secured by certain student loans of the Authority that are not insured by the federal government. The 2015-1 Series Bonds are secured by federally insured student loans of the Authority.

Notes from Direct Borrowing: The 2020A Series Bonds are secured by private student loans. All other indebtedness is secured by federally insured student loans of the Authority.

Notes from Direct Placement:

The Taxable Guaranteed Student Loan Revenue Private Placement Bonds, 2008-1 Series are LIBOR indexed debt instruments due September 1, 2037. The Tax-Exempt Student Loan Backed Notes, 2015-1 Series are LIBOR indexed debt instruments due November 25, 2028.

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7. Noncurrent Liabilities (Concluded)

Notes from Direct Borrowing:

The Taxable Student Loan Backed Notes 2010-1 Series are LIBOR indexed debt instruments due July 25, 2041. The Taxable Student Loan Backed Notes 2011-1 Series are LIBOR indexed debt instruments due October 25, 2041. The Taxable Student Loan Backed Notes 2011-2 are LIBOR indexed debt instruments due July 25, 2036. The Taxable Student Loan Backed Notes 2012-1 are LIBOR indexed debt instruments due July 25, 2039. The Taxable Student Loan Backed Notes 2013-1 are LIBOR indexed debt instruments due December 26, 2039.

All of the above series have a variable interest rate that changes either monthly or quarterly. The annual interest requirements in the schedule above were calculated using the rates in effect on June 30, 2021. Therefore, the debt service interest requirements on the aforementioned series will change on a monthly/quarterly basis throughout the life of the bonds.

The Tax-Exempt Student Loan Revenue Bonds 2020A Series are fixed rate serial and term debt instruments due June 1, 2039. The serial bonds bear an interest rate of 5%, and the term bonds bear a 3.125% interest rate.

8. Pension Plans

A. Defined Benefit Plan:

Plan Administration: The State of North Carolina administers the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System (TSERS) plan. This plan is a cost-sharing, multiple-employer, defined benefit pension plan established by the State to provide pension benefits for general employees and law enforcement officers (LEOs) of the State, general employees and LEOs of its component units, and employees of Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and charter schools not in the reporting entity. Membership is comprised of employees of the State (state agencies and institutions), universities, community colleges, and certain proprietary component units along with the LEAs and charter schools that elect to join the Retirement System. Benefit provisions are established by General Statute 135-5 and may be amended only by the North Carolina General Assembly.

Benefits Provided: TSERS provides retirement and survivor benefits. Retirement benefits are determined as 1.82% of the member's average final compensation times the member's years of creditable service. A member's average final compensation is calculated as the average of a member's four highest consecutive years of compensation. General employee plan members are eligible to retire with full retirement benefits at age 65 with five years of creditable service, at age 60 with 25 years of creditable service, or at any age with 30 years of creditable service. General employee plan members are eligible to retire with partial retirement benefits at age 50 with 20 years of creditable service or at age 60 with five years of creditable service. Survivor benefits are available to eligible beneficiaries of general members who die while in active service or within 180 days of their last day of service and who also have either completed 20 years of creditable service regardless of age, or have completed five years of service and have reached age 60. Eligible beneficiaries may elect to receive a monthly Survivor's Alternate Benefit for life or a return of the member's contributions. The plan does not provide for automatic post-retirement benefit increases.

NORTH CAROLINA
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8. Pension Plans (Continued)

Contributions: Contribution provisions are established by General Statute 135-8 and may be amended only by the North Carolina General Assembly. Employees are required to contribute 6% of their annual pay. The contribution rate for employers is set each year by the North Carolina General Assembly in the Appropriations Act based on the actuarially-determined rate recommended by the actuary. The Authority's contractually-required contribution rate for the year ended June 30, 2021 was 14.78% of covered payroll. Employee contributions to the pension plan were \$161,086, and the Authority's contributions were \$396,809 for the year ended June 30, 2021.

The TSERS plan's financial information, including all information about the plan's assets, deferred outflows of resources, liabilities, deferred inflows of resources, and fiduciary net position, is included in the State of North Carolina's fiscal year 2020 *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*. An electronic version of this report is available on the North Carolina Office of the State Controller's website at <https://www.osc.nc.gov/> or by calling the State Controller's Financial Reporting Section at (919) 707-0500.

TSERS Basis of Accounting: The financial statements of the TSERS plan were prepared using the accrual basis of accounting. Plan member contributions are recognized in the period in which the contributions are due. Employer contributions are recognized when due and the employer has a legal requirement to provide the contributions. Benefits and refunds are recognized when due and payable in accordance with the terms of each plan. For purposes of measuring the net pension liability, deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions, and pension expense, information about the fiduciary net position of the TSERS plan, and additions to/deductions from the TSERS plan's fiduciary net position have been determined on the same basis as they are reported by TSERS.

Methods Used to Value TSERS Investment: Pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes, the State Treasurer is the custodian and administrator of the retirement systems. The State Treasurer maintains various investment portfolios in its External Investment Pool. TSERS and other pension plans of the State of North Carolina participate in the Long-Term Investment, Fixed Income Investment, Equity Investment, Real Estate Investment, Alternative Investment, Opportunistic Fixed Income Investment, and Inflation Sensitive Investment Portfolios. The Fixed Income Asset Class includes the Long-Term Investment and Fixed Income Investment Portfolios. The Global Equity Asset Class includes the Equity Investment Portfolio. The investment balance of each pension trust fund represents its share of the fair market value of the net pension of the various portfolios within the External Investment Pool. Detailed descriptions of the methods and significant assumptions regarding investments of the State Treasurer are provided in the 2020 *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*.

Net Pension Liability: The Authority reported a liability of \$ 1,407,553 at June 30, 2021 for its proportionate share of the collective net pension liability. The net pension liability was measured as of June 30, 2020. The total pension liability used to calculate the net pension liability was determined by an actuarial valuation as of December 31, 2019, and update procedures were used to roll forward the total pension liability to June 30, 2020. The Authority's proportion of the net pension liability was based on the present value of future salaries for the Authority relative to the present value of future salaries for all participating employers, actuarially determined. As of June 30, 2020, the Authority's proportion was .012%, which was a decrease of .001% from its proportion measured as of June 30, 2019, which was .013%.

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8. Pension Plans (Continued)

Actuarial Assumptions: The following table presents the actuarial assumptions used to determine the total pension liability for the TSERS plan at the actuarial valuation date:

Valuation Date	12/31/2019
Inflation	3.00%
Salary Increases*	3.50% - 8.10%
Investment Rate of Return**	7.00%

* Salary increases include 3.5% inflation and productivity factor.

**Investment rate of return includes inflation assumption and is net of pension plan investment expense.

TSERS currently uses mortality tables that vary by age, gender, employee group (i.e. teacher, general, law enforcement officer), and health status (i.e. disabled and healthy). The current mortality rates are based on published tables and based on studies that cover significant portions of the U.S. population. The mortality rates also contain a provision to reflect future mortality improvements.

The actuarial assumptions used in the December 31, 2019 valuations were based on the results of an actuarial experience review for the period January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2014.

Future ad hoc Cost of Living Adjustment amounts are not considered to be substantively automatic and are therefore not included in the measurement.

The projected long-term investment returns and inflation assumptions are developed through review of current and historical capital markets data, sell-side investment research, consultant whitepapers, and historical performance of investment strategies. Fixed income return projections reflect current yields across the U.S. Treasury yield curve and market expectations of forward yields projected and interpolated for multiple tenors and over multiple year horizons. Global public equity return projections are established through analysis of the equity risk premium and the fixed income return projections. Other asset categories and strategies' return projections reflect the foregoing and historical data analysis. These projections are combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return by weighting the expected future real rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage and by adding expected inflation. Best estimates of arithmetic real rates of return for each major asset class included in the pension plan's target asset allocation as of June 30, 2020 (the valuation date) are summarized in the following table:

<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return</u>
Fixed Income	1.4 %
Global Equity	5.3 %
Real Estate	4.3 %
Alternatives	8.9 %
Opportunistic Fixed Income	6.0 %
Inflation Sensitive	4.0 %

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8. Pension Plans (Continued)

The information in the preceding table is based on 30-year expectations developed with the consulting actuary and is part of the asset, liability, and investment policy of the North Carolina Retirement Systems. The long-term nominal rates of return underlying the real rates of return are arithmetic annualized figures. The real rates of return are calculated from nominal rates by multiplicatively subtracting a long-term inflation assumption of 3.05%. Return projections do not include any excess return expectations over benchmark averages. All rates of return and inflation are annualized. The long-term expected real rate of return for The Bond Index Pool as of June 30, 2020 is 1.2%.

Discount Rate: The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was calculated at 7.00% for the December 31, 2019 valuation. The discount rate is in line with the long-term nominal expected return on pension plan investments. The calculation of the net pension liability is a present value calculation of the future net pension payments. These net pension payments assume that contributions from plan members will be made at the current statutory contribution rate and that contributions from employers will be made at the contractually required rates, actuarially determined. Based on those assumptions, the pension plan's fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments of the current plan members. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability.

Sensitivity of the Net Pension Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate: The following presents the net pension liability of the plan at June 30, 2020 calculated using the discount rate of 7.00%, as well as what the net pension liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is 1-percentage-point lower (6.00%) or 1-percentage-point higher (8.00%) than the current rate:

Net Pension Liability		
1% Decrease (6.00%)	Current Discount Rate (7.00%)	1% Increase (8.00%)
\$ <u>2,533,264</u>	\$ <u>1,407,553</u>	\$ <u>463,314</u>

Deferred Outflows of Resources and Deferred Inflows of Resources Related to Pensions: For the year ended June 30, 2021, the Authority recognized pension expense of \$441,966. At June 30, 2021, the Authority reported deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions from the following sources:

Employer Balances of Deferred Outflows of Resources and Deferred Inflows of Resources
Related to Pensions by Classification

	Deferred Outflows of Resources	Deferred Inflows of Resources
Difference Between Actual and Expected Experience	\$ 77,564	\$
Change of Assumptions	47,698	
Net Difference Between Projected and Actual Earnings on Plan Investments	155,661	
Change in Proportion and Differences Between Authority's Contributions and Proportionate Share of Contributions	22,175	33,385
Contributions Subsequent to the Measurement Date	396,809	
	<u>\$ 699,907</u>	<u>\$ 33,385</u>

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8. Pension Plans (Concluded)

The amount reported as deferred outflows of resources related to contributions subsequent to the measurement date will be included as a reduction of the net pension liability in the year ended June 30, 2022. Other amounts reported as deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions will be recognized as pension expense as follows:

Schedule of the Net Amount of the Authority's Balances of Deferred Outflows of Resources
and Deferred Inflows of Resources that will be Recognized in Pension Expense

Year		
2022	\$	100,684
2023		71,785
2024		50,871
2025		46,373
2026		-
	\$	269,713

B. Defined Contribution Plan:

The Optional Retirement Program (ORP) is a defined contribution pension plan that provides retirement benefits with options for payments to beneficiaries in the event of the participant's death. Administrators of the Authority may join ORP instead of TSERS. The Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina is responsible for the administration of ORP and designates the companies authorized to offer investment products or the trustee responsible for the investment of contributions under ORP and approves the form and contents of the contracts and trust agreements.

Participants in ORP are immediately vested in the value of employee contributions. The value of employer contributions is vested after five years of participation in ORP. Participants become eligible to receive distributions when they terminate employment or retire.

Participant eligibility and contributory requirements are established by General Statute 135-5.1. Member and employer contribution rates are set each year by the North Carolina General Assembly. For the year ended June 30, 2021, these rates were set at 6% of covered payroll for members and 6.84% of covered payroll for employers. The Authority assumes no liability other than its contribution.

For the year ended June 30, 2021, the Authority had a total payroll of \$3,797,699, of which \$1,058,418 was covered under ORP. Total employee and employer contributions for pension benefits for the year ended June 30, 2021 were \$63,505 and \$72,396, respectively. The amount of expense recognized in the current year related to ORP is equal to the employer contributions.

9. Other Postemployment Benefits

The Authority participates in two postemployment benefit plans, the Retiree Health Benefit Fund and the Disability Income Plan of North Carolina, that are administered by the State of North Carolina as pension and other employee benefit trust funds. Each plan's financial information, including all information about the plan's assets, deferred outflows of resources, liabilities, deferred inflows of resources, and fiduciary net position, is included in the State of North Carolina's fiscal year 2020 *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*. An electronic version of this report is available on the North Carolina Office of the State Controller's website at <https://www.osc.nc.gov/> or by calling the State Controller's Financial Reporting Section at (919) 707-0500.

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9. Other Postemployment Benefits (Continued)

A. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies and Plan Asset Matters:

Basis of Accounting: The financial statements of these plans were prepared using the accrual basis of accounting. Employer contributions are recognized when due and the employer has made a formal commitment to provide the contributions. Benefits are recognized when due and payable in accordance with the terms of each plan. For purposes of measuring the net OPEB liability, deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to OPEB, and OPEB expense, information about the fiduciary net position of each plan, and additions to/deductions from each plan's fiduciary net position have been determined on the same basis as they are reported by the plans.

Methods Used to Value Plan Investments: Pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes, the State Treasurer is the custodian and administrator of the other postemployment benefits funds. The State Treasurer maintains various investment portfolios in its External Investment Pool. The Retiree Health Benefit Fund participates in the External Investment Pool. The Disability Income Plan of North Carolina is invested in the Short-Term Investment Portfolio of the External Investment Pool and the Bond Index External Investment Pool. The investment balance of each other employee benefit trust fund represents its share of the fair market value of the net position of the various portfolios within the pool. Detailed descriptions of the methods and significant assumptions regarding investments of the State Treasurer are provided in the 2020 *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*.

B. Plan Descriptions:

1. Health Benefits:

Plan Administration: The State of North Carolina administers the North Carolina State Health Plan for Teachers and State Employees, referred to as the State Health Plan (the Plan), a healthcare plan exclusively for the benefit of employees of the State, the University of North Carolina System, community colleges, and certain other component units. In addition, LEAs, charter schools, and some select local governments that are not part of the State's financial reporting entity also participate. Health benefit programs and premium rates are determined by the State Treasurer upon approval of the Plan Board of Trustees.

The Retiree Health Benefit Fund (RHBF) has been established as a fund to provide health benefits to retired and disabled employees and their applicable beneficiaries. RHBF is established by General Statute 135-7, Article 1. RHBF is a cost-sharing, multiple-employer, defined benefit healthcare plan, exclusively for the benefit of eligible former employees of the State, the University of North Carolina System, and community colleges. In addition, LEAs, charter schools, and some select local governments that are not part of the State's financial reporting entity also participate.

By statute, RHBF is administered by the Board of Trustees of the TSERS. RHBF is supported by a percent of payroll contribution from participating employing units. Each year the percentage is set in legislation, as are the maximum per retiree contributions from RHBF to the Plan. The State Treasurer, with the approval of the Plan Board of Trustees, then sets the employer contributions (subject to the legislative cap) and the premiums to be paid by retirees, as well as the health benefits to be provided through the Plan.

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9. Other Postemployment Benefits (Continued)

Benefits Provided: Plan benefits received by retired employees and disabled employees from RHBF are OPEB. The healthcare benefits for retired and disabled employees who are not eligible for Medicare are the same as for active employees as described in Note 10. The plan options change when former employees become eligible for Medicare. Medicare retirees have the option of selecting one of two fully-insured Medicare Advantage/Prescription Drug Plan options or the self-funded Traditional 70/30 Preferred Provider Organization Plan option that is also offered to non-Medicare members. If the Traditional 70/30 Plan is selected by a Medicare retiree, the self-funded State Health Plan coverage is secondary to Medicare.

Those former employees who are eligible to receive medical benefits from RHBF are long-term disability beneficiaries of the Disability Income Plan of North Carolina and retirees of TSERS, the Consolidated Judicial Retirement System, the Legislative Retirement System, the Authority Employees' ORP, and a small number of local governments, with five or more years of contributory membership service in their retirement system prior to disability or retirement, with the following exceptions: for employees first hired on or after October 1, 2006, and members of the North Carolina General Assembly first taking office on or after February 1, 2007, future coverage as retired employees and retired members of the North Carolina General Assembly is subject to the requirement that the future retiree have 20 or more years of retirement service credit in order to receive coverage on a noncontributory basis. Employees first hired on or after October 1, 2006 and members of the North Carolina General Assembly first taking office on or after February 1, 2007 with 10 but less than 20 years of retirement service credit are eligible for coverage on a partially contributory basis. For such future retirees, the State will pay 50% of the State Health Plan's total noncontributory premium.

Section 35.21 (c) & (d) of Session Law 2017-57 repeals retiree medical benefits for employees first hired on or after January 1, 2021. The legislation amends Chapter 135, Article 3B of the General Statutes to require that retirees must earn contributory retirement service in the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System (or in an allowed local system unit), the Consolidated Judicial Retirement System, or the Legislative Retirement System prior to January 1, 2021, and not withdraw that service, in order to be eligible for retiree medical benefits under the amended law. Consequently, members first hired on and after January 1, 2021 will not be eligible to receive retiree medical benefits.

The Plan's and RHBF's benefit and contribution provisions are established by Chapter 135-7, Article 1, and Chapter 135, Article 3B of the General Statutes and may be amended only by the North Carolina General Assembly. RHBF does not provide for automatic post-retirement benefit increases.

Contributions: Contribution rates to RHBF, which are intended to finance benefits and administrative expenses on a pay-as-you-go basis, are determined by the North Carolina General Assembly in the Appropriations Bill. The Authority's contractually-required contribution rate for the year ended June 30, 2021 was 6.68% of covered payroll. The Authority's contributions to the RHBF were \$250,045 for the year ended June 30, 2021.

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9. Other Postemployment Benefits (Continued)

2. Disability Income:

Plan Administration: As discussed in Note 10, short-term and long-term disability benefits are provided through the Disability Income Plan of North Carolina (DIPNC), a cost-sharing, multiple-employer defined benefit plan, to the eligible members of TSERS which includes employees of the State, the University of North Carolina System, community colleges, certain participating component units, LEAs which are not part of the reporting entity, and the Authority Employees' ORP. By statute, DIPNC is administered by the Department of State Treasurer and the Board of Trustees of TSERS.

Benefits Provided: Long-term disability benefits are payable as an OPEB from DIPNC after the conclusion of the short-term disability period or after salary continuation payments cease, whichever is later, for as long as an employee is disabled. An employee is eligible to receive long-term disability benefits provided the following requirements are met: (1) the employee has five or more years of contributing membership service in TSERS or the Authority Employees' ORP, earned within 96 months prior to the end of the short-term disability period or cessation of salary contribution payments, whichever is later; (2) the employee must make application to receive long-term benefits within 180 days after the conclusion of the short-term disability period or after salary continuation payments cease or after monthly payments for Workers' Compensation cease (excluding monthly payments for permanent partial benefits), whichever is later; (3) the employee must be certified by the Medical Board to be mentally or physically disabled for the further performance of his/her usual occupation; (4) the disability must have been continuous, likely to be permanent, and incurred at the time of active employment; (5) the employee must not be eligible to receive an unreduced retirement benefit from TSERS; and (6) the employee must terminate employment as a permanent, full-time employee. An employee is eligible to receive an unreduced retirement benefit from TSERS after (1) reaching the age of 65 and completing five years of membership service, or (2) reaching the age of 60 and completing 25 years of creditable service, or (3) completing 30 years of creditable service, at any age.

For employees who had five or more years of membership service as of July 31, 2007, during the first 36 months of the long-term disability period, the monthly long-term disability benefit is equal to 65% of one-twelfth of an employee's annual base rate of compensation last payable to the participant or beneficiary prior to the beginning of the short-term disability period, plus the like percentage of one-twelfth of the annual longevity payment and local supplements to which the participant or beneficiary would be eligible. The monthly benefits are subject to a maximum of \$3,900 per month reduced by any primary Social Security disability benefits and by monthly payments for Workers' Compensation to which the participant or beneficiary may be entitled, but the benefits payable shall be no less than \$10 a month. After the first 36 months of the long-term disability, the long-term benefit is calculated in the same manner as described above except the monthly benefit is reduced by an amount equal to a monthly primary Social Security disability benefit to which the participant or beneficiary might be entitled had Social Security disability benefits been awarded. When an employee qualifies for an unreduced service retirement allowance from TSERS, the benefits payable from DIPNC will cease, and the employee will commence retirement under TSERS or the ORP.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

9. Other Postemployment Benefits (Continued)

For employees who had less than five years of membership service as of July 31, 2007, and meet the requirements for long-term disability on or after August 1, 2007, during the first 36 months of the long-term disability period, the monthly long-term disability benefit shall be reduced by an amount equal to the monthly primary Social Security retirement benefit to which the employee might be entitled should the employee become age 62 during the first 36 months. This reduction becomes effective as of the first day of the month following the month of initial entitlement to Social Security benefits. After the first 36 months of the long-term disability, no further benefits are payable under the terms of this section unless the employee has been approved and is in receipt of primary Social Security disability benefits.

Contributions: Although DIPNC operates on a calendar year, disability income benefits are funded by actuarially determined employer contributions that are established in the Appropriations Bill by the North Carolina General Assembly and coincide with the State's fiscal year. The Authority's contractually-required contribution rate for the year ended June 30, 2021 was 0.09% of covered payroll. The Authority's contributions to DIPNC were \$3,369 for the year ended June 30, 2021.

C. Net OPEB Liability:

Net OPEB Liability: At June 30, 2021, the Authority reported a liability of \$ 4,175,748 for its proportionate share of the collective net OPEB liability. The net OPEB liability was measured as of June 30, 2020. The total OPEB liability used to calculate the net OPEB liability was determined by an actuarial valuation as of December 31, 2019, and update procedures were used to roll forward the total OPEB liability to June 30, 2020. The Authority's proportion of the net OPEB liability was based on the present value of future salaries for the Authority relative to the present value of future salaries for all participating employers, actuarially determined. As of June 30, 2020, the Authority's proportion was approximately .015%, which was an increase of .002% from its proportion measured at June 30, 2019, which was .013%.

Actuarial Assumptions: The net OPEB liability for RHBF and DIPNC was determined by actuarial valuations as of December 31, 2019, using the following actuarial assumptions, applied to all periods included in the measurement, unless otherwise specified. The net OPEB liability was then rolled forward to June 30, 2020 utilizing update procedures incorporating the actuarial assumptions.

	Retiree Health Benefit Fund	Disability Income Plan of N.C.
Valuation Date	12/31/2019	12/31/2019
Inflation	3.00%	3.00%
Salary Increases*	3.50% - 8.10%	3.50% - 8.10%
Investment Rate of Return**	7.00%	3.75%
Healthcare Cost Trend Rate - Medical	6.50% grading down to 5.00% by 2024	6.50% grading down to 5.00% by 2024
Healthcare Cost Trend Rate - Prescription Drug	9.50% grading down to 5.00% by 2029	9.50% grading down to 5.00% by 2029
Healthcare Cost Trend Rate - Medicare Advantage	5.00%	N/A
Healthcare Cost Trend Rate - Administrative	3.00%	3.00%

* Salary increases include 3.5% inflation and productivity factor.

**Investment rate of return is net of pension plan investment expense, including inflation.

N/A - Not Applicable

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

9. Other Postemployment Benefits (Continued)

The OPEB plans currently use mortality tables that vary by age, gender, employee group (i.e. teacher, general, law enforcement officer) and health status (i.e. disabled and healthy). The current mortality rates are based on published tables and studies that cover significant portions of the U.S. population. The healthy mortality rates also contain a provision to reflect future mortality improvements.

The projected long-term investment returns and inflation assumptions are developed through a review of current and historical capital markets data, sell-side investment research, consultant whitepapers, and historical performance of investment strategies. Fixed income return projections reflect current yields across the U.S. Treasury yield curve and market expectations of forward yields projected and interpolated for multiple tenors and over multiple year horizons. Global public equity return projects are established through analysis of the equity risk premium and the fixed income return projections. Other asset categories and strategies' return projections reflect the foregoing and historical data analysis. These projections are combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return by weighting the expected future real rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage and by adding expected inflation. DIPNC is primarily invested in the Bond Index Investment Pool as of June 30, 2020.

Best estimates of real rates of return for each major asset class included in RHBF's target asset allocation as of June 30, 2020 (the valuation date) are summarized in the following table:

<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return</u>
Fixed Income	1.4 %
Global Equity	5.3 %
Real Estate	4.3 %
Alternatives	8.9 %
Opportunistic Fixed Income	6.0 %
Inflation Sensitive	4.0 %

The information in the preceding table is based on 30-year expectations developed with the consulting actuary and is part of the asset, liability, and investment policy of the North Carolina Retirement Systems. The long-term nominal rates of return underlying the real rates of return are arithmetic annualized figures. The real rates of return are calculated from nominal rates by multiplicatively subtracting a long-term inflation assumption of 3.05%. Return projections do not include any excess return expectations over benchmark averages. All rates of return and inflation are annualized. The long-term expected real rate of return for the Bond Index Investment Pool as of June 30, 2020 is 1.2%.

Actuarial valuations of the plans involve estimates of the value of reported amounts and assumptions about the probability of occurrence of events far into the future. Examples include assumptions about future employment, mortality, and the healthcare cost trend. Actuarially determined amounts are subject to continual revision as actual results are compared to past expectations and new estimates are made about the future.

The actuarial assumptions used for RHBF are consistent with those used to value the pension benefits of TSERS where appropriate. These assumptions are based on the most recent pension valuations available. The discount rate used for RHBF reflects a pay-as-you-go approach.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

9. Other Postemployment Benefits (Continued)

Projections of benefits for financial reporting purposes of the plans are based on the substantive plan (the plan as understood by the employer and plan members) and include the types of benefits provided at the time of each valuation and historical pattern of sharing of benefit costs between the employer and plan members to that point. Historically, the benefits funded solely by employer contributions applied equally to all retirees. Currently, as described earlier in the note, benefits are dependent on membership requirements.

The actuarial methods and assumptions used for DIPNC include techniques that are designed to reduce the effects of short-term volatility in actuarial accrued liabilities and the actuarial value of assets, consistent with the long-term perspective of the calculations.

The actuarial assumptions used in the December 31, 2018 valuations were generally based on the results of an actuarial experience study prepared as of December 31, 2014, as amended for updates to certain assumptions (such as the long-term investment return, medical claims, and medical trend rate assumptions) implemented based on annual reviews that have occurred since that experience study.

Discount Rate: The discount rate used to measure the total OPEB liability for RHBF was 2.21%. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that contributions from employers will be made at the current statutorily determined contribution rate. Based on the above assumptions, the plan's fiduciary net position was not projected to be available to make projected future benefit payments of current plan members. As a result, a municipal bond rate of 2.21% was used as the discount rate used to measure the total OPEB liability. The 2.21% rate is based on the Bond Buyer 20-year General Obligation Index as of June 30, 2020.

The discount rate used to measure the total OPEB liability for DIPNC was 3.75%. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that contributions from plan members will be made at the current contribution rate and that contributions from employers will be made at statutorily required rates, actuarially determined. Based on those assumptions, the plan's fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments of the current plan members. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total OPEB liability.

Sensitivity of the Net OPEB Liability (Asset) to Changes in the Discount Rate: The following presents the Authority's proportionate share of the net OPEB liability (asset) of the plans, as well as what the plans' net OPEB liability (asset) would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is 1-percentage point lower or 1-percentage point higher than the current discount rate:

Net OPEB Liability (Asset)			
	1% Decrease (1.21%)	Current Discount Rate (2.21%)	1% Increase (3.21%)
RHBF	\$ <u><u>4,961,153</u></u>	\$ <u><u>4,183,850</u></u>	\$ <u><u>3,556,646</u></u>
	1% Decrease (2.75%)	Current Discount Rate (3.75%)	1% Increase (4.75%)
DIPNC	\$ <u><u>(6,997)</u></u>	\$ <u><u>(8,102)</u></u>	\$ <u><u>(9,175)</u></u>

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

9. Other Postemployment Benefits (Continued)

Sensitivity of the Net OPEB Liability (Asset) to Changes in the Healthcare Cost Trend Rates: The following presents the net OPEB liability (asset) of the plans, as well as what the plans' net OPEB liability (asset) would be if it were calculated using healthcare cost trend rates that are 1-percentage-point lower or 1-percentage-point higher than the current healthcare cost trend rates:

Net OPEB Liability (Asset)			
	1% Decrease (Medical - 4.00-5.50%, Pharmacy - 4.00-8.50%, Med Advantage - 4.00%, Administrative - 2.00%)	Current Healthcare Cost Trend Rates (Medical - 5.00-6.50%, Pharmacy - 5.00-9.50%, Med Advantage - 5.00%, Administrative - 3.00%)	1% Increase (Medical - 6.00-7.50%, Pharmacy - 6.00-10.50%, Med Advantage - 6.00%, Administrative - 4.00%)
RHBF	\$ <u>3,683,374</u>	\$ <u>4,183,850</u>	\$ <u>5,752,567</u>
	1% Decrease (Medical - 4.00-5.50%, Pharmacy - 4.00-8.50%, Administrative - 2.00%)	Current Healthcare Cost Trend Rates (Medical - 5.00-6.50%, Pharmacy - 5.00-9.50%, Administrative - 3.00%)	1% Increase (Medical - 6.00-7.50%, Pharmacy - 6.00-10.50%, Administrative - 4.00%)
DIPNC	\$ <u>(8,116)</u>	\$ <u>(8,102)</u>	\$ <u>(8,091)</u>

OPEB Expense: For the year ended June 30, 2021, the Authority recognized OPEB expense as follows:

RHBF	\$ 436,479
DIPNC	<u>7,220</u>
Total OPEB Expense	\$ <u>443,699</u>

Deferred Outflows of Resources and Deferred Inflows of Resources Related to OPEB: At June 30, 2021, the Authority reported deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to OPEB from the following sources:

Employer Balances of Deferred Outflows of Resources Related to OPEB by Classification			
	<u>RHBF</u>	<u>DIPNC</u>	<u>Total</u>
Differences Between Actual and Expected Experience	\$ (159,887)	\$ 5,869	\$ (154,018)
Changes of Assumptions	(1,514,386)	(8)	(1,514,394)
Net Difference Between Projected and Actual Earnings on Plan Investments	8,814	(1,373)	7,441
Changes in Proportion and Differences Between Authority's Contributions and Proportionate Share of Contributions	1,757,758	(910)	1,756,848
Contributions Subsequent to the Measurement Date	<u>250,045</u>	<u>3,369</u>	<u>253,414</u>
	\$ <u>342,344</u>	\$ <u>6,947</u>	\$ <u>349,291</u>

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

9. Other Postemployment Benefits (Concluded)

Amounts reported as deferred outflows of resources related to contributions subsequent to the measurement date will be recognized as a reduction of the net OPEB liability related to RHBF and an increase of the net OPEB asset related to DIPNC in the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022. Other amounts reported as deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to OPEB will be recognized in OPEB expense as follows:

Schedule of the Net Amount of the Authority's Balances of Deferred Outflows of Resources
and Deferred Inflows of Resources that will be Recognized in OPEB Expense

Year Ended June 30	RHBF	DIPNC
2022	\$ (38,165)	\$ 1,755
2023	(37,705)	1,203
2024	148,185	643
2025	20,660	1,002
2026	(676)	(200)
Thereafter	(825)	(825)
Total	\$ 92,299	\$ 3,578

10. Risk Management

The Authority is exposed to various risks of loss related to torts; theft of, damage to, and destruction of assets; errors and omissions; injuries to employees; and natural disasters. These exposures to loss are handled via a combination of methods, including participation in state-administered insurance programs and self-retention of certain risks. There have been no significant reductions in insurance coverage from the previous year.

A. Employee Benefit Plans:

1. State Health Plan:

Authority employees are provided comprehensive major medical care benefits. Coverage is funded by contributions to the State Health Plan, a discretely presented component unit of the State of North Carolina. The State Health Plan is funded by employer contributions. Certain plans also require contributions from employees. The State Health Plan has contracted with third parties to process claims. See Note 9, Other Postemployment Benefits, for additional information regarding retiree health benefits.

2. Death Benefit Plan of North Carolina:

Term life insurance (death benefits) of \$25,000 to \$50,000 is provided to eligible workers who enroll in the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System. This Death Benefit Plan is administered by the State Treasurer and funded via employer contributions. The employer contribution rate was 0.13% for the current fiscal year.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

10. Risk Management (Continued)

3. Disability Income Plan:

Short-term and long-term disability benefits are provided to Authority employees through the DIPNC, part of the State's Pension and Other Employee Benefit Trust Funds. Short-term benefits are paid by the Authority up to the first six months of benefits and reimbursed by DIPNC for any additional short-term benefits. As discussed in Note 9, long-term disability benefits are payable as other postemployment benefits from DIPNC after the conclusion of the short-term disability period or after salary continuation payments cease, whichever is later, for as long as an employee is disabled.

B. Other Risk Management and Insurance Activities:

1. Automobile, Fire, and Other Property Losses:

The Authority is required to maintain all risk coverage on all state-owned buildings and contents through the State Property Fire Insurance Fund (Fund), an internal service fund of the State. Fire and lightning coverage is provided at no cost to the Authority for operations supported by the State's General Fund. Other operations not supported by the State's General Fund are charged for the fire and lightning coverage. Coverage for all remaining risks for all buildings is charged to the Authority. Losses covered by the Fund are subject to a \$5,000 per occurrence deductible.

2. Public Officers' and Employees' Liability Insurance:

The risk of tort claims of up to \$1,000,000 per claimant is retained under the authority of the State Tort Claims Act. In addition, the State provides excess public officers' and employees' liability insurance up to \$2,000,000 per claim and \$5,000,000 in the aggregate per fiscal year via contract with a private insurance company. The Authority pays the premium, based on a composite rate, directly to the private insurer.

3. Employee Dishonesty and Computer Fraud:

The Authority is protected for losses from employee dishonesty and computer fraud. This coverage is with a private insurance company and is handled by the North Carolina Department of Insurance. Agencies are charged a premium by the private insurance company. Coverage limit is \$5,000,000 per occurrence. The private insurance company pays 90% of each loss less a \$100,000 deductible.

4. Statewide Workers' Compensation Program:

The North Carolina Workers' Compensation Program provides benefits to workers injured on the job. All employees of the State and its component units are included in the program. When an employee is injured, the Authority's primary responsibility is to arrange for and provide the necessary treatment for work related injury. The Authority is responsible for paying medical benefits and compensation in accordance with the North Carolina Workers' Compensation Act. The Authority retains the risk for workers' compensation.

Additional details on the state-administered risk management programs are disclosed in the State of North Carolina's *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*, issued by the Office of the State Controller.

5. Cyber and Breach Response Insurance:

The Authority is protected for losses from cyber and data breach. This coverage is with a private insurance company. Coverage limit is \$5,000,000 for related losses.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2021

11. Adoption of New Accounting Standard

For the year ended June 30, 2021, the Authority implemented the following pronouncement issued by GASB:

- GASB Statement No. 84, *Fiduciary Activities*.
This Statement improves guidance regarding the identification of fiduciary activities for accounting and financial reporting purposes and how those activities should be reported. This Statement establishes criteria for identifying fiduciary activities of all state and local governments. The focus of the criteria generally is on (1) whether a government is controlling the assets of the fiduciary activity, and (2) the beneficiaries with whom a fiduciary relationship exists. Separate criteria are included to identify fiduciary component units and postemployment benefit arrangements that are fiduciary activities. Governments with activities meeting the criteria should present a statement of fiduciary net position and a statement of changes in fiduciary net position. An exception to that requirement is provided for a business-type activity that normally expects to hold custodial assets for 90-days or less.

12. COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic developed rapidly during 2020, with a significant number of cases. Measures taken by various governments to contain the virus have affected economic activity. The Authority has implemented measures to monitor and mitigate the effects of COVID-19, such as safety and health measures for staff (including social distancing and working from home) and securing the supply of items that are essential to Authority operations. Otherwise, any disruptions due to the pandemic have been isolated and minimal. Based on experience to date, the Authority expects this to remain the case. The Authority will continue to follow the various government policies and advice, and will continue with ongoing operations in the best and safest way possible without jeopardizing the health of Authority staff.

13. Subsequent Events

Subsequent events have been evaluated through November 12, 2021, which is the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

SCHEDULE OF PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE NET PENSION LIABILITY

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Required Supplementary Information
Schedule of Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability
Cost-Sharing, Multiple-Employer, Defined Benefit Pension Plan
Last Eight Fiscal Years *

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Authority's proportionate share percentage of collective net pension liability	0.012%	0.013%	0.013%
Authority's proportionate share of TSERS collective net pension liability	\$ 1,407,553	\$ 1,357,035	\$ 1,330,133
Authority's covered payroll	\$ 2,400,732	\$ 2,379,219	\$ 2,352,372
Authority's proportionate share of the net pension liability as a percentage of covered payroll	58.630%	57.037%	56.544%
Plan fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total pension liability	85.980%	87.560%	87.610%

* The amounts presented for each fiscal year were determined as of the prior fiscal year ending June 30.

<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
0.014%	0.011%	0.013%	0.014%	0.014%
\$ 1,075,117	\$ 1,053,292	\$ 482,209	\$ 163,432	\$ 163,432
\$ 2,300,394	\$ 2,044,547	\$ 2,131,189	\$ 2,208,847	\$ 2,209,421
46.736%	51.517%	22.626%	7.399%	7.397%
89.510%	87.320%	94.640%	98.240%	90.600%

SCHEDULE OF AUTHORITY CONTRIBUTIONS (PENSION)

NORTH CAROLINA
 STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
 Required Supplementary Information
 Schedule of Authority Contributions (Pension)
 Cost-Sharing, Multiple-Employer, Defined Benefit Pension Plan
 Last Ten Fiscal Years

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Contractually required contribution	\$ 396,809	\$ 311,375	\$ 292,406	\$ 253,586
Contributions in relation to the contractually determined contribution	<u>396,809</u>	<u>311,375</u>	<u>292,406</u>	<u>253,586</u>
Contribution deficiency (excess)	<u>\$ _____</u>	<u>\$ _____</u>	<u>\$ _____</u>	<u>\$ _____</u>
Authority's covered payroll	\$ 2,684,772	\$ 2,400,732	\$ 2,379,219	\$ 2,352,372
Contributions as a percentage of covered payroll	14.78%	12.97%	12.29%	10.78%

<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>
\$ 229,579	\$ 187,076	\$ 195,004	\$ 191,949	\$ 184,045	\$ 138,421
<u>229,579</u>	<u>187,076</u>	<u>195,004</u>	<u>191,949</u>	<u>184,045</u>	<u>138,421</u>
<u><u>\$</u></u>	<u><u>\$</u></u>	<u><u>\$</u></u>	<u><u>\$</u></u>	<u><u>\$</u></u>	<u><u>\$</u></u>
\$ 2,300,394	\$ 2,044,547	\$ 2,131,189	\$ 2,208,847	\$ 2,209,421	\$ 2,807,731
9.98%	9.15%	9.15%	8.69%	8.33%	4.93%

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Required Supplementary Information
Schedule of Authority Contributions (Pension)
Cost-Sharing, Multiple-Employer, Defined Benefit Pension Plan
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2021

1. Changes of Benefit Terms

Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System:

Cost of Living Increase

<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
N/A	N/A	1.00%	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.00%	N/A	N/A	N/A

2. Changes of Assumptions

In 2015, the North Carolina Retirement Systems' consulting actuaries performed the quinquennial investigation of each retirement systems' actual demographic and economic experience (known as the "Experience Review"). The Experience Review provides the basis for selecting the actuarial assumptions and methods used to determine plan liabilities and funding requirements. The most recent Experience Review examined each plan's experience during the period between January 1, 2010 and December 31, 2014. Based on the findings, the Board of Trustees and the TSERS adopted a number of new actuarial assumptions and methods. The most notable changes to the assumptions include updates to the mortality tables and the mortality improvement projection scales to reflect reduced rates of mortality and significant increases in mortality improvements. These assumptions were adjusted to reflect the mortality projection scale MP-2015, released by the Society of Actuaries in 2015. In addition, the assumed rates of retirement, salary increases, and rates of termination from active employment were reduced to more closely reflect actual experience. The discount rate for the TSERS was lowered from 7.20% to 7.00% for the December 31, 2017 valuation. For the December 31, 2019 valuation, the discount rate was 7.00%.

The Board of Trustees also adopted a new asset valuation method for the TSERS. For determining plan funding requirements, the plan now uses a five-year smoothing method with a reset of the actuarial value of assets to market value as of December 31, 2014.

The Notes to Required Supplementary Information reflect the most recent available information included in the State of North Carolina's 2020 *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*.

SCHEDULE OF PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE NET OPEB LIABILITY (ASSET)

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Required Supplementary Information
Schedule of Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability (Asset)
Cost-Sharing, Multiple-Employer, Defined Benefit OPEB Plans
Last Five Fiscal Years *

	2021	2020	2019
Retiree Health Benefit Fund			
Authority's proportionate share percentage of collective net OPEB liability (asset)	0.01508%	0.01498%	0.01542%
Authority's proportionate share of collective net OPEB liability (asset)	\$ 4,183,850	\$ 4,740,014	\$ 4,392,925
Authority's covered payroll	\$ 3,518,790	\$ 3,507,443	\$ 3,382,627
Authority's proportionate share of the net OPEB liability as a percentage of covered payroll	118.90%	135.14%	129.87%
Plan fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total OPEB liability (asset)	6.92%	4.40%	4.40%
Disability Income Plan of North Carolina			
Authority's proportionate share percentage of collective net OPEB liability (asset)	0.01647%	0.01096%	0.01109%
Authority's proportionate share of collective net OPEB liability (asset)	\$ (8,102)	\$ (4,729)	\$ (3,369)
Authority's covered payroll	\$ 3,518,790	\$ 3,507,443	\$ 3,382,627
Authority's proportionate share of the net OPEB liability as a percentage of covered payroll	(0.23%)	(0.13%)	(0.10%)
Plan fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total OPEB liability (asset)	(115.57%)	(113.00%)	(108.47%)

* The amounts presented for each fiscal year were determined as of the prior fiscal year ending June 30.

<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
0.01168%	0.00968%
\$ 3,829,724	\$ 4,211,129
\$ 3,148,955	\$ 2,832,617
121.62%	148.67%
3.52%	2.41%
<hr/>	
0.01172%	0.01042%
\$ (7,163)	\$ (6,471)
\$ 3,148,955	\$ 2,832,617
(0.23%)	(0.23%)
(116.23%)	(116.06%)
<hr/>	

SCHEDULE OF AUTHORITY CONTRIBUTIONS (OPEB)

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Required Supplementary Information
Schedule of Authority Contributions (OPEB)
Cost-Sharing, Multiple-Employer, Defined Benefit OPEB Plans
Last Ten Fiscal Years

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Retiree Health Benefit Fund				
Contractually required contribution	\$ 250,045	\$ 227,666	\$ 219,917	\$ 204,649
Contributions in relation to the contractually determined contribution	<u>250,045</u>	<u>227,666</u>	<u>219,917</u>	<u>204,649</u>
Contribution deficiency (excess)	\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>
Authority's covered payroll	\$ 3,743,190	\$ 3,518,790	\$ 3,507,443	\$ 3,382,627
Contributions as a percentage of covered payroll	6.68%	6.47%	6.27%	6.05%

Disability Income Plan of North Carolina

Contractually required contribution	\$ 3,369	\$ 3,519	\$ 4,910	\$ 4,736
Contributions in relation to the contractually determined contribution	<u>3,369</u>	<u>3,519</u>	<u>4,910</u>	<u>4,736</u>
Contribution deficiency (excess)	\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>
Authority's covered payroll	\$ 3,743,190	\$ 3,518,790	\$ 3,507,443	\$ 3,382,627
Contributions as a percentage of covered payroll	0.09%	0.10%	0.14%	0.14%

<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>
\$ 183,498	\$ 158,627	\$ 153,413	\$ 146,021	\$ 135,438	\$ 155,223
<u>183,498</u>	<u>158,627</u>	<u>153,413</u>	<u>146,021</u>	<u>135,438</u>	<u>155,223</u>
\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>
\$ 3,148,955	\$ 2,832,617	\$ 2,794,390	\$ 2,704,091	\$ 2,555,455	\$ 3,104,423
5.83%	5.60%	5.49%	5.40%	5.30%	5.00%

\$ 11,966	\$ 11,614	\$ 11,457	\$ 11,898	\$ 11,244	\$ 16,143
<u>11,966</u>	<u>11,614</u>	<u>11,457</u>	<u>11,898</u>	<u>11,244</u>	<u>16,143</u>
\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>	\$ <u><u> </u></u>
\$ 3,148,955	\$ 2,832,617	\$ 2,794,390	\$ 2,704,091	\$ 2,555,455	\$ 3,104,423
0.38%	0.41%	0.41%	0.44%	0.44%	0.52%

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Required Supplementary Information
Schedule of Authority Contributions (OPEB)
Cost-Sharing, Multiple-Employer, Defined Benefit OPEB Plans
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2021

1. Changes of Benefit Terms

Effective January 1, 2016, benefit terms related to copays, out-of-pocket maximums, and deductibles were changed for three of four options of the RHBF. Most of the changes were an increase in the amount from the previous year.

Effective January 1, 2017, benefit terms related to copays, coinsurance maximums, out-of-pocket maximums and deductibles were changed for two of four options of the RHBF. Most of the changes were an increase in the amount from the previous year.

Effective January 1, 2019, benefit terms related to copays, out-of-pockets maximums, and deductibles were changed for one of four options of the RHBF. Out-of-pocket maximums increased while certain specialist copays decreased related to option benefits.

Effective January 1, 2020, benefit terms related to copays, out-of-pockets maximums, and deductibles were changes for the 70/30 PPO option of the RHBF. Only the copays were adjusted for 80/20 PPO option of the RHBF.

Additionally, the December 31, 2017 Disability Income Plan of North Carolina (DIPNC) actuarial valuation includes a liability for the State's potential reimbursement of health insurance premiums paid by employers during the second six months of the short-term disability benefit period.

2. Method and Assumptions Used in Calculations of Actuarially Determined Contributions

An actuarial valuation is performed for each plan each year. The actuarially determined contribution rates in the Schedule of Employer Contributions are calculated by the actuary as a projection of the required employer contribution for the fiscal year beginning six months following the date of the valuation results for the RHBF. The actuarially determined contribution rates in the Schedule of Employer Contributions are calculated by the actuary as a projection of the required employer contribution for the fiscal year beginning 18 months following the date of the valuation results for the DIPNC. See Note 9 for more information on the specific assumptions for each plan. The actuarially determined contributions for those items with covered payroll were determined using the actuarially determined contribution rate from the actuary and covered payroll as adjusted for timing differences and other factors such as differences in employee class. Other actuarially determined contributions are disclosed in the schedule as expressed by the actuary in reports to the plans.

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Required Supplementary Information
Schedule of Authority Contributions (OPEB)
Cost-Sharing, Multiple-Employer, Defined Benefit OPEB Plans
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2021

3. Changes of Assumptions

In 2015, the North Carolina Retirement Systems' consulting actuaries performed the quinquennial investigation of each retirement systems' actual demographic and economic experience (known as the "Experience Review"). The Experience Review provides the basis for selecting the actuarial assumptions and methods used to determine plan liabilities and funding requirements. The most recent Experience Review examined each plan's experience during the period between January 1, 2010 and December 31, 2014. Based on the findings, the Board of Trustees and the TSERS and the State Health Plan adopted a number of new actuarial assumptions and methods for the RHBF and the DIPNC. The most notable changes to the assumptions include updates to the mortality tables and the mortality improvement projection scales to reflect reduced rates of mortality and significant increases in mortality improvements. These assumptions were adjusted to reflect the mortality projection scale MP-2015, released by the Society of Actuaries in 2015. In addition, the assumed rates of retirement and rates of termination from active employment were reduced to more closely reflect actual experience.

For the actuarial valuation measured as of June 30, 2020, the discount rate for the RHBF was updated to 2.21%. In the prior year, disability rates were adjusted to the non-grandfathered assumptions used in the TSERS actuarial valuation to better align with the anticipated incidence of disability. Medical and prescription drug claim costs were changed based on most recent experience, and medical and prescription drug trend rates were changed to the current schedule. Enrollment assumptions were updated to model expected migrations among RHBF plan options over the next four years. For the DIPNC actuarial valuation as of December 31, 2018, for individuals who may become disabled in the future, the Social Security disability income benefit (which is an offset of the DIPNC benefit) was updated to be based on assumed Social Security calculation parameters in the year of disability. The assumed costs related to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act regarding the Health Insurance Provider Fee for the fully insured plans and Excise Tax were removed when those pieces were repealed December 2019.

The Notes to Required Supplementary Information reflect the most recent available information included in the State of North Carolina's 2020 *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*.

SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards
For The Year Ended June 30, 2021

<u>Program Title</u>	<u>Federal CFDA Number</u>
U.S. Department of Education--Direct Program:	
Federal Family Education Loan Program (Guaranty Agencies)	84.032G
Balance of Loans Guaranteed for Years Ending June 30, 2010 and Prior:	
Insured Federal Stafford Loans Outstanding	
Insured Consolidation Loans Outstanding	
Insured Federal PLUS Loans Outstanding	
Insured Federal SLS Loans Outstanding	
Interest and Special Allowance	
Account Maintenance Fees	
TOTALS	

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this schedule.

<u>Outstanding Balance at July 1, 2020</u>	<u>Federal Expenditures</u>
\$ 551,529,745	\$ 551,529,745
363,108,980	363,108,980
36,302,640	36,302,640
<u>229,071</u>	<u>229,071</u>
\$ <u>951,170,436</u>	<u>951,170,436</u>
	2,671,514
	<u>663,130</u>
	\$ <u><u>954,505,080</u></u>

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Notes to Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards
June 30, 2021

1. Basis of Accounting and Presentation

The accompanying Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (the Schedule) includes the federal award/expenditure activity of the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority (the Authority) under programs of the federal government for the year ended June 30, 2021 and is presented on the accrual basis of accounting. The information in the Schedule is presented in accordance with the requirements of Title 2 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance). Because the Schedule presents only a selected portion of the operations of the Authority, it is not intended to and does not present the net position, changes in net position, or cash flows of the Authority.

2. Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP)

Pursuant to certain amendments to the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, included in the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, all new federal student loans have been originated through the Federal Direct Loan Program since July 1, 2010. As a result, the Schedule reflects the balance of FFELP loans guaranteed by the Authority for the years ending June 30, 2010 and prior. Loans outstanding at the beginning of the year are included in the federal expenditures presented in the Schedule. At June 30, 2021, the balance of FFELP loans guaranteed by the Authority totaled \$851,232,787.

Beginning with eligible FFELP loans first disbursed on or after April 1, 2006, excess interest must be remitted to the U.S. Department of Education when the applicable interest rate on a loan for any given quarter exceeds the special allowance support level. During the year ended June 30, 2021, excess interest remitted to the U.S. Department of Education on loans funded by the Authority totaled \$25,324,374.

3. Continuing Compliance Requirements

Guaranteed student loans impose no continuing compliance requirements other than to repay the loans.

COMPLIANCE AND INTERNAL CONTROL REPORTS



The Officers and Directors
North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority
Research Triangle Park, North Carolina

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING
AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED ON AN AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH *GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS*

We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority, a nonmajor component unit of the State of North Carolina, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2021, and have issued our report thereon dated November 12, 2021.

Internal Control over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Authority's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority's internal control.

A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

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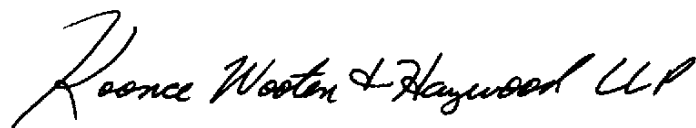
919 934 1121
919 934 1217 FAX

Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rance Weston & Haywood LLP". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Raleigh, North Carolina
November 12, 2021



Board of Directors
North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority
Research Triangle Park, North Carolina

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON COMPLIANCE FOR EACH MAJOR PROGRAM
AND ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER COMPLIANCE REQUIRED BY THE UNIFORM GUIDANCE

Report on Compliance for Each Major Federal Program

We have audited the compliance of the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority, a nonmajor component unit of the State of North Carolina, with the types of compliance requirements described in the *OMB Compliance Supplement* that could have a direct and material effect on the Authority's major federal program for the year ended June 30, 2021. The North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority's major federal program is identified in the summary of auditor's results section of the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs.

Management's Responsibility

Management is responsible for compliance with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of its federal awards applicable to its federal program.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on compliance for the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority's major federal program based on our audit of the types of compliance requirements referred to above. We conducted our audit of compliance in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and the audit requirements of Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance). Those standards and the Uniform Guidance require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether noncompliance with the types of compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on the major federal program occurred. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence about the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority's compliance with those requirements and performing such other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion on compliance for the major federal program. However, our audit does not provide a legal determination of the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority's compliance.

Opinion on Each Major Federal Program

In our opinion, the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority complied, in all material respects, with the types of compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on its major federal program for the year ended June 30, 2021.

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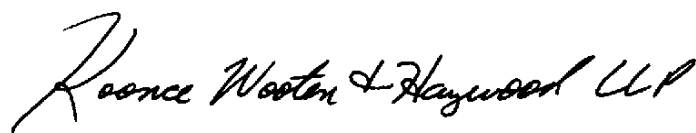
Report on Internal Control over Compliance

Management of the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal control over compliance with the types of compliance requirements referred to above. In planning and performing our audit of compliance, we considered the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority's internal control over compliance with the types of requirements that could have a direct and material effect on its major federal program to determine the auditing procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing an opinion on compliance for the major program and to test and report on internal control over compliance in accordance with the Uniform Guidance, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over compliance. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority's internal control over compliance.

A deficiency in internal control over compliance exists when the design or operation of a control over compliance does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program on a timely basis. *A material weakness in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance, such that there is a reasonable possibility that material noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. *A significant deficiency in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program that is less severe than a material weakness in internal control over compliance, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control over compliance was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control over compliance that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. We did not identify any deficiencies in internal control over compliance that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

The purpose of this report on internal control over compliance is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over compliance and the results of that testing based on the requirements of the Uniform Guidance. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rance Wooten & Haywood LLP". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Raleigh, North Carolina
November 12, 2021

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY
Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs
For the Year Ended June 30, 2021

Section I – Summary of Auditor's Results

Financial Statements

Type of auditor's report issued: Unmodified

Internal control over financial reporting:

- Material weakness identified? Yes No
- Significant deficiency identified that is not considered to be material weakness? Yes None Reported
- Noncompliance material to financial statements noted? Yes No

Federal Awards

Internal control over major programs:

- Material weakness identified? Yes No
- Significant deficiency identified that is not considered to be material weakness? Yes None Reported

Type of auditor's report issued on compliance for major programs: Unmodified

Any audit findings disclosed that are required to be reported in accordance with 2 CFR Section 200.516(a)? Yes No

Identification of major programs:

CFDA Number
84.032G

Name of Federal Program or Cluster
Federal Family Education Loan Program
(Guaranty Agencies)

Dollar threshold used to distinguish between Type A and Type B programs:

\$750,000

Auditee qualified as low-risk auditee? Yes No

Section II – Financial Statement Findings

There were no findings relating to the financial statements required to be reported in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS).

Section III – Federal Award Findings and Questioned Costs

There were no findings or questioned costs for Federal awards required to be reported under 2 CFR Section 200.516(a).

This audit report required approximately 1,400 audit hours at a cost of \$186,100.