

NORTH CAROLINA GEOGRAPHIC ALLIANCE



STRATEGIC PLAN

2012-2017

**NORTH CAROLINA GEOGRAPHIC ALLIANCE
STRATEGIC PLAN 2012 - 2017**

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Credits

NORTH CAROLINA GEOGRAPHIC ALLIANCE

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NORTH CAROLINA GEOGRAPHIC ALLIANCE



November 12, 2012

Dear Colleague,

2012 marks the twenty-fifth year of the North Carolina Geographic Alliance (NCGA). With support from the National Geographic Society and committed educators, much has been accomplished and there is much to be done.

We are all acutely aware of the challenges facing education in North Carolina and the United States. Career preparation, shrinking school resources, and the limited awareness of our graduating students of global interrelationships are just a few of the challenges. The goals of the NCGA and National Geographic Society are to address these challenges through enhanced geo-literacy, teacher preparation, strengthened curricula, and stronger partnerships.

This strategic plan is the result of a more than a year of hard work by the members of the NCGA and input from many partners and stakeholders. Your continued support is crucial to our success.

Thank you,

The North Carolina Geographic Alliance Steering Committee

STRATEGIC PLAN
THE NORTH CAROLINA GEOGRAPHIC ALLIANCE
2012-2017

Vision

The vision of the North Carolina Geographic Alliance is to develop an understanding of the full scope and value of geography among educators, governmental decision makers, and the general population of the state. Recognizing that geography is essential in preparing North Carolina students as productive citizens, the NCGA is committed to achieving geographic literacy and proficiency, not only in the classroom, but in the workforce, in business, and in the lives of all citizens. We envision the NCGA becoming a leading source of information for geography education in the state.

Mission

1. To provide educators with effective and relevant professional development, support, and materials focusing on geographic concepts, content, and pedagogy.
2. To inspire and support curriculum design and professional development connections among K-12 educators, community colleges and universities, and professional associations.
3. To educate legislators, education decision-makers, and business leaders at the local, state, and national levels about the relevance of geography in the 21st century.
4. To cultivate awareness among parents of students and the public at large of the importance of geo-literacy and to actively engage citizens in supporting efforts to improve geography education.
5. To build the capacity and resources of the NCGA to enable it to carry forward its mission.

Core Values

1. Education equips students with the knowledge and skills to be informed, active citizens and to compete in the global marketplace.
2. Teachers are the foundation of our education system and must be supported through effective and relevant professional development.
3. Geography is and should remain an integral part of the curriculum of North Carolina schools.
4. The North Carolina Geographic Alliance is a collegial organization of volunteers based on a mutual passion for geography education.
5. Our organization and initiatives shall be based on fairness, openness, and democratic principles.
6. Input from those outside the education system is vital support for the strategies and activities at the NCGA.

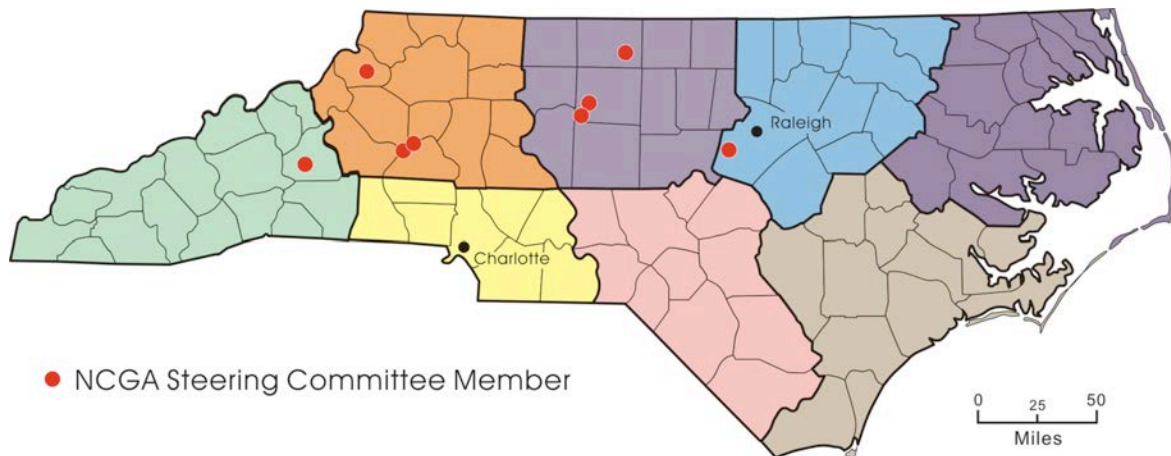
CONTEXT AND SITUATION ANALYSIS

NCGA Today

Membership

NCGA currently has fifty members who are active in the organization, including many past and present Teacher Consultants (TCs). K-12 educators are well represented among the active members. Active members, however, include only one university faculty representative and no current representatives from government, private, or non-profit sectors. The Central and Research Triangle regions of NC are well represented among the active members, but Western NC, Charlotte, and the eastern part of the state are not. (See map below indicating the location of 2012 Steering Committee members.)

North Carolina by Regional Education Service Areas (RESA)



The NCGA maintains a database with 800 contacts representing mostly passive members. Members also include approximately 400 past Summer Institute participants, of which an estimated 50% have retired from teaching or moved out of state. Many others have not remained active in the NCGA. Membership is free and on-going.

Budget and Organization

NCGA currently has an office at Appalachian State University (ASU), located in Boone in the northwestern part of North Carolina. ASU functions as the fiscal agent. Dr. James Young, ASU Department of Geography and Planning, and Steve Pierce in Old Fort, NC are NCGA coordinators.

A Steering Committee of approximately ten members representing some, but not all, regions of the state participates in program decisions, priority setting, and program delivery. The Steering Committee was central to the development of this strategic plan.

The NCGA's current calendar year budget is approximately \$30,000. Approximately \$20,000 per year is budgeted for programming activities. In the early years of the NCGA, state funding through the NC Legislature and/or NC Department of Public Instruction budget provided funding at substantially higher levels.

The NCGA implements its programs and services with the help of several important relationships and partners. Current partners include:

- The North Carolina Council for the Social Studies (NCCSS) - Several NCGA TCs have served in leadership positions in the NCCSS, dating back to the early 1990s. The annual NCCSS conference provides the NCGA with a venue for outreach to teachers through a table in the vendor area, offering workshop sessions, and sponsoring special events and speakers.
- World View - The NCGA has provided workshop sessions and distributes NCGA materials at World View Symposia held twice a year.
- NC Middle School Association- the NCGA has had a booth in the vendor area and workshop sessions for this annual conference.
- Elementary School Conference - the NCGA has had a booth in the vendor area.

Communication

Until 2012, NCGA's primary communication vehicle was a web site portal as part of the National Geographic Society (NGS) EdNet website. Since NGS EdNet has discontinued sponsorship of the site, this plan will address redevelopment of a web site and related communication tools.

NCGA events and services are publicized in the *World View* quarterly online newsletter. NCGA is also mentioned in targeted emails sent by social studies curriculum specialists in some school systems (e.g., Wake Co. Social Studies Supervisor's weekly email).

The Giant Traveling Map program and a booth at the annual social studies conference are other ways the NCGA communicates with teachers, parents, and administrators.

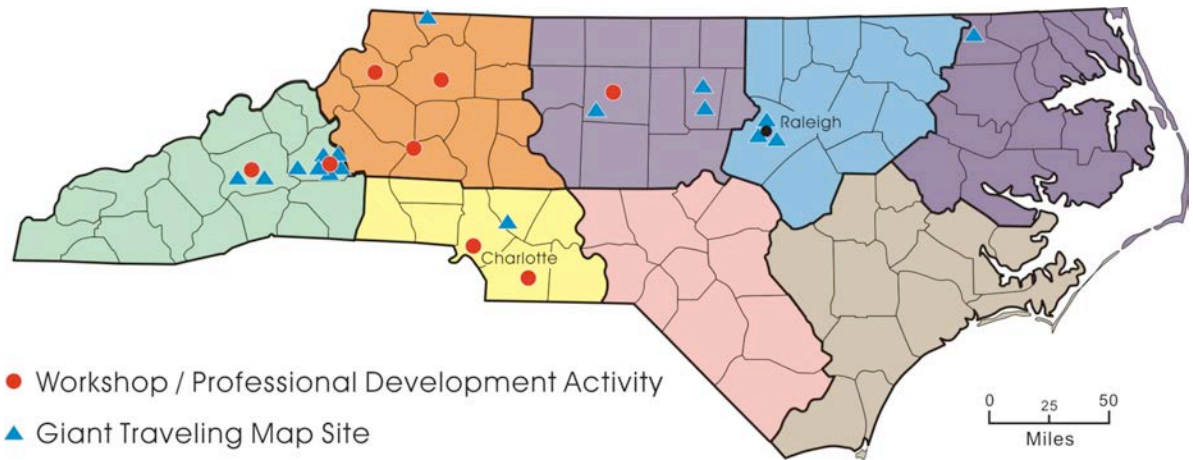
Programs and Services

Over the course of its history, thousands of participants have attended NCGA workshops. Currently, the NCGA reaches or trains approximately 100-200 participants annually through professional development sessions. Another 150-200 teachers interact with the NCGA each year at the NCCSS Social Studies Conference. In 2011-2012, the NCGA reached over 200 teachers through the new Essential Standards Workshop and 120 teachers through workshops offered at the annual Social Studies Conference.

Current programs and services include:

1. An Essential Standards workshop to help teachers learn how to teach geography concepts as part of the new curriculum standards
2. Giant traveling map of South America. This marks the fourth year the NCGA has hosted one of the Giant Traveling Maps from NGS. It is estimated that over 3,000 students and hundreds of teachers and parents experience the map each year.
3. Workshops offered at the annual NCCSS Conference in Greensboro. The NCGA hosts an exhibit table in the vendor area and presents an average of 6 to 8 sessions at the conference.
4. Classroom materials such as maps, inflatable globes, and lesson plans are distributed to teachers at the NCCSS conference and at workshops.
5. Materials for Geography Awareness Week are distributed to teachers at the World View Fall Symposium. A display table also offers information about NCGA membership and programs.

Outreach Programs by NCGA, 2010-2012



Education in North Carolina

North Carolina’s Public Schools are governed by an elected State Superintendent of Public Instruction and State Board of Education whose members are appointed by the governor. The Department of Public Instruction carries out policies set by the State Board of Education, including curriculum, assessment and testing, and teacher licensure. The North Carolina Legislature and the Governor determine the annual budget for education and enact legislation that directly affects education policy in the state.

Teachers are paid on the basis of a state salary schedule, with local supplements added by the Local Education Agency (LEA - a county school district or a city school district). State law does not permit collective bargaining. Teachers are hired and under contract for a specified period of time.

The Department of Public Instruction oversees the curriculum of K-12 schools. The *NC Standard Course of Study* has been the curriculum followed by public schools for many years. As a rule, specific subject areas were revised every five years. In the 2012-13 school year, the state implemented Common Core ELA and Math and the North Carolina Essential Standards for all other subjects. LEA’s were charged with writing their own curriculum for specific subject areas following the goals and objectives in the Essential Standards.

For the NCGA, the Essential Standards for Social Studies is the part of the curriculum that is of greatest interest. Geography is one of the Five Strands in the Essential Standards (History, Geography, Economics, Civics and Government, and Culture) for grades K-8. At the secondary level four social studies courses are required for graduation: World History, Civics and Economics, U.S. History I, and U.S. History II. A stand-alone Geography course is not required; however, AP Human Geography is offered at many high schools and some schools offer an elective geography course.

Statewide testing includes end-of-grade tests for English/Language Arts (ELA) and Math for grades 3-8, and Science for grades 5 and 8. For grades 9-12, end-of-course tests in English II, Algebra I, and Biology are administered.

There are 115 Local Education Agencies (a county school district or a city school district) that have 2,361 public schools (Elementary, Middle, and High) and 64 Early College schools (grades 9-13) that offer a high school diploma and an Associates Degree from a community college over 5 years. In addition, North Carolina has 131 public charter schools. Each charter school operates as

its own school district or local education agency (LEA). Each charter school is governed by its own school board that is answerable to the parents and the State Board of Education.

Additional information on the North Carolina Public Schools is available in Appendix C.

Current Situation Analysis

Stakeholder Interviews

As part of the strategic planning process, outreach interviews were held with key stakeholders from a variety of private, public, and non-profit sectors. The NCGA will continue to seek input and feedback from these and other stakeholders.

While the majority of stakeholders interviewed knew very little about the NCGA, there was broad agreement that geo-literacy was important and that geographic education in the state could be improved.

The following is a summary of external obstacles and supporting factors for realizing the vision of the geography.

External Obstacles, Barriers and Weaknesses	External Supporting Factors and Strengths
<p><u>Knowledge & Awareness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> US students are typically unaware/unfamiliar with world geography. There is a stigma about taking Earth science classes, versus physics or other science courses. <p><u>University Faculty engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University faculty are pulled in many different directions (e.g., research/publishing requirements for promotion & tenure). Elementary/middle/high school curriculum is largely ignored by university faculty. <p><u>Federal & state pressures</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal mandates and 20-30 year trends, including No Child Left Behind, push “teaching to the test” and have marginalized geography and other disciplines. Local communities in the state differ about the extent to which geography content can and should be included in K-12 curriculum. <p><u>Funding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of money for professional development and textbooks/materials. NC budget cuts result in more pressure. Competition for funds could reduce number of teachers and impact what gets taught in the schools; geography might be further marginalized. 	<p><u>Demand is High</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased competitiveness in the global economy demands a greater understanding and respect for geographic principles in every discipline. Schools are moving towards increasing students’ awareness of the world around them (vs. memorization of facts). Opportunity for geography educators to capitalize on this trend. The new standards and more flexibility by LEAs (Local Education Authority) to implement curriculum is a real opportunity for the NCGA, possibly increasing demand for inexpensive professional development: teachers are interested in building their own awareness of geography so they are better prepared to teach. May be opportunities in specific local communities that may not be possible statewide. <p><u>Partner and Funding Potential</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of strong Strategic Plan offers opportunity for multi-year funding commitment from NGS Strong interest from university department chairs offers opportunity for future partnerships and joint programs

<p><u>Teachers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> History teachers are not as well prepared as they can be for applying geographic principles within the curriculum. Lack of time to focus on new issues or the creativity allowed within the standards. Summers are shorter and teachers don't want to commit to 1-2 weeks to attend the summer institutes. Teachers and students may lack basic understanding of spatial relationships <p><u>Curriculum standards & testing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCGA had limited influence in the development of the essential standards Testing: Educators are held to rigid standards in reading, writing, math, and science. Social Studies is not assessed through the statewide testing program. 	<p><u>Teachers, Schools and Students are critical</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers are the strongest asset. They have passion and commitment and can see how to branch out to use the curriculum in creative ways.
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Internal Obstacles, Barriers and Weaknesses	Internal Supporting Factors and Strengths
<p><u>A Weak Brand Outside NCGA Teachers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little known to the public. Somewhat known to the social studies community. Little current communication outside circle of teachers. NCGA Steering and leadership groups currently lack the capacity to carry out much of the mission. NCGA does not currently represent other stakeholder groups that can lend assistance. Bridges between universities and communities can be strengthened. 	<p><u>Outreach & Collaboration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCGA participation in Geography Awareness Week (GAW) increases public understanding of geography Valuable cooperation between NCGA and national professional groups (NGS, AAG, NCGE) and state organizations (NC Council for the Social Studies) <p><u>Within the schools</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased teacher awareness of geography and support is keeping geography alive in the schools Providing opportunities for teachers to participate in workshops conducted by university geographers and NCGA Teacher Consultants (TCs) <p><u>Community of Interest</u></p> <p>Created an institutional structure that allows teachers and professors to gather and present ideas about geography and be part of like-minded community</p>

Market Analysis and Opportunities

The NCGA has the potential to impact many different audiences, including educators (teachers, faculty, and administrators) in K-12 schools, community colleges, and universities; the general public individual citizens, parents, students, media, government decision makers, businesses and corporations, associations and other non-profits.

Target Audience - Priority is K-12 Educators

Given the large size of the NCGA's potential audience, the NCGA will target the groups of K-12 educators where Alliance activities stand to have the greatest impact. In 2010, in North Carolina there were 90,000 teachers in K-12 education. Of these 46,000 are elementary school teachers, almost all of whom teach social studies. Almost 31,000 are secondary teachers. (See further details in Appendix B)

High rates of teacher turnover (~12%) are both a challenge and an opportunity for the NCGA. For example, new teachers coming into the system in the midst of significant changes in the Essential Standards for each grade will be seeking assistance and guidance. The NCGA is in discussion about the most effective ways to reach teachers, either locally or statewide, to provide such assistance in the form of curriculum and materials support.

Subsets of new teachers entering the NC public school system offer an opportunity to reach an audience with high demand and needs early in their NC careers. Similarly, the NCGA sees an opportunity to provide professional development support for pre-service teachers.

The NCGA also sees different market opportunities for larger vs. smaller school systems. While larger school systems have more resources, as well as the power to define the norms for the state, smaller school systems may be looking for cost-effective options to successfully implement the new standards. Larger systems might have the resources to experiment with model programs, professional development offerings, and other programs in support of NCGA goal. Successes can be leveraged elsewhere in the state.

Location plays a role in the NCGA's goals and strategies. Certain parts of the state, (including eastern North Carolina and the western region) are under-represented among active members and the NCGA will seek to address this in the near term. The highest priority will be to populate the steering committee and program committees of the NCGA with active members from currently under-represented regions of the state. Similarly, the "MAP" ("Member, Associate, Partner" – see Goal 4) recruitment program will focus on achieving better geographic representation.

Other audiences, such as media, potential employers requiring a geo-literate workforce, university geographers, and decision-makers (such as legislators, state and county boards of education and local decision makers on infrastructure and land use) will be targeted for building the strength and breadth of the NCGA.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies & Indicators

GOALS OF THE NC GEOGRAPHIC NCGA:

- 1. IMPROVE GEO-LITERACY OF TEACHERS AND THEIR ABILITY TO TEACH GEOGRAPHY**
- 2. INCREASE PUBLIC AND POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING**
- 3. BUILD AN OPERATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE SUITABLE FOR CARRYING OUT THE MISSION OF THE NCGA**
- 4. BUILD SUSTAINED FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

Section Organization: Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Indicators

The following sections detail the 5-year goals of the NCGA, along with related objectives and strategies. Where possible, the NCGA has framed its strategies as SMART (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound.) Building the capacity of the NCGA is paramount. In many cases, measures and indicators are shown as what may be possible once the NCGA builds its organizational strength to take action.

Note on Priorities: While the NCGA will work on each goal and will continue its current programming, the highest organizational priority is to build its capacity and sustainability. Goals 3 and 4 focus on these initiatives and the accompanying discussion describes related organization structure, membership, and recruitments plans, as well as objectives regarding funding and staffing.

**GOAL 1:
IMPROVE GEO-LITERACY OF TEACHERS AND THEIR ABILITY TO TEACH GEOGRAPHY**

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	POSSIBLE METRICS/ INDICATORS
1. Design and offer professional development (PD) programs to enhance teacher skills and develop NCGA leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Design and initiate PD programs focused on implementing the NC Essential Standards in Social Studies and Common Core ELA and Math. (See “Foothold” Program discussion below). ○ Begin offering PD as locally-based programs in 1-2 locations and at high attendance conference sessions. ○ Design program and materials to reach pre-service teachers. ○ Identify and work with geography lab and partner schools to develop partner programs. ○ Hold leadership seminars and training for teachers, offering geography content, leadership training, and opportunities to become teacher-leaders in the NCGA and schools and districts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number and type of educational services and products offered to teachers. ○ Teacher feedback about content and applicability/ usefulness for students. ○ By 2017, 50% of teachers attending geo-literacy PD programs and workshops will incorporate geo-literacy skills in their classrooms. ○ Participation in leadership seminars and an increase in the number of trained teacher-leaders.
2. Improve communications and outreach by the NCGA to teachers.	Utilize web-based and social media tools, in conjunction with NCGA communications initiatives, to provide an easily accessed platform for teachers to get information and build engagement with the NCGA as a professional development and practical resource.	Annual 10% increase in the number of teachers accessing NCGA’s electronic resources; measured by website hits, social media interaction, Constant Contact reports, and Google Analytics.
3. Develop tools, materials, and lesson plans to support the NC Essential Standards and the Common Core Curriculum.	Develop a set of tools and materials (e.g., brochure, blueprint, case studies, webinars) which can be accessed and deployed electronically to assist teachers to infuse geographic learning into NC Essential Standards and Common Core across content areas.	Provide a method for teachers to give feedback on the materials they used. Develop one significant publication each year.

**ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION OF OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES to Support Goal 1:
IMPROVE GEO-LITERACY OF TEACHERS AND THEIR ABILITY TO TEACH GEOGRAPHY**

“FOOTHOLD” PROGRAM - PRIMARY FOCUS OF NCGA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHER SUPPORT

The implementation of *Common Core* ELA and Math and the *North Carolina Essential Standards* (social studies, science and other subjects) in 2012-13 creates both a demand and an opportunity for the NCGA. School districts have faced the challenge of preparing teachers to implement the new standards. There is ample opportunity at every grade level for creative teachers to build an effective geography component across the curriculum. The NCGA will meet this demand by providing tools and approaches for teachers to effectively implement the Essential Standards and Common Core standards.

The NCGA will offer a teacher preparation and professional development program. These “FOOTHOLD” offerings would later be augmented by additional content and support for a broad target audience of teachers in several disciplines throughout the state. Some examples of FOOTHOLD offerings are:

- **Geo-CORE initiative:** The NCGA Professional Development Committee will develop materials and professional development opportunities for teachers that link geographic topics and Common Core ELA.
- **Geo-STEM initiative:** The NCGA Professional Development Committee will develop materials and professional development opportunities for teachers that link geographic topics with STEM subjects.
- The NCGA will develop a program for new teachers that will use some of the content of the FOOTHOLD programming.

ADDITIONAL IDEAS

1. Increase the number of conference presentations (middle school, elementary school, social studies, and science conferences)
2. Increase number of NCGA events for teachers, such as the *Geo-Saturday* annual meeting.
3. Pre-service offerings at Social Studies Conference and at universities.
4. Redesign of the Summer Institutes to meet the need for leadership development, Common Core, and NC Essential Standards.

**GOAL 2:
INCREASE PUBLIC AND POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING**

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	POSSIBLE METRICS/ INDICATORS
<p>1. Build NCGA capacity and sustainability by increasing the visibility and awareness of the NCGA as the voice of geography and geo-literacy in NC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Form a Public Awareness and Outreach Committee to address public awareness, stakeholder outreach, partnership development, and communication. ○ Create an internship opportunity with a university marketing and communications department to assist with NCGA outreach and communication. ○ Recruit a paid or volunteer communications professional to work with the Public Awareness and Outreach Committee. ○ Brand and web-based media: build a website for NCGA; update NCGA logo and create a branding and messaging strategy; increase use of social media to promote greater interactivity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NCGA and Public Awareness/Outreach Committee can garner professional support, produce freshly branded promotional materials, and begin to attract active membership within 2 years. ○ Measure interaction through social media interaction, Constant Contact reports, and Google Analytics.
<p>2. Increase the geographic representation and scope of the NCGA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expand NCGA geographic representation in the state and leverage existing educational structures. Have at least one NCGA-trained “Teacher-Leader” in each of the state’s 115 school districts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Each state region will have a representative on one of the operating committees or the Steering Committee. ○ Roster of Teacher-Leaders across the state.
<p>3. Increase awareness of job opportunities in the field of geography.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Build new relationships with university departments of geography to enlist support for programs and outreach to teachers. ○ Develop materials that raise awareness of GIS, geospatial technologies, and STEM subjects that offer future employment opportunities. ○ Provide materials and displays that highlight geography for Career Day programs in NC schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of joint programs with other universities in the state. ○ Outreach and awareness materials developed for employment opportunities and career days.

**GOAL 2:
INCREASE PUBLIC AND POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING**

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	POSSIBLE METRICS/ INDICATORS
<p>4. Raise government officials' and decision makers' awareness of geography as an engine for economic development and job creation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meet with state legislators and government officials to discuss the role of geography in education and employment. ○ Develop an advocacy program that will seek to influence education decision-makers and advance geo-literacy and geography education. ○ Work with state organizations (such as the North Carolina Center for Geographic Information and Analysis) to create opportunities to discuss the role of geography with state legislators and government officials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Document meetings and contacts that members of the NCGA Public Awareness and Outreach Committee and designees have with key legislators and state officials. ○ Designate a Policy Point Person from the Steering Committee to coordinate advocacy initiatives.

**GOAL 3:
BUILD AN OPERATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE SUITABLE FOR CARRYING OUT THE MISSION OF THE NCGA**

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	POSSIBLE METRICS/ INDICATORS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deepen and broaden membership of educators and teacher leaders to forward the mission of NCGA. 2. Establish functional leadership committees to carry out the mission of the NCGA. 3. Develop active partnerships with business groups, public agencies, university programs, and other organizations. 4. Increase NCGA membership beyond classroom teachers. 5. Conduct an annual review of NCGA operations to assess the capabilities of the organization and recommend changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop the NCGA MAP Network as a new membership program to increase membership and involvement in the organization. (See MAP Network discussion A below) ○ Sponsor training programs to develop leadership and improve geo-literacy of NCGA members that will allow them to become leaders in the NCGA and provide geographic professional development to groups of teachers. ○ Under the direction of the Steering Committee, establish three new committees to develop programs and initiatives in the areas of Professional Development, Public Awareness and Outreach, and Development and Capacity Building. See Organization discussion B below) ○ Recruit diverse members from target audiences (university-level geographers, pre-service and early-career educators, potential employers, and government officials). ○ Build partnerships with other organizations that have missions related to geo-literacy and geography education and seek ways to collaborate on mutual projects. ○ Establish an annual Assessment Committee to review the programs of the NCGA and make recommendations for improving the effectiveness of programs and the organization. (See Annual Review/Assessment discussion C below) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual growth in NCGA general membership and participation in NCGA programs. ○ Leadership training programs held and new teacher-leaders added annually. ○ NCGA leadership and committees form and accomplish stated goals. ○ Annual growth in the number of members and partners from outside the ranks of K-12 teachers. ○ Document collaboration with partner groups holding an interest in geographic education and employment. ○ The annual Assessment Committee report and action taken by the Steering Committee on recommendations, as evidenced through annual Action Plans.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION OF OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES to Support Goal 4:

BUILD AN OPERATING INFRASTRUCTURE SUITABLE FOR CARRYING OUT THE MISSION OF THE NCGA

A. “NCGA MAP NETWORK” - STRATEGIC PLAN TO ENGAGE NCGA MEMBERSHIP AND CULTIVATE NCGA LEADERSHIP

The NCGA will develop and market the “Map Network” membership program.

M - MEMBER

A - ADVANCED MEMBER

P - PARTNER/TEACHER-LEADER

The future capacity of the NCGA to complete elements of its mission and remain viable and visible depends on a more concentrated effort for engaging and cultivating members and leaders.

The MAP Network will enroll new members in the NCGA through a combination of professional development offerings and through direct engagement in programming. Educators within the state can opt to become more active in the NCGA, thereby developing a new cadre of active membership and leaders for the NCGA.

1. The NCGA will make available a variety of opportunities for educators in the state to become Members at geography and social studies conferences, through newsletter and website media, and through notification at the school and district level. An improved database tool will be employed to capture member information for both enrollment and for communications and outreach.
2. Teachers and educators who participate actively in professional development programs, summer institutes and other programs of the NCGA will become Advanced Members. The NCGA will cultivate an active roster of Advanced Members who will have achieved a higher level of expertise in geo-literacy, teaching geography, and integrating geography into the curriculum.
3. From the group of Advanced Members, the NCGA will cultivate a group of Partners/Teacher-Leaders. Partners/Teacher-Leaders will number perhaps 50 - 100 educators and stakeholders throughout the state. They will participate as community leaders in public awareness and education; assist in the delivery of professional development programs and teacher support; coordinate and provide online training and professional development through the auspices of the NCGA; participate in updating timely and useful website content; and assist with other activities in leadership roles of the NCGA. It is expected that members of the NCGA Steering Committee will be drawn from the statewide group of Partners/Teacher-Leaders.

Through this actively cultivated network, the membership and leadership of the NCGA will stay refreshed and engaged. The NCGA will seek Advanced Members, and especially Partners/Teacher-Leaders, from K-12 teachers and stakeholders outside the classroom. It will emphasize public awareness and education about geo-literacy along with the primary mission of professional development for teachers.

B. NCGA ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

The NCGA will refresh its organization and leadership structure, borrowing from successful principles of other nonprofit and educational organizations. Two coordinators and a loosely structured steering committee now manage NCGA activities. It is clear to the planning group that the ability and capacity of the NCGA to undertake its professional development, public awareness, and capacity building goals will require a stronger and more active core working group.

The steps to engage and cultivate a more active and broad membership across the state through the MAP Network will yield results beginning in the 2nd year of the strategic plan. In the meantime, the current leadership group will take steps to augment its membership with new leaders, reach out for additional university participation, and engage stakeholders from outside the K-12 teacher community.

The management, leadership and work of the NCGA will be done through an organization that will include:

1. **COORDINATORS**—functioning in part like a Board of Directors and a fiscal agent.
2. **STEERING COMMITTEE**—functioning as a management group and Board of Directors. The Steering Committee will be geographically representative and will include K-12 teachers and possibly other stakeholders. Steering Committee members will chair working committees of the NCGA. Steering committee members likely will come from the group of Partners/Teacher-Leaders developed through the MAP program.
3. **STANDING COMMITTEES**—Core NCGA work will be completed in large part through several functional committees made up of Steering Committee members and others. It is anticipated that there will be at least three standing committees:
 - a. Professional Development
 - b. Public Awareness and Outreach
 - c. Development and Capacity Building
4. **ADVISORS** – The NCGA will call on and engage individuals to provide expertise in finance, fundraising, and marketing to advise members of the steering committee and standing committees.

C. ANNUAL REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT

The Coordinators and the Steering Committee will designate a committee to conduct an annual review of NCGA operations and programs to assess the capabilities of the organization and the effectiveness of its programs. They will share their assessment with the Steering Committee and make recommendations based on their evaluation. The Steering Committee may use the recommendations to make organizational adjustments and in developing a yearly action plan.

We anticipate that we will need to make some changes in our organizational structure, budget targets, and programming based on our yearly progress and new opportunities through collaboration and resource development. The annual review will be a useful tool in assessing progress and where we will need to make adjustments.

**GOAL 4:
BUILD SUSTAINED FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	POSSIBLE METRICS/ INDICATORS
<p>1. Secure grants to support basic operations and establish new programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish a Development and Capacity Building Committee and a Resource Development sub-committee to recommend a long-term financial plan and how it will be implemented. ○ Develop suitable resource materials aimed at potential donors to communicate the vision, mission and programs of the NCGA. ○ Build active partnerships with businesses, foundations, educational organizations and government agencies. ○ Develop and submit grant proposals to appropriate foundations, government granting organizations, community organizations, and/or businesses. ○ Explore corporate support and co-marketing opportunities that fit the culture of the NCGA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grow annual operating budget to \$100,000 by 2017. ○ Revenue targets established in the budgets are met each year. ○ Extent of revenue diversification: grant proposals are submitted and grants received from non-NGEF sources. ○ New programs are established, strengthening the funding value proposition for NCGA to meet the changing needs in geography education in the state.
<p>2. Establish an endowment in order to have consistent, sustainable funding to support basic NCGA operations and programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore the creation of a permanent endowment using government and/or private funds and in coordination with the NGEF. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development and Capacity Building Committee and Resource Development sub-committee meet with potential funders and report to the Steering Committee.

DISCUSSION: ORGANIZING THE NORTH CAROLINA GEOGRAPHIC NCGA FOR STRATEGY AND IMPACT

The Steering Committee will be made up of 12–15 people, mainly K-12 teachers. Other members will be the co-coordinators, university faculty, and other stakeholders.

The Steering Committee will oversee the work of three standing committees:

1. Professional Development
2. Public Awareness and Outreach
3. Development and Capacity Building

University membership and participation on the Steering Committee. Representation sources:

1. Education department – connection to social studies professors and others
2. Geography department – faculty and graduate students
3. Career placement and service learning departments
4. Community Colleges and University representation

K-12 educator steering recruitment. Representation sources:

1. Administrators
2. Central office representation from the Department of Public Instruction of RESA Network
3. Grade level representation from all elementary, middle school and high school (including charter and private schools.)
4. Regional geographic representation from across the state.

TARGETS OF NCGA MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

Positions	2012	2013	2014
Coordinators	2	2 or 3	3
Steering Committee Members	10	15	15
Members	500	750	1000
Advanced Members	100	200	300
Partners/Teacher-Leaders	20	40	60

The Functional Model below indicates the intended roles and responsibilities of each component of NCGA leadership, membership and professional support.

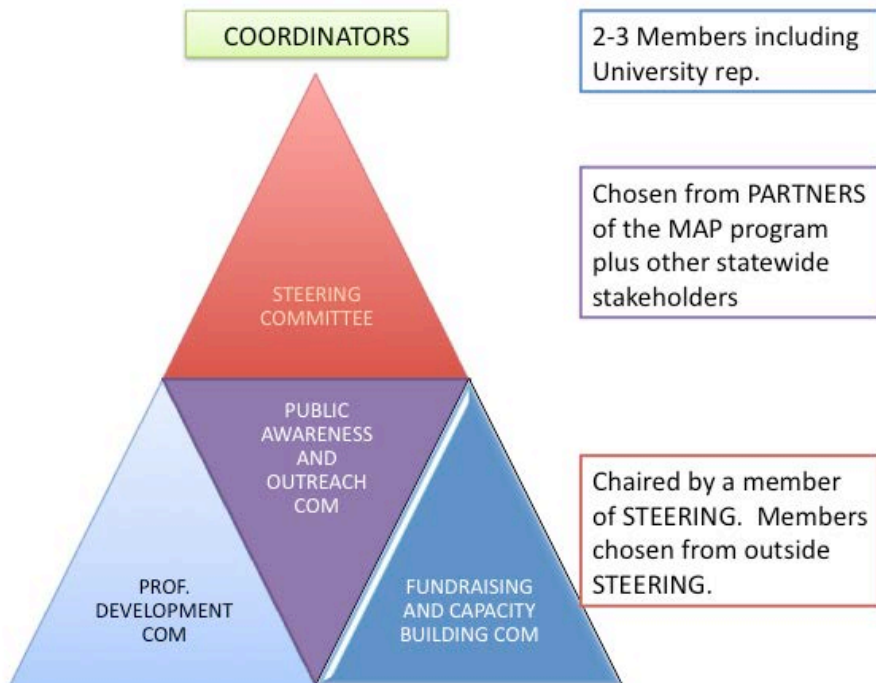
FUNCTION	COORDINATOR	STEERING COMM	PROGRAM COMM	ASSOC/PARTNER	OTHER
Strategy and Policy		X	A		
Administration	X				
Fiscal Agency/ Acctg	X				
State and National Lobbying	X	X			
Program Planning	A	X	X		
Program Implementation	A		X	X	
Communications and Marketing Strategy and Design	A	X	X		A
Communications and Marketing Implementation	A		X	X	A
Fundraising Strategy		X	X		A
Fundraising Implementation	A		X	A	A
Membership Management		X	A	A	
Leadership/ Steering Recruitment	X	X			

Key

X=Responsible

A=Assist

ALLIANCE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE



NCGA Budget Projections 2013-2017

The budget projections shown on the chart below are based on the proposed programs and initiatives outlined in Strategic Goals 1 – 4. Resource development and fundraising activities by the NCGA will be a priority as we move through the five years of the plan. We will be working with resource development professionals in developing our fundraising plan. The Development & Capacity Building and the Outreach & Public Awareness Committees will coordinate most of this work.

The budget projections are for the programs planned by the NCGA. We will be pursuing an endowment for long range funding for the NCGA. We realize this will take much planning and effort to achieve, so we decided not to include endowment revenue in this budget.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Revenue					
NGEF	\$ 42,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00
Foundation Grants	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
Corporate Grants		\$ 5,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
State Funds					
Donations					
Earned Income					
Other (rollover, etc.)	\$ 8,000.00				
Total Revenue	\$ 55,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 100,000.00
Expenses					
Program Cost	\$ 33,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
Management and Administration	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
Fundraising	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 7,000.00
Communications	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
Travel	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Other					
Total Expenses	\$ 55,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 100,000.00

Appendix A - Strategic Definitions

What is Geography?

Geography is much more than just a dot on the map. Geography encompasses many disciplines and it is an integral part of the broad area of the social studies. Geographic concepts include:

1. Spatial awareness of the earth, using maps and other graphics to explain and interpret distributions and patterns.
2. Physical regions of the earth and the impact of physical forces on the earth.
3. Diverse cultural patterns of people and the regions they inhabit.
4. People interact with their environment.
5. Interconnectedness of people, places, and regions.

Additionally, geography encompasses critical thinking skills that have problem-based, real world applications and 21st century skills incorporating technology such as GIS.

What does it mean to be geo-literate?

Geo-literacy is a term that describes the way a person views, understands, and interacts with the world. The geo-literate individual has an understanding of the dynamic physical and cultural forces that interact across the world. He or she has a spatial awareness of the world and is able to see and understand patterns, distributions, and interactions of the physical and human realms.

Being geo-literate equips a person to understand geo-political realities in order to make informed decisions about local, national, and world affairs. A geo-literate workforce will be able to compete successfully in the global marketplace. A perspective in geography offers a critically needed understanding of the relationships between human activity and the condition of the planet.

Implications of Geo-Literacy

How Geo-Literacy would change North Carolina

Geo-literacy action by people and individual citizens

- People are better able to understand the impact of current events
- Students and adults can better understand environmental and cultural differences and their comments reflect an understanding of these issues
- Citizens get involved with and interact with others who are from different cultures
- Citizens ask politicians intelligent questions and demand intelligent decisions related to land use, resources, and education about place
- Citizens are better able to discuss the pros and cons of economic development with a clear view of future impacts on land use and resources.
- The debate about jobs also focuses on “sustainable” employment as it relates to place and geography

Geo-literacy by educators

- Educators can better interpret media images (about places, cultures and land use).
- Educators have greater opportunities for travel, opening them to further learning and experience about geographic issues; “exploration” is modeled by educators.
- Educators can understand and communicate the concept of place, make differentiations and connections between places, integrate disciplines, and make better sense of the world through these connections.
- Teachers model cultural connections.
- Teachers take an active role in acknowledging and building geography and geo-literacy into K-12 education.

Geo-literacy actions taken by governments

- Government decisions clearly reflect an understanding of the impact of physical environments, culture, and place.
- Decisions reflect the efficient use of resources. Decisions are made at the appropriate scale (i.e., different factors are relevant globally and locally).

Appendix B - NCGA History

Formation Years - 1987-2000

The North Carolina Geographic Alliance was founded in 1987 as part of a national network established by the National Geographic Society (NGS) with the goal of promoting better teaching of geography. The NGS provided teacher training, a national professional development method, lesson plans, and supplies (such as maps) during the first several years of the NCGA.

After establishing a base of Teacher Consultants (TC), the NCGA built a statewide network that the NCGA used to pass along information to teachers for use in their classrooms. From 1987 until 2004, Appalachian State University (ASU) and East Carolina University (ECU) were centers for the NCGA, and university connections were critical. TCs formed the NCGA's initial core membership.

In 1988, NCGA held its first NCGA Summer Geography Institute (ASGI) at ECU, with 40 participants followed by an ASGI at ASU a year later with an equal number of participants. NCGA also held the first of several Geo-Saturday events that year. The summer institutes, which were held every year from 1988 through the late 1990s, focused on the fundamentals of geography education: The Five Themes of Geography, content in a variety of geographic topics, hands-on lessons, and professional development methods. Later ASGIs focused on environmental education, weather, climate, and mapping.

In 1993, NCGA experienced its first successful transition to new leadership, with a change in the coordinator at ASU (Jim Young). NCGA had a second leadership change in 2004 when Steve Pierce became a coordinator, marking a shift in the leadership away from university geographers.

During the 1990s the NCGA had a positive working relationship with the NC Department of Instruction (NCDPI) and had influence on curriculum revision during that time. In the *NC Standard Course of Study (SCOS)*, geography was one of the major strands in the social studies curriculum, largely due to input from the NCGA.

Program Expansion and Diversification - 2000-2012

Around the year 2000, the NCGA lost state funding. NCGA also lost the participation of ECU, and the geographic emphasis of the NCGA shifted from the east to central and western North Carolina. In 2005 there was an effort to increase geographic education through "My Wonderful World" launched by National Geographic.

Relying on yearly grants from the National Geographic Education Fund, the NCGA held ASGIs at ASU to train Teacher Consultants in 2008 and 2009. It was during these years that the NCGA began to increase its outreach to teachers through the annual Social Studies Conference sponsored by the NC Council for the Social Studies. Several NCGA Teacher Consultants (TCs) have served in leadership roles in the NCCSS.

Currently, the NCGA provides professional development for teachers through the Western Regional Education Service Alliance (WRESA) and the annual state social studies conference. Outreach efforts include distributing GAW materials, participation in World View symposia, and the Giant Traveling Map program.