

# ***Improving Student Achievement through Professional Development***

**Final Report to the State Board of Education and the  
State Superintendent**

**February 2003**

**North Carolina Professional Development Committee**

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## Executive Summary

The quality of classroom practices and school leadership can be significantly improved, even within current limited resources, with a strongly focused professional development initiative. Realigning existing resources, increasing oversight and formalizing a collaborative approach can significantly enhance the State's ability to provide equitable access to high-quality professional development opportunities for teachers and school leaders and thus result in improved student achievement. State-level leadership and support can enable the Office of the Governor, Education Cabinet, State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction, Center for School Leadership Development, colleges, universities, community colleges, regional education service alliances, local education agencies and professional organizations to become stronger collaborative partners for improving achievement for all students in North Carolina.

There is growing consensus among educational reformers that professional development for teachers and school administrators lies at the center of educational reform and instructional improvement.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Elmore, assisted by Deanna Burney. "Investing in Teacher Learning: Staff Development and Instructional Improvement in Community School District # 2, New York City. Report prepared for the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future and supported by CRPE, April, 1997.

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## Introduction

The demand for reform in public education includes the call for highly-qualified, caring teachers in every classroom. Mounting research, which has revealed the ineffectiveness of past professional development efforts, documents the relationship between sustained, on-the-job professional development and increased student achievement. In the current climate, the State and its partners (Office of the Governor, Education Cabinet, State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction, Center for School Leadership Development, colleges, universities, community colleges, regional education service alliances, local education agencies and professional organizations) have the responsibility for delivering high quality professional development to ensure that all educators have the knowledge, skills and attitudes to work with diverse student learning needs. In addition, while there will always be a place for dissemination of research findings and best practices, the focus of professional development must switch from a concentration on short-term, quick-fix information, dissemination to building content knowledge, teaching skills, change of work behaviors and maintenance of those skills and behaviors. The traditional isolated array of unrelated activities cannot support or bring about educational reform. Professional development must go beyond providing courses and workshops to earn continuing education units (CEUs) for license renewal. Instead, it must be seen as an ongoing process that builds deep content knowledge and related instructional practices. It must also be a valued expectation of teachers and school leaders. Professional development is also the primary vehicle for providing and retaining quality teachers who meet the core standards identified by the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission (NC PTSC). These standards can be found in Appendix 1, page 17. As supported by the proposed standards, the NC PTSC standards and [A Profession in Jeopardy](#), professional development is a fundamental, job-embedded requirement for teachers and school leaders.

The Department of Public Instruction and State Board of Education, in partnership with schools, districts, legislators, Center for School Leadership Development, regional education service alliances, community colleges, colleges and universities, are committed to providing quality teachers and other leaders in the school systems as well as effectively using limited State dollars. Thus, in July 2002, the State Board and State Superintendent moved to convene a Statewide committee to examine issues related to professional development in North Carolina. The Committee was specifically charged with developing

1. a clear vision and conceptual framework for professional development activities;
2. standards for professional development based on the vision and conceptual framework;
3. a rubric for evaluating the quality of professional development activities based on the standards;

4. specific topics to be covered and delivery strategies to be used for professional development;
5. an assessment of the resources and providers available to support the plan;
6. strategies and a timetable for implementing the plan;
7. policy changes that would be needed to implement the plan; and
8. a system for evaluating the impact of the plan on the quality of professional development.

This document addresses the outcomes of the Committee's work between September 4, 2002 and November 13, 2002. While a tremendous amount of work was accomplished during this time period, there is a great deal of work remaining to be done. This is addressed through recommendations reflecting the need for future action.

## **Preamble**

North Carolina has established goals challenging education professionals to lead in unprecedented efforts to become First in America in education by 2010. Meeting that goal will require an investment in the knowledge and skills of teachers and school leaders.

While research confirms high quality professional development as a powerful intervention, there are several critical attributes of successful offerings. These include, but are not limited to, clear goals, alignment with standards guiding content, process, context (the organization that must be in place for learning to occur) and the development of the vision and process for professional development.

"Professional development is only as good as the outcomes it pursues. High standards give educators a focus for their work. A system that sets high standards will seek powerful strategies for achieving them."<sup>2</sup> It is critical to ensure alignment among critical contributors -- schools, districts, state, legislators, State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction, Center for School Leadership Development, regional education service alliances, community colleges, colleges and universities. This alignment will serve as a means of ensuring that professional development results in an increased ability for teachers and school leaders to implement Statewide student standards successfully. In addition, teachers and school leaders will be able to serve the diverse range of students in North Carolina's classrooms.

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<sup>2</sup> Stephanie Hirsch, Deputy Executive Director. National Staff Development Council, Oxford, Ohio.

## Beliefs

The Professional Development Committee established the following beliefs as the foundation for its work.

### Professional development

- ❖ will result in improved student achievement.
- ❖ is based on standards for teacher quality developed by the NC PTSC that were adopted by the State Board of Education and adapted for teachers and school leaders at different levels of skill and knowledge.
- ❖ is embedded in educators' work.
- ❖ is an ongoing process that is sustained over time, not a single event.
- ❖ occurs within a learning community founded on a sense of collegiality and collaboration among teachers and school leaders.
- ❖ must be evaluated and modified based on whether or not it enhances teaching in the classroom and improves student achievement.
- ❖ is structured to include a system of accountability at every level for providing high quality learning experiences for teachers and school leaders.
- ❖ uses the resources and expertise of school staffs, Department of Public instruction, Center for School Leadership Development, regional education service alliances and consortia, faculty and staff of the State's community colleges, colleges and universities in a collaborative effort.
- ❖ benefits teachers, school leaders and students.
- ❖ is essential for everyone who affects student learning.
- ❖ is the responsibility of all teachers and school leaders.
- ❖ is a vital component of teacher retention.

## The Vision

Classroom practice and school leadership in North Carolina will be improved through tailored, intensive professional development that includes follow-up, support, practice, feedback and evaluation.<sup>3</sup> It is a collaborative effort that provides every student access to a competent, caring and highly-qualified teacher. All fiscal and human resources within the educational community support classroom instruction and interactions that prepare students to thrive and contribute to a complex, dynamic, global and multicultural society. Activities result in implementation of classroom practices that lead to improved student achievement.

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<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Hayes Mizell, Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. "What Key Reformers Have Learned About Reform." Presented at the National Staff Development Council conference and reported on in *Grantmakers for Education*, January 2000.

## Standards for Professional Development in North Carolina

The National Staff Development Council (NSDC) provides standards for professional development for all those who work with students and clearly articulates the intended outcome of all professional development should be to improve student achievement. The 12 standards are research-based and organized around three broad areas to support the research.

1. **Context standards** address the organization, system and culture in which the new learning will be implemented. They describe the structures that must be in place for successful learning to occur.
2. **Process** refers to the “how” of professional development. It describes the learning processes used in the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. Process standards address the use of data, evaluation and research.
3. **Content** refers to the “what” of professional development. Content decisions begin with an examination of what students must know and be able to do. Professional development content addresses the knowledge and skills that ensure all students are successful.

Context, process and content standards are all necessary to ensure that professional development improves student learning. If one dimension is ignored, the intended results are far less likely to be achieved.<sup>4</sup>

NSDC standards served as the beginning point for the development of standards for North Carolina. As a result of the Committee’s work, the standards and indicators in the following pages are proposed for North Carolina.

**“We can’t ask teachers to raise their standards without giving them the support and time they need to keep on learning.”<sup>5</sup>**

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<sup>4</sup> Adapted from *Standards for Staff Development: Revised*. National Staff Development Council. 2001, Oxford, Ohio.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Riley, US Secretary of Education. “The Challenges in America: A High Quality Teacher in Every Classroom.” Speech in South Carolina, June 24, 1999.

# Context Standards

## 1. Learning Communities

**Professional development that improves the learning of all students organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district.**

- a. Small learning teams may be composed of teachers, administrators, non-teaching staff, parents, representatives of community colleges and colleges and universities, regional education service alliances, policy makers and community members. The teams are a primary component of the staff development plan.
- b. All teachers are part of ongoing, school-based learning teams that meet as needed to plan instruction, examine student work, and/or solve problems.
- c. School faculties and learning teams focus on school and district goals and State professional development beliefs.

## 2. Leadership

**Professional development that improves the learning of all students requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement.**

- a. School calendars, daily schedules and incentive systems support professional development.
- b. Leaders recognize and advocate for professional development as a key strategy for supporting significant improvements in student achievement.
- c. Administrators and teachers develop knowledge and skills necessary to be leaders in professional development.
- d. Administrators model practices consistent with the professional development plan of the school, the LEA and the State.

## 3. Resources

**Professional development that improves the learning of all students requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration.**

- a. Collaboration among colleagues should be made available primarily during the school day.
- b. Significant fiscal resources are dedicated to professional development.
- c. A significant amount of time in educators' workday is used for professional development.

## Process Standards

### 4. Data-Driven

**Professional development that improves the learning of all students uses disaggregated student data<sup>6</sup> to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress and help sustain continuous improvement.**

- a. Data on student learning provide focus of staff development efforts.
- b. Teachers gather evidence of improvements in student learning in their classrooms to determine the effects of their professional development on their students.
- c. Data are disaggregated to ensure equitable treatment of all subgroups of students.
- d. Professional development is aligned with the school improvement plan and supported by school data.
- e. Professional development is focused on helping teachers and school leaders access, understand and use a variety of data to improve learning for all students.

### 5. Evaluation

**Professional development that improves the learning of all students uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact.**

- a. Evidence is used to improve the quality of professional development (formative evaluation).
- b. Evidence is used to determine whether professional development achieved its intended outcomes (summative evaluation).
- c. The evaluation of professional development consistently includes all of the following: qualitative and quantitative data indicating knowledge gained by participants, level of implementation and improvement in student learning.

### 6. Research-Based

**Professional development that improves the learning of all students prepares educators to apply research to decision making.**

- a. Professional development prepares educators to be skillful users of educational research and technology.
- b. Researchers and practitioners methodically collaborate to align strategic priorities of the State Board of Education with improvement strategies.
- c. Pilot studies and action research are used when appropriate to test the effectiveness of new approaches when research is contradictory or does not exist.

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<sup>6</sup> "Data" include classroom, school, district, State and national sources.

## 7. Design

**Professional development that improves the learning of all students uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal.**

- a. Teachers and school leaders participate in a variety of strategies to achieve professional development goals that focus on student learning.
- b. Technology supports educators' adult learning styles.
- c. Professional development is differentiated for teachers and school leaders based on individualized plans for personal and professional growth.
- d. Major change initiatives are supported by a variety of timely follow up activities.<sup>7</sup>

## 8. Learning

**Professional development that improves the learning of all students applies knowledge about human learning and change.**

- a. Professional development demonstrates learning methods that mirror, as closely as possible, the methods participants are expected to use with their students.
- b. Professional development offers opportunities to practice new skills and receive feedback on the performance of those skills.
- c. Professional development leaders use feedback about professional development initiatives to design interventions and follow-up strategies.

## 9. Collaboration

**Professional development that improves the learning of all students provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate.**

- a. Professional development prepares educators to be skillful members of various stakeholders' groups<sup>8</sup>
- b. Professional development provides educators with opportunities and skills necessary to manage conflict and challenges productively.
- c. Professional development prepares educators to use technology to collaborate.
- d. Professional development occurs within a broad-based learning community and enhances educators' skills to use online tools and resources to advance knowledge.

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<sup>7</sup> Examples of appropriate follow up activities include reflection, classroom application, assessment of student work, coaching, etc.

<sup>8</sup> Examples of stakeholder groups include school improvement teams, grade-level teams, district and State groups, community groups, youth-serving organizations and research teams.

## Content Standards

### 10. Equity

**Professional development that improves the learning of all students prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students; create safe, orderly, caring and supportive learning environments and hold high expectations for their academic achievement.**

- a. Educators participate in cultural diversity training and create school-wide practices that convey respect for all students, their families and their cultural backgrounds.
- b. Professional development prepares educators to establish learning environments that communicate high expectations for the academic achievement of all students.
- c. Educators learn how to adjust instruction and assessments to match the learning requirements of individual students.

### 11. Quality Teaching

**Professional development that improves the learning of all students deepens educators' knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately.**

- a. Professional development offers many opportunities for teachers to develop deep knowledge of their content.
- b. Professional development expands teachers' instructional methods appropriate to specific content areas.
- c. Professional development addresses a variety of classroom assessment tools that are integrated into the instructional process and allow teachers to regularly monitor gains in all student learning.

### 12. Family Involvement

**Professional development that improves the learning of all students provides teachers and school leaders with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately.**

- a. Professional development prepares leaders to build consensus among educators and community members concerning the overall mission and goals for professional development.
- b. Professional development prepares educators to establish positive relationships with families to support student learning.
- c. Professional development enables educators to communicate with families and the community through various means, including technology.

## The Current Status of Professional Development

The current process and system for delivering professional development in North Carolina is primarily a decentralized one with many decisions being made in individual schools. Few schools have a sequential approach to professional development that is geared to the changing needs of a teacher over time. Too much staff development is focused on things that have little, if any, measurable impact on the classroom (team building, how to make site-based decisions, etc.).<sup>9</sup>

The State lacks a process through which school staff and leaders can be confident that professional development secured through providers, including for-profit groups, is aligned with and enhances the goals, philosophies and instructional strategies defined in the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study*.

North Carolina's current system is inadequate for providing the systemic support necessary to improve teaching, learning and school leadership and ensuring that North Carolina is First in America by 2010. Program administration lacks coherent alignment with a Statewide framework of the Strategic Priorities due to a lack of leadership and guidance. Legislative action during the 1990's required the State Board of Education to define the critical functions of DPI. Due to decreased staff, professional development was excluded as a critical function. There is an ill-defined process for gaining access to information related to professional development and standards. Consequently, professional development is fragmented, at best.

Several of the State's largest LEAs have the in-house expertise and staff to meet local professional development needs. However, the small, poor school systems do not have these resources and lack adequate, affordable professional development services. Although there is a State requirement that schools develop a professional development plan that aligns with the school improvement plan, there is currently no mechanism to ensure that this occurs. In addition, there are extensive variations in developing Individual Growth Plans for teachers and school leaders across the State. Consequently, resources oftentimes do not align with school and staff needs. It is unlikely that the current system will assist schools and LEAs in complying with the professional development requirements of No Child Left Behind. See Appendix 2, page 24.

While there is a better-than-ever cooperative spirit with professional organizations, Center for School Leadership Development, community colleges, colleges and universities, there is a void in the stakeholders working collaboratively to examine, prioritize and offer professional development needs for the State. Many superior programs are offered across the State, but there is

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<sup>9</sup> *The Things That Matter: Guiding Principles for Strengthening the System of Funding North Carolina's Public Schools*. The Public School Forum of North Carolina. Raleigh, NC.

a significant lack of connectivity among them. Through collaborative partnerships among these stakeholders, student achievement and school leadership in North Carolina can and will improve.

## Needed Improvements in Professional Development

There are several critical areas for which the State must assume leadership for professional development. The Education Cabinet, Office of the Governor, Department of Public Instruction, State Board of Education, institutions of higher education, regional education service alliances and professional organizations must work collaboratively to address these needs in order for classroom practices and school leadership to focus clearly on improving student achievement.

1. The State needs clear vision, standards, framework and priorities for professional development in North Carolina. The State must assume leadership in assuring that the framework is data-driven.
2. The State needs a means to facilitate the sharing of information regarding professional development opportunities and an explanation of how they align with the State's priorities.
3. There is a need to assist many LEAs with accessing and implementing standards for high-quality professional development. This will result in LEAs generating adequate return on their investments; improved student achievement in return for participation in professional development.
4. There is a need to ensure that professional development, regardless of the service provider, is of high quality and is aligned with the State Board of Education's Strategic Priorities and the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* and that will enhance compliance with No Child Left Behind. The priorities must be based on a Statewide needs assessment to determine which opportunities will have the most significant impact on improving student achievement
5. LEAs need to use a clearly-defined improvement process, developed by the State, to develop and implement a comprehensive, high-quality professional development program that leads to in-depth content knowledge, skill in pedagogical methodologies and the disposition to implement the new learning. The new learning must be applied to classroom practice and to school leadership. Work from Kansas in this area can assist North Carolina in developing this process. See Appendix 3, page 26.
6. Schools and school systems need to "see" what a high quality professional development program looks like (as opposed to a series of isolated events). This program would then serve as a model for how professional development should be delivered Statewide.
7. Education-related research conducted by colleges and universities needs to be directly related to best practices that align with the *North Carolina*

*Standard Course of Study*, school and LEA needs. With increasing emphasis on research-based strategies for improving knowledge, skills and dispositions as required in No Child Left Behind, this is a role of increasing urgency.

8. State and local resources must be used effectively to ensure that professional development providers conduct activities that result in improved classroom practices, match the philosophy and approach of the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* and meet the standards for high quality professional development.
9. The State needs a clear and unified authority over professional development opportunities.
10. Authority over resource allocation at the local level must be established to ensure equity.
11. The State must address the variations that currently exist in school improvement plans, Individual Growth Plans and professional development plans.
12. The State must provide consistent incentives for Schools of Education to provide continuing education programs for educators, either regionally or Statewide. Services must be available beyond for-credit, degree-related courses.
13. The Center for School Leadership Development needs a common, shared mission (and central authority to develop such a mission) among the existing programs.
14. All professional development opportunities must be evaluated to determine their impact on student achievement.

## Recommendations for Improving Student Achievement through Professional Development

1. Establish a clearinghouse for professional development that serves as a resource and referral service for schools and LEAs. The clearinghouse must be comprehensive in its effort to include all professional development provided with State funding. This clearinghouse would provide endorsements of State-approved service providers, criteria for selecting service providers, evaluation procedures and guidelines for contract development. Such criteria must be aligned with State and local LEA goals. The Clearinghouse would also maintain a count of participants in professional development activities. The use of the clearinghouse by the LEAs would not be mandated, but would be voluntary and service oriented. Mandate that the State Clearinghouse maintain resources that are sharable throughout the State (not restricted to geographical areas) to ensure Statewide equity.
2. Encourage LEAs to align their professional development initiatives and plan with State and LEA education goals and objectives. These should be indicated on the professional development component of the school improvement plan.
3. Provide an evaluation process, including the Rubric for LEA/School Assessment found in Appendix 4, page 31. The rubric is aligned with the 12 professional development standards proposed by the North Carolina Professional Development Committee.
4. Delete the current three units of technology CEUs required for licensure renewal. Implement a “...**required, but flexible plan**...” of renewal credit based on levels of teaching expertise, from beginner to accomplished, in the areas of: content knowledge, content pedagogy, assessment, diverse learners, leadership, technology and others.<sup>10</sup>
5. Identify the body responsible for oversight of professional development in North Carolina and for the implementation of these recommendations.
6. Develop a handbook for professional development to provide guidelines for quality professional development and recommendations to align State requirements, processes and resources for implementation. The handbook should include a process for continuous improvement in professional development in North Carolina, similar to the Kansas model. See Appendix 3, page 28.

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<sup>10</sup> This recommendation is taken from the work of the North Carolina Commission on Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps.

7. Continuously review the impact of professional development as it relates to increased student achievement for all students.
8. Implement a random audit of the activities described in LEA professional development/school improvement plans to include measurement of the impact on increased student achievement for all students.
9. Establish a senior-level office within the Department of Public Instruction to direct a Statewide professional development initiative with appropriate authority and resources. Mandate that the office be responsible for developing the needs-based framework and for maintaining and serving as staff to the Clearinghouse of professional development providers (indexed based on the Statewide needs assessment). The Office would also be responsible for maintaining resource materials such as information on effective teaching strategies.
10. Establish area collaboratives for professional development to support the delivery of high quality professional development at the school level. Coordinate program priorities that are directed to specific local needs through local educators.
11. Supplement existing resources with Raleigh-based and current field-based staff from the Department of Public Instruction, as determined by the needs of the respective collaboratives.
12. Base area collaboratives convenient to the campuses of the State's colleges, universities or community colleges for convenient accessibility by schools and LEAs to expedite the sharing of resources and expertise.
13. Study and identify various regulatory, legal or institutional barriers that impair the optimally productive system of professional development in North Carolina.
14. Review the findings of the General Assembly's professional development study and implement recommendations as appropriate.

## Resources

A Profession in Jeopardy. Public School Forum of North Carolina. Raleigh, NC. 1996.

Assessing Impact: Evaluating Staff Development. Joellen Killion, National Staff Development Council. Oxford, Ohio. 2002.

Designing Powerful Professional Development for Teachers and Principals. Dennis Sparks, National Staff Development Council. Oxford, Ohio. 2002.

Draft Guidelines for Quality Professional Development for Kansas Educators. Kansas State Department of Education and the Kansas Learning-First Alliance. Kansas, April 15, 2002.

*Effective Staff Development: NSDC Standards for Staff Development.* Presentation by Patricia Roy to the North Carolina Professional Development Committee on September 4, 2002. Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Every Child's Teacher in North Carolina. North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission, Raleigh, North Carolina. 1999.

National Staff Development Council's Standards for Staff Development, Revised. National Staff Development Council, Oxford, Ohio. 2001.

North Carolina Commission of Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps. Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, North Carolina.

*Requirements for Professional Development Under Title I of No Child Left Behind.* Presentation by William F. McGrady to the North Carolina Professional Development Committee on September 17, 2002. Durham Staff Development Center, Durham, North Carolina.

*Requirements for Professional Development Under Title I of No Child Left Behind.* Presentation by Michael Kestner to the North Carolina Professional Development Committee on September 17, 2002. Durham Staff Development Center, Durham, North Carolina.

The Things That Matter: Guiding Principles for Strengthening the System of Funding in North Carolina's Public Schools. The Public School Forum of North Carolina, Raleigh, NC.

## **Appendices**

## Appendix 1

### North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission Core Standards for Teachers

These six Core Standards for Teachers were developed by the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission. The Core Standards were presented to and adopted by the State Board of Education in November, 1999. They are intended for use by teachers, administrators, parents, policy makers, and by others interested in education and teacher quality in North Carolina.

#### **Core Standard 1: Teachers know the content they teach.**

- 1. Teachers have a broad knowledge of content.** Teachers serve as role models of educated citizens. To teachers, the world is a fascinating place. They pass on to their students a high level of interest in and curiosity about all aspects of knowledge. Teachers are dedicated to learning and knowing in the same way an athlete is dedicated to physical fitness or an orchestra conductor is dedicated to music. All teachers have a background in basic subject areas; the arts, humanities, mathematics, and sciences. They have broad understanding of the major cultures, religions, geography, political systems, philosophies and economic systems by which people organize their lives. Teachers know and appreciate the great creative works of world cultures.
- 2. Teachers know the content appropriate to their teaching specialty.** Some teachers, often teachers of young children, are generalists. Because they teach everything, generalists have a broad knowledge of every discipline. They are prepared to direct a child's natural curiosity into an interest in learning about science, mathematics, the arts and social sciences. Some teachers are specialists in a specific subject. Specialists know their subjects considerably beyond the content they are expected to teach. This allows them to bring richness and depth of understanding to their classrooms, and to work well with students who wish to go beyond the curriculum. They understand how technological advances affect their discipline. Specialists also have a strong background in the subjects related to their specialty area. Algebra teachers know calculus and geometry, physical science teachers know biology and chemistry. In addition to knowledge of content, specialist teachers know how professionals in their field think and analyze the world.
- 3. Teachers understand the ways in which their teaching area connects to the broad curriculum.** Teachers know how their teaching specialty connects

to the general curriculum. In order to deepen understanding and make learning more interesting for students, teachers help students understand how different subjects are related to each other. Teachers know the links between the grade or subject they teach and what comes before and after their course or grade.

4. **Teachers know relevant applications of the content they teach.** Students often ask their teachers, "What difference does this make?" "Why does this matter?" Teachers have the answers to these questions. They understand ways in which the subjects they teach have an impact on the world in which we live.

### **Core Standard II: Teachers know how to teach students.**

5. **Teachers know the ways in which learning takes place.** They know the appropriate levels of intellectual, physical, social and emotional development of the students they teach. Teachers in elementary schools know how young children think, and teachers in secondary schools understand adolescents. Even within age and grade levels, however, there is a wide scope of expected skills and behaviors. Teachers design their instruction for the range of students that they teach. Teachers recognize when students think and act outside of the expected range and when to refer such students to specialists for evaluation.
6. **Teachers use a variety of methods to teach students.** There is no single way to teach all of the students all of the time. Teachers choose the methods and techniques that are successful in helping a specific class or a specific student learn on a specific day. This may be direct, teacher-centered instruction, it may be small group projects, or it may be student-directed discovery. What is appropriate for one class may not work for another. To teach all students successfully, teachers must have command of a wide range of techniques.
7. **Teachers are expert communicators.** Teachers express their thoughts and ideas in ways that are clearly understood by their students. Teachers also understand that communication is a two-way process. They are expert listeners and interpreters of what students mean. Teachers are skilled at distinguishing the difference between a student's expression of deep anger or mild annoyance, between expressions of true fear or of brief anxiety and between a student who is momentarily frustrated and one who is seriously discouraged.
8. **Teachers have strong and current technology skills.** Teachers are skilled at using technology to teach. They know when and how to use current educational technology, and they understand the most appropriate type and level of technology to use to maximize student learning.

9. **Teachers plan instruction that is appropriate for the students they teach.** Teachers develop short and long-range plans for their instruction. These plans reflect understanding of how students learn and allow for students who learn at a faster or slower pace than others to be successful and engaged in learning. Teachers understand that plans are general guidelines and must be constantly monitored and modified to enhance the learning that is occurring in the classroom.
10. **Teachers use a variety of methods to assess what students have learned.** Teachers make teaching decisions based on what individual and groups of students know and understand. Gathering and interpreting data about what students know and are able to do is the basis for making good teaching decisions. Teachers use formal tests, responses to quizzes, evaluation of class assignments, student performances and projects and standardized achievement tests to understand what students know. Teachers also evaluate informal measures of student understanding, such as the questions asked in class and the level of student enthusiasm.
11. **Teachers teach thinking and problem solving skills.** Students need to know how to use their knowledge. Teachers help students evaluate information, consider alternatives and make wise choices. For example, teachers encourage students to synthesize knowledge, draw conclusions, and ask questions. Teachers encourage their students to think creatively and critically.
12. **Teachers help students develop skills of teamwork, leadership and cooperation in their classrooms and schools.** Surveys of employers identify teamwork and the ability to work with others as highly important workplace skills. Our neighborhoods and communities also require these skills for a high quality of life. There is no better place to teach teamwork and cooperation than in schools where children from diverse backgrounds gather daily. Teachers take advantage of this opportunity to teach students how to live and work together productively and in a positive manner.
13. **Teachers instill a love of learning and self-confidence based on achievement.** Successful adults in the 21st century will have both the skills and the desire to continue learning and growing long after they leave formal education. They will hold high personal standards for achievement, appreciate and enjoy learning, and have confidence in their abilities. Skilled teachers lay the groundwork for these skills and attitudes during the years students are in school. They observe and nurture hidden talents and skills, and encourage young people to make decisions and follow a path that will use these talents. Teachers know and teach the importance of cooperation and working together in order for students to be successful both in school and in their adult lives.

**14. Teachers align their instruction with the required curriculum.** Teachers know the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* and local curriculum framework. They are familiar with the content standards developed by professional organizations in their specialty areas. Teachers develop and apply strategies to make this curriculum significant to the students they teach. Teachers are skilled at meeting the requirements of the entire curriculum, while recognizing and focusing on those concepts in the curriculum which are fundamental to student understanding. Among the basic components of the curriculum are reading, communicating orally and using mathematics. Teachers know how to develop literacy, communication and mathematical skills appropriate to their specialty areas. They know how to assess a student's level of competence in these fundamentals, to recognize problems and to help the student find assistance and resources when necessary.

**Core Standard III: Teachers are successful in teaching a diverse population of students.**

**15. Teachers demonstrate their belief that diversity in the classroom, in the school, and in the society is a strength.** Teachers show their commitment to this belief by their daily conduct. They do not allow subtle or overt intolerance or bigotry in their classrooms or schools, and they actively select materials and develop lessons that counteract stereotypes.

**16. Teachers treat students as individuals.** Teachers maintain high expectations for children of all backgrounds. Teachers avoid stereotypes or jumping to conclusions about individual children based on race and ethnicity, gender, language, family economic level, or any of the other ways in which our society defines groups.

**17. Teachers know and respect the influence of race, ethnicity, gender, religion and other aspects of culture on a child's development and personality.** Teachers have and actively seek knowledge of others through reading, personal interaction and direct experience. They strive to understand how an individual child's culture and background influence his or her school performance. In schools and communities where population diversity is limited, teachers find ways to acquaint children with the wide variety of people who make up our society and world.

**18. Teachers adapt their teaching for the benefit of students with special needs.** Teachers make inclusion of special needs students in the regular classroom a positive experience for each student in the class. Teachers collaborate with the range of support specialists to help them meet the needs of all students.

**19. Teachers work collaboratively with the families and significant adults in the lives of their students.** Teachers recognize that educating children is a

shared responsibility involving the school, parents, and the larger community. Teachers reach out beyond the school to promote trust and understanding and build partnerships with all segments of the school community. Teachers overcome obstacles that stand in the way of effective family and community.

**Core Standard IV: Teachers are leaders.**

20. **Teachers lead in their classrooms.** Teachers exercise leadership by taking personal responsibility for the progress of all students. They organize and motivate their students to act in ways that meet the needs of both the individual student and the class as a whole. In their classrooms, teachers maximize efficiency, maintain discipline and morale, promote teamwork, plan, communicate, focus on results, evaluate progress and make constant adjustments.
21. **Teachers lead in the school.** Teachers assume additional responsibility in the schools. They help develop school goals and strategies, mentor new teachers, improve the effectiveness of their departments or grade levels and work with their school improvement committees to improve student achievement. Teachers frequently lead extra-curricular activities, such as coaching, sponsoring student clubs, editing the yearbook, directing the school musical, or organizing field trips.
22. **Teachers lead in advocating for schools and children.** Teachers are informed about policy issues, and they initiate or assist in implementing initiatives to improve the education of children. They contribute to discussions of education and social policy affecting children. Teachers are respected members of the community who play key roles in helping improve communication and collaboration between the members of the community and educators in the school and the school system.
23. **Teachers function effectively in a complex, dynamic environment.** Teachers understand that many factors beyond their control affect the classroom and school environment, and they find ways for students to learn despite everything that happens. They realize that everything that happens in the community, between individual students, with families, or with colleagues has an impact in the classroom. Teachers work to minimize disruptions in student learning and take advantage of unexpected events to teach students. They are resourceful and flexible in meeting the demands of their profession, and are skilled at facilitating consensus and mediating conflict. Teachers are enthusiastic about teaching even when faced with obstacles and frustrations.
24. **Teachers meet high ethical standards of practice.** Teachers keep the needs of students at the center of their professional thoughts and actions. They live up to universal ethical principles of honesty, truthfulness, integrity, fair treatment, and respect for others. Teachers meet ethical standards for

competent practice, for example, by only accepting a teaching assignment for which they are qualified and adhering to the confidentiality procedures for student testing. Teachers maintain a clear distinction between personal values and professional ethics. Teachers have opinions and beliefs, but they do not impose their personal religious, political, or social values on students. Teachers recognize that families are the primary shapers of children's values, and they treat any conflict between school and family values with great caution and care.

25. **Teachers support the teaching profession.** Teachers believe in the teaching profession. They advocate for teacher professionalism, for school conditions that encourage teaching and learning and for decision-making structures that take advantage of the expertise of teachers. Teachers promote professional growth and assist their colleagues in improving their teaching skills. They support and assist new teachers, either formally as mentors or informally as colleagues. They strive to create learning communities in their schools and participate in their professional organizations. Teachers encourage talented students to consider becoming teachers, and they work with teacher cadet and internship programs.

**Core Standard V: Teachers are reflective about their practice.**

26. **Teachers analyze the results of teaching.** Teachers think systematically about what happens in their classrooms and schools, why it happens and what can be done to improve student achievement. They search in their own practice for reasons why a student has difficulty with comprehending a reading passage, or why one class has great success in learning a math concept. Teachers collect and use data on student performance to analyze and improve school and classroom effectiveness.
27. **Teachers collaborate with their colleagues.** Teachers value and learn from the expertise of other educators. They offer and accept support, encouragement, and advice. Teachers assume responsibility for the effectiveness of their colleagues and of the entire school. Teachers observe and learn from professionals in other schools and communities. They collect the best ideas and practices to use in their own schools.
28. **Teachers use research in their classrooms.** Teachers study educational literature and can interpret research and apply it in their classrooms and schools. They discuss research-based books and articles, either in study groups or more informally. Teachers conduct action research in their classrooms and schools to determine the most effective teaching strategies.
29. **Teachers continue to grow professionally.** Teachers recognize that life-long learning is an integral part of their profession. They know they can

always be more effective. Teachers are constantly looking for new and better ways to teach.

**Core Standard VI. Teachers respect and care about students.**

30. **Teachers enjoy spending time in the company of children and young adults.** Teachers find young people interesting and enjoy interacting with them. Teachers understand that young people make mistakes and act in ways that are difficult to understand, but that such behavior is part of growing up. Teachers find pleasure and satisfaction in helping children develop into responsible adults.
31. **Teachers learn all they can about each of their students.** Teachers know about each child's interests, hobbies and activities. Teachers find out what is special about each student and use this knowledge to help students grow and develop self-confidence and a sense of self-worth.
32. **Teachers maintain the dignity of each student.** Teachers teach students to respect themselves, other students and adults in the school. They establish a respectful, caring classroom atmosphere where every student feels worthy and valued. Even when it is necessary to correct student behavior, it is done in ways that maintain the dignity of the student.
33. **Teachers express pride in their students' accomplishments.** Teachers encourage students to set and achieve high standards for themselves by praising their accomplishments and celebrating their successes.

## Appendix 2

### Professional Development Requirements in No Child Left Behind

Under the requirements in Title II of No Child Left Behind, professional development must

- improve and increase teachers' knowledge of the academic subject;
- improve classroom management skills;
- be of high-quality, sustained, intensive and classroom-focused;
- be aligned to State academic content standards;
- advance teacher understanding of effective instructional strategies; and
- be based on scientifically-based research; research that includes rigorous data analysis, provides reliable and valid data and is accepted by peer-reviewed journal.

The focus of the Title II Program is to ensure that professional development is

- for all core academic subjects,
- targeted to attracting and retaining qualified teachers,
- evaluated and accountable for effectiveness of professional development activities,
- targeted to schools of greatest needs for assistance,
- designed to improve the knowledge of teachers and principals concerning effective instructional practices,
- designed to improve the knowledge of teachers and principals concerning one or more core academic subjects,
- designed to improve the knowledge of teachers and principals concerning integration of technology,
- designed to support and not supplant the funds that would otherwise be used for activities authorized under this program,
- designed to help eliminate the achievement gap for minority and low-income students,
- targeted to schools with lowest proportion of highly-qualified teachers,
- targeted to schools with largest average class size,
- targeted to schools identified for school improvement,
- designed to enable teachers to address the needs of students with different learning styles,
- designed to enable teachers to improve student behavior,
- designed to enable teachers to involve parents in their children's education,
- designed to enable teachers to use data and assessments to improve instruction,

- designed to increase the number of highly-qualified teachers,
- designed to recruit and retain highly-qualified teachers,
- designed to reduce class size (especially in lower grades),
- based on scientifically-based research,
- expected to improve student achievement,
- aligned to State academic content standards,
- coordinated with other federal, State and local programs, and
- developed collaboratively.

Legislation requires employing professional development that has been found, through **scientifically-based research**, to significantly improve the academic achievement of participants' students

**OR**

has been found to have **strong evidence** that it will significantly improve the academic achievement of participants' students

## **Scientifically-Based Research**

The criteria for scientifically-based research are

- use of systemic, empirical methods,
- subject to rigorous data analyses,
- use of reliable and valid data collection,
- demonstrates a strong research design, and
- has detailed results that allow for replication.

## **Strong Evidence**

Strong evidence that professional development will significantly improve academic achievement demonstrates a

- combination of high quality studies (less rigorous standard than scientifically-based research),
- positive effect on student achievement, and
- is relevant, significant and consistent.

## **What No Child Left Behind Says About Professional Development<sup>11</sup>**

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<sup>11</sup> *Working Toward Excellence: A Newsletter of the Alabama Best Practices Center*. Volume 2, Number 4, Fall, 2002. p 7.

The definition of professional development is defined in Title IX, Part A, Section 9101 of No Child Left Behind. This legislation recognizes the importance of professional development in assuring that every child will have a “highly qualified” teacher by the end of the 2005-06 school year.

A. Professional development includes activities that

1. improve and increase teachers’ knowledge of the academic subjects the teachers teach, and enable teachers to become highly qualified;
2. are an integral part of broad schoolwide and districtwide educational improvement plans;
3. give teachers, principals and administrators the knowledge and skills to provide students with the opportunity to meet challenging State academic content standards and student achievement standards;
4. improve classroom management skills;
5. are high quality, sustained, intensive and classroom focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction and the teacher’s performance in the classroom;
6. are not one-day or short-term workshops or conferences;
7. support the recruiting, hiring and training of highly qualified teachers, including teachers who become highly qualified through State and local alternative routes to certification;
8. advance teacher understanding of effective instructional strategies that are
  - a. based on scientifically based research, and
  - b. strategies for improving student academic achievement or substantially increasing the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers; and are directly related to State academic content standards, student achievement standards and assessments; and the curricula and programs tied to the standards.
9. are developed with extensive participation of teachers, principals, parents and administrators of schools to be served under this Act;
10. are designed to give teachers of limited English proficient children, and other teachers and instructional staff, the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and appropriate language and academic support to those children, including the appropriate use of curricula and assessments;

11. to the extent appropriate, provide training for teachers and principals in the use of technology so that technology and technology applications are effectively used in the classroom to improve teaching and learning in the curricula and core academic subjects in which the teachers teach;
12. as a whole, are regularly evaluated for their impact on increased teacher effectiveness and improved student academic achievement, with the findings of the evaluations used to improve the quality of professional development;
13. provide instruction in methods of teaching children with special needs;
14. include instruction in the use of data and assessments to inform and instruct classroom practice; and
15. include instruction in ways that teachers, principals, pupil services personnel and school administrators may work more effectively with parents.

B. Professional development may include activities that

1. involve the forming of partnerships with institutions of higher education to establish school-based teacher training programs that provide prospective teachers and beginning teachers with an opportunity to work under the guidance of experienced teachers and college faculty;
2. create programs to enable paraprofessionals (assisting teachers employed by a local education agency receiving assistance under Part A of Title I) to obtain education necessary for those paraprofessionals to become certified and licensed teachers; and
3. provide follow-up training to teachers who have participated in activities described in subparagraph (A) or another clause of this subparagraph that are designed to ensure that the knowledge and skills learned by the teachers are implemented in the classroom.

## Appendix 3

### The Kansas Model for Continuous Improvement:<sup>12</sup> A Synopsis

*It [professional development] is an ongoing invention rather than a canned program, and it is collaborative because teachers and principals need to consider together how they can improve the quality of the work they give students and what the teachers and principals need to learn in order to do that.*

Quoted by Phillip Schlechty from  
“The Educator Examined.” Dennis Sparks  
The Journal of Staff Development. 19 (3), p. 38-42 (Summer, 1998).

The following steps are necessary for the school to complete a results-based staff development plan.

#### 1. **Select a planning team.**

The professional development planning team may have the same membership as the school improvement/leadership team. After the team is in place, it is important to identify the roles of individual members. These roles may include serving as chairs or a variety of subcommittees. These subcommittees may be small groups that meet according to content areas such as reading and mathematics or according to grade levels. One person may need to be responsible for scheduling professional development activities, a person responsible for overseeing the documentation necessary for renewal credits, and person focused on student performance data and a chairperson of the committee.

#### 2. **Complete a professional development needs assessment.**

The needs assessment begins with the analysis of student learning in relation to State and district curriculum standards. The purpose of this analysis is to identify gaps between students’ actual performance and the desired goals or outcomes.

Following the identification of performance gaps, the current status of the school’s professional development must be evaluated according to

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<sup>12</sup> Adapted from draft of *Guidelines for Quality Professional Development for Kansas Educators*. Kansas State Department of Education, April 15, 2002.

- a. context: whether or not the staff development is ongoing and job-embedded;
- b. process: decision-making, communication and team functioning; and
- c. content: the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to ensure a quality education for all students regardless of culture, race, gender or ethnicity are addressed.

### **3. Determine professional development goals.**

Identify the knowledge and skills that staff need to close student achievement gaps. Discuss how staff can gain the knowledge and skills identified. Following this discussion, decide what the staff development goals should be. Be certain to take into consideration the current status of the school's professional development and how this can be maintained or improved.

### **4. Select professional development strategies.**

Before selecting the professional development strategies, consider what instructional experiences can be designed so that all students master the standards. The planning team should discuss the new content or skills that staff will need in order to provide these instructional experiences to students.

Following this process, identify possible professional development strategies that will help teachers master the knowledge and skills necessary to provide students with optimum instruction. Consider what resources are available including money, time and substitute teachers. Find out if there are staff members who have expertise related to the strategies identified. Goals can be attained more easily if the school values and uses the professional expertise within the school.

Select the professional development strategies and activities that will best meet needs, but that can also be effectively accomplished using the available resources.

### **5. Write the professional development plan.**

Once the needs assessment has been completed and the professional development strategies and activities have been selected, the team is ready to write the results-based professional development plan. This plan should include the school improvement goals or targets as well as the professional development goals.

Strategies for helping staff transfer new knowledge and skills into practice are the cornerstone of the results-based professional development plan. Make certain that the plan references each of the strategies selected by the

planning team. Indicate the intended purpose for each of the strategies as well as the staff members who will be using the strategies.

Successful implementation and ongoing use of the plan depend upon a timeline that includes specific dates for professional development as well as the dates of implementation and evaluation throughout the academic year.

#### **6. Analyze progress.**

Indicators are used to determine if the planned professional development has lead to the desired results. Indicators should be assessed throughout each school year as well as annually.

Indicators may include measures of how well participants are using what is learned at a professional development activity, including measures of use of new ideas and practices. Evaluations of use should be taken at regular intervals.

Changes in how problems are addressed, sufficiency of resources and recognition of successes can determine organizational support and change.

Multiple measures of student learning may include evaluations of both students' cognitive and psychomotor learning.

#### **7. Revise the plan as necessary.**

If the indicators show that progress is not being made or that the desired and expected results are not taking place, the plan should be revised. Revision may include follow-up training, great collaboration and/or peer coaching, further study or abandoning a strategy for another that may prove more effective.

## Appendix 4

### The Rubric for LEA/School Assessment

<b>North Carolina Professional Development Rubric for LEA/School Assessment</b>					
<p><b>Directions:</b> As your LEA/school reviews each level, consider what specific evidence you have to support the key components for that level. Level 4 contains the key indicators of the standard. To be at Level 4, you would need clear, convincing, and consistent evidence. Evidence is measurable and furnishes proof and/or documents results. Based on this definition, what level would you rate your professional development, and what evidence would you provide to support your choice?</p>					
Standard	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Evidence to Document Level
<b>Context: Learning Communities</b>					
<p>Professional development that improves the learning of all students organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and LEA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators seek new information, plan instruction, and solve problems independently or with little collaboration with others.</li> <li>• Learning and professional development is focused on individual interests and needs.</li> <li>• Individuals make few attempts to align professional development with LEA or school goals for student learning and performance.</li> <li>• The learning community is narrowly focused on educators alone or in small groups and is not inclusive of all adults in the school community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators are beginning to participate in collaborative activities regarding instruction, assessment and problem solving.</li> <li>• Collaboration occurs infrequently and is not a regularly scheduled expectation of professional practice; the group pays minimal attention to the outcomes of student work.</li> <li>• The work of the group is independent of LEA or school professional development goals.</li> <li>• The learning community involves some representation from adults outside the school and has some opportunity for collective input.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several of the educators have formed collaborative teams for the purpose of examining student works, planning instruction and solving problems.</li> <li>• Educators in these teams regard team collaboration as a productive professional development activity, and some teams specifically focus on improving student learning.</li> <li>• Team planning time occurs with some regularity and school or LEA goals are considered as the team's work.</li> <li>• The learning community regularly involves adult stakeholders in establishing learning goals and in substantive learning designed to meet those goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All educators are part of school-based learning teams that meet weekly to plan instruction, assessment, examine student work and/or solve problems.</li> <li>• School-based learning teams are a primary mechanism of the school professional development plan.</li> <li>• Team efforts align with school improvement goals, and members work actively to increase student achievement.</li> <li>• Learning teams reflect the diversity of the adults in the school community and the richness of resources to support individual, school and LEA goals. Opportunity for adult learning reflects the needs recognized to provide all adults with meaningful opportunities for involvement in improving school and student performance.</li> </ul>	

**North Carolina Professional Development Rubric for LEA/School Assessment**

**Directions:** As your LEA/school reviews each level, consider what specific evidence you have to support the key components for that level. Level 4 contains the key indicators of the standard. To be at Level 4, you would need clear, convincing, and consistent evidence. Evidence is measurable and furnishes proof and/or documents results. Based on this definition, what level would you rate your professional development, and what evidence would you provide to support your choice?

Standard	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Evidence to Document Level
<b>Context: Leadership</b>					
Professional development that improves the learning of all students requires skillful school and LEA leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daily schedules and incentive systems are developed without regard to professional development.</li> <li>Implementation of improvement efforts typically happens independent of professional development opportunities.</li> <li>Training for professional development leadership is seldom provided for administrators and teachers.</li> <li>Technology is not used by the staff as a resource.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daily schedules and incentive systems are designed with little consideration of ongoing professional development.</li> <li>Professional development is considered necessary but seldom ties directly to goals for improvement efforts.</li> <li>Administrators and teachers direct staff development, but with little leadership or skills training.</li> <li>Technology is not seen as a tool for collaboration purposes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yearly calendars, daily schedules and incentive systems are designed with some consideration for professional learning needs and goals.</li> <li>Leaders acknowledge professional development as one strategy for supporting improvement.</li> <li>Administrators and teachers occasionally share the responsibility for purposefully developing knowledge and skills for leadership in professional development.</li> <li>Technology is used in some situations as a resource for collaboration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calendars, daily schedules and incentive systems support professional learning.</li> <li>Leaders support professional development as a key strategy for ensuring significant improvements.</li> <li>Administrators and teacher-leaders have opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills to be effective professional development leaders.</li> <li>Educators know how to use technology for different forms of collaboration.</li> </ul>	

**North Carolina Professional Development Rubric for LEA/School Assessment**

**Directions:** As your LEA/school reviews each level, consider what specific evidence you have to support the key components for that level. Level 4 contains the key indicators of the standard. To be at Level 4, you would need clear, convincing, and consistent evidence. Evidence is measurable and furnishes proof and/or documents results. Based on this definition, what level would you rate your professional development, and what evidence would you provide to support your choice?

Standard	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Evidence to Document Level
<b>Process: Resources</b>					
Professional development that improves the learning of all students requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no designated budget for professional development activities.</li> <li>There are few opportunities available for professional development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only the minimal budget is dedicated for professional development activities.</li> <li>Some time is made available during building/LEA in-service days for professional development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some of the LEA's budget is dedicated to professional development.</li> <li>Staff is regularly provided time for collaboration and professional development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monies allocated for professional development are substantial and aligned with school improvement plans and system/state strategic goals.</li> <li>Collaboration and professional development occur primarily during the school day.</li> </ul>	

**North Carolina Professional Development Rubric for LEA/School Assessment**

**Directions:** As your LEA/school reviews each level, consider what specific evidence you have to support the key components for that level. Level 4 contains the key indicators of the standard. To be at Level 4, you would need clear, convincing, and consistent evidence. Evidence is measurable and furnishes proof and/or documents results. Based on this definition, what level would you rate your professional development, and what evidence would you provide to support your choice?

Standard	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Evidence to Document Level
<b>Process: Data-Driven</b>					
Professional development that improves the learning of all students uses disaggregated student data <sup>13</sup> to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress and help sustain continuous improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional development is planned based on individual interest of educators with little regard for student learning needs.</li> <li>No attempts are made to gather school or school system data to evaluate the effect of professional development on student learning.</li> <li>Data about student learning is not the basis for professional development activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some student data is used in conjunction with individual interests of educators for planning professional development.</li> <li>Few attempts are made to collect school or school system data to determine the effect of professional development for improvement of student achievement.</li> <li>Data about student learning is periodically used to offer professional development activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional development is focused more on student needs and less on teacher interests.</li> <li>Some educators collect student data in order to evaluate the impact of their own learning based on measures of student progress.</li> <li>Several professional development initiatives were created in response to data that identifies student needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The learning community consistently makes decisions regarding professional development based on student learning needs and monitors on a continuous basis.</li> <li>All educators routinely collect evidence of improved student learning to determine the effects of their own professional development.</li> <li>All professional development initiatives are based on disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities.</li> </ul>	

<sup>13</sup> "Data" include classroom, school, LEA, State and national sources.

**North Carolina Professional Development Rubric for LEA/School Assessment**

**Directions:** As your LEA/school reviews each level, consider what specific evidence you have to support the key components for that level. Level 4 contains the key indicators of the standard. To be at Level 4, you would need clear, convincing, and consistent evidence. Evidence is measurable and furnishes proof and/or documents results. Based on this definition, what level would you rate your professional development, and what evidence would you provide to support your choice?

Standard	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Evidence to Document Level
<b>Process: Evaluation</b>					
Professional development that improves the learning of all students uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No evidence is generated via formative evaluation to improve the quality of professional development.</li> <li>• No evidence is generated via summative evaluation to determine whether professional development achieved its intended outcomes.</li> <li>• No evidence is generated to demonstrate knowledge gained by participants, level of implementation, return on professional development expenditures, and improvement in student learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some evidence is generated via formative evaluation to improve the quality of professional development.</li> <li>• Some evidence is generated via summative evaluation to determine whether professional development achieved its intended outcomes.</li> <li>• Some evidence is generated to demonstrate knowledge gained by participants, level of implementation, return on professional development expenditures, and improvement in student learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some evidence is used via formative evaluation to improve the quality of some professional development.</li> <li>• Some evidence is used via summative evaluation to determine whether some professional development achieved its intended outcomes.</li> <li>• Some evidence is used to demonstrate knowledge gained by participants, level of implementation, return on some professional development expenditures, and improvement in student learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence is used via formative evaluation to improve the quality of professional development.</li> <li>• Evidence is used via summative evaluation to determine whether professional development achieved its intended outcomes.</li> <li>• The evaluation of professional development consistently includes all of the following: qualitative and quantitative data concerning knowledge gained by participants, level of implementation, return on professional development expenditures, and improvement in student learning</li> </ul>	

**North Carolina Professional Development Rubric for LEA/School Assessment**

**Directions:** As your LEA/school reviews each level, consider what specific evidence you have to support the key components for that level. Level 4 contains the key indicators of the standard. To be at Level 4, you would need clear, convincing, and consistent evidence. Evidence is measurable and furnishes proof and/or documents results. Based on this definition, what level would you rate your professional development, and what evidence would you provide to support your choice?

Standard	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Evidence to Document Level
<b>Process: Research-Based</b>					
Professional development that improves the learning of all students prepares educators to apply research to decision making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators are not aware of the importance of using educational research and technology.</li> <li>• There are no teams of teachers and administrators in place to study research before adopting improvement strategies.</li> <li>• Staff is not knowledgeable about pilot studies and action research.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some educators are aware of the importance of using educational research and technology.</li> <li>• Some teams of teachers and administrators are in place to study research before adopting improvement strategies.</li> <li>• Some staff are knowledgeable about pilot studies and action research.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some educators skillfully use educational research and technology.</li> <li>• Some teams of teachers and administrators methodically study research before adopting improvement strategies.</li> <li>• Some staff use pilot studies and action research to determine if programs should be adapted/continued.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development prepares educators to be skillful users of educational research and technology.</li> <li>• Teams of teachers and administrators methodically study research for alignment with North Carolina goals and strategic priorities before adopting improvement strategies.</li> <li>• Pilot studies and action research are used when appropriate to test the effectiveness of new approaches when research is contradictory or does not exist.</li> </ul>	

**North Carolina Professional Development Rubric for LEA/School Assessment**

**Directions:** As your LEA/school reviews each level, consider what specific evidence you have to support the key components for that level. Level 4 contains the key indicators of the standard. To be at Level 4, you would need clear, convincing, and consistent evidence. Evidence is measurable and furnishes proof and/or documents results. Based on this definition, what level would you rate your professional development, and what evidence would you provide to support your choice?

Standard	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Evidence to Document Level
<b>Process: Design</b>					
<p>Professional development that improves the learning of all students uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development at the school and system level is seldom or never designed to provide specific strategies targeted at increasing student achievement through appropriate learning strategies.</li> <li>• Educational technology is not used to meet adult learning styles when delivering school and LEA level professional development.</li> <li>• Professional development is delivered without any differentiation or consideration of individualized personal or professional growth plans.</li> <li>• Change initiatives are instituted with little or no formal planning of follow-up activities.</li> <li>• Administrators rarely model behaviors that must be reflected in classroom application.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development at the school and system level is inconsistently designed to provide specific strategies targeted at the increasing student achievement through appropriate learning strategies.</li> <li>• Educational technology is seldom used to meet adult learning styles when delivering professional development.</li> <li>• Professional development is delivered with inconsistent differentiation and inconsistent consideration of individualized personal or professional growth plans.</li> <li>• Change initiatives are instituted with some formal planning of follow-up activities.</li> <li>• Administrators inconsistently model behaviors that must be reflected in classroom application.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development at the school and system level is consistently designed to provide specific strategies targeted at the increasing student achievement through appropriate learning strategies.</li> <li>• To meet adult learning styles, educational technology is considered and sometimes used to optimize school and LEA professional development.</li> <li>• Individualized personal and professional growth plans are considered and frequently used to differentiate professional development.</li> <li>• Change initiatives are considered when planning professional development follow-up. Some consistency between this follow-up and professional development is noted.</li> <li>• Administrators inconsistently model behaviors that must be reflected in classroom application.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development at the school and system level is always designed to provide specific strategies targeted at the increasing student achievement through appropriate learning strategies.</li> <li>• To effectively meet adult learning styles, educational technology is always used to optimize school and LEA professional development.</li> <li>• Individualized personal and professional growth plans drive the differentiation of professional development.</li> <li>• All follow-up for change initiatives have a high degree of correlation with the long-term professional development planning system at the school and system level.</li> <li>• Administrators are instructional leaders who always model behaviors that transfer to effective classroom application.</li> </ul>	

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Standard	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Evidence to Document Level
<b>Process: Learning</b>					
Professional development that improves the learning of all students applies knowledge about human learning and change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators rarely use research or technology to engage students in effective learning strategies.</li> <li>• Individuals at the local level sometimes find new research and implement it.</li> <li>• Pilot studies and action research are not considered before implementing national research locally.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators sometimes use educational research and technology for student learning.</li> <li>• Informal teams of teachers or administrators find research and attempt to implement it with some consideration given to North Carolina Goals.</li> <li>• Pilot studies and action research may or may not be used prior to full-scale implementation of national research at the local level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators are consistently skillful users of educational research and technology in order to effectively assure student learning.</li> <li>• Collaborative teams of teachers and administrators study research and try to align it to North Carolina goals.</li> <li>• Pilot studies and action research are frequently use to test national research at the local system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators always use cutting-edge educational research and the latest technology to engage students in the most appropriate manner.</li> <li>• Collaborative teams of teachers and administrators systematically study research and always align it to North Carolina goals prior to implementation.</li> <li>• Pilot studies and action research are always used to test the local effects of national research.</li> </ul>	

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Standard	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Evidence to Document Level
<b>Process: Collaboration</b>					
Professional development that improves the learning of all students provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educators work in isolation and are not encouraged to collaborate.</li> <li>Educators who work in teams avoid controversial issues and conflict.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educators work in groups but minimal professional development is provided to develop skills in group processes.</li> <li>Conflict is allowed to fester or is avoided and is not resolved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional development is provided to prepare staff to work collaboratively.</li> <li>Conflict is talked about and is often resolved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educators have the structures and training to be skillful members of a variety of groups.</li> <li>Educators have and use skills to bring conflict to the surface and productively manage conflict and reach decisions through consensus.</li> </ul>	

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Standard	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Evidence to Document Level
<b>Content: Equity</b>					
Professional development that improves the learning of all students prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students; create safe, orderly, caring and supportive learning environments and hold high expectations for their academic achievement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educators use teacher-centered curriculum and instruction with minimal awareness of the cultural backgrounds of their students.</li> <li>Educators continue to implement the same lesson plans year after year.</li> <li>Student expectations are not established.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities related to culture and diversity encourage educators to plan cultural activities that focus only on holidays.</li> <li>Staff are provided training on individualizing instruction but the achievement gap is not closing.</li> <li>Professional development is focused on helping educators accelerate students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some educators implement practices that promote safe environments and convey respect for all students, their families and students' diverse backgrounds.</li> <li>Educators are provided training to help them to individualize instruction to close the achievement gap but are inconsistently applying what they have learned.</li> <li>Staff demonstrate the importance of high expectations for all students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educators implement school-wide practices that promote safe environments and convey respect for all students, their families and students' diverse backgrounds.</li> <li>Educators are closing the achievement gap by adjusting instruction and assessment to match the learning requirements of individual students.</li> <li>Staff establish learning environments that demonstrate high expectations for all students.</li> </ul>	

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Standard	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Evidence to Document Level
<b>Content: Quality Teaching</b>					
Professional development that improves the learning of all students deepens educators' knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional development opportunities occur sporadically without regard to needs for developing deeper content knowledge.</li> <li>Instruction is focused on covering the curriculum.</li> <li>Classroom assessment is used to support grades for progress reporting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities are offered for educators to increase content knowledge but most are associated with implementation of new curriculum.</li> <li>Occasional professional development for instructional skills occurs but is independent of improvement plans and content area.</li> <li>Professional development efforts occasionally provide educator with knowledge of some classroom assessment strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff has many opportunities to develop knowledge of their content area.</li> <li>Some professional development is available regarding classroom assessment methods, and some educators are beginning to regularly use assessment strategies to monitor gains in student learning.</li> <li>The impact of professional development activity is sometimes assessed for impact on student performance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff has many opportunities to develop deep knowledge of their content.</li> <li>Professional development expands instruction methods appropriate to specific content areas and educators learn about and implement classroom assessment skills that allow them to regularly monitor gains in student learning.</li> <li>The impact of professional development activity is monitored and results are used to improve current and future practices.</li> </ul>	

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Standard	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Evidence to Document Level
<b>Content: Family Involvement</b>					
Professional development that improves the learning of all students provides teachers and school leaders with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School has no involvement plans that outline specific strategies for Staff to use, ask for or implement input from community members and parents.</li> <li>• Educators do not welcome volunteers into the school.</li> <li>• Educators do not effectively use technology to communicate with the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The principal and other staff members at the school develop the school improvement plan and include broad references to family community and business involvement but lack implementation.</li> <li>• Educators fail to involve volunteers in meaningful efforts outside of fundraising.</li> <li>• Educators utilize technology in a limited manner to communicate with parents and community members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff recognizes the need for training and technical assistance in how to build consensus among educators, family, community, and business in developing school improvement plans.</li> <li>• Educators create opportunity for members of the school community at large to address critical issues identified in the school improvement plans and support student learning.</li> <li>• Educators use technology to communicate with parents, and community members and seek to improve skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development prepares administrators and teacher leaders to build consensus among educators and community members concerning the overall mission and goals for staff development.</li> <li>• Educators establish positive relationship with families, community members and business to support student learning.</li> <li>• Educators to communicate effectively with families' communities and business through various means including technology.</li> </ul>	