

# Weekly Message – State Superintendent June Atkinson

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**SUPERINTENDENTS' WEEKLY MESSAGE**

**Sept. 14, 2015**



On Friday, I had the pleasure of speaking to approximately 65 local public information officers and communication directors from local school districts who had come to the fall PIO meeting hosted by NCDPI's Communications division at the Education Building in Raleigh.

I shared with them my vision for public education to meet the needs of our changing technology landscape and accompanying learning requirements. I outlined the moves that we know are coming: moving from time certain learning to mastery and competency, from fixed places to learning anywhere anytime, from printed and static text to digital content, from bubble sheet tests to assessments that blend into learning activities, and more.

As our schools make these necessary changes, we will need the help of communication professionals to help explain the changes to parents and students, community members, employers, news media and taxpayers in general. While we have often depended on communication professions to deal with news media, with public records compliance and similar tasks, we need to also ensure that there are good communicators prepared to be proactive in describing what 21st century learning needs to be.

Today, we are on a bridge between the old systems of the 20th century and the fully integrated digitally powered 21st century classroom. The digital learning plan updated for the State Board of Education

earlier this month showed that many districts are making progress in digital learning, but many are still in the beginning stages. That means we have a great deal of work to do with policy, resources and also building support for needed improvements. That's where our communication teams can make a difference in the future of public education.

Thanks for giving your staff time to come to Raleigh for this important meeting, and thank you for making their work a priority.



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## Help Us Develop the Hope Street Group North Carolina Teacher Voice Network

NCDPI recently launched a partnership with the national nonprofit Hope Street Group to engage teacher fellows across the state to provide feedback from the field.

The program, called the North Carolina Teacher Voice Network, requires selected teachers to develop peer networks to participate in surveys, focus groups and other activities aimed at helping teachers gain a voice in developing education policy. Hope Street has launched similar programs in multiple states with great success, and looks forward to a fruitful partnership in North Carolina.

The current class of [fellows](#) will facilitate their first data collection from Sept. 21-Oct. 11, and we hope you will welcome your teachers participating.

We see the fellows and the networks they develop as a valuable source of information about state education policies as they affect the classroom, including testing and perhaps the upcoming Proof of Concept pilot. Listening to our teachers is one way we can make North Carolina public schools the best choice for more than 1.5 million students across the state.

If you have any questions, please contact [Mike McLaughlin](#).

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## Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Update: Integrated Academic and Behavior Systems

A principal who attended a recent MTSS professional development session provided by the NC MTSS team said, "I like the comprehensive approach of MTSS - (it) keeps the focus on all students and all aspects of education."



This is just one of many examples how MTSS is designed to support the needs of all staff to support all students. It also supports the NCDPI mission statement "...DPI will support LEAs to implement a Multi-Tiered System of Support by providing professional development, coaching and technical assistance, research and evaluation, and communication and visibility that results in college and career readiness for ALL students."

Visionary administrators in every district, charter school and state-operated program across the state are critical to developing the school-wide capacity and infrastructure required in order to implement and sustain MTSS. Development of this capacity and infrastructure for implementation will need to include ongoing professional development and coaching with an emphasis on data-based problem solving and multi-tiered instruction and intervention.

The NCDPI statewide rollout plan will assist every LEA, charter school and state-operated program in building this infrastructure and capacity. Visit the NCMTSS [wikispace](#) for the most up to date information on trainings, support and briefs.



## NCVPS Fall Enrollment Still Possible

NCVPS has ended its regular registration period, but still has a number of ways it can help districts with fall enrollments.

Let NCVPS help you with those difficult student situations with its transfer program. The transfer program is not for students new to a course, but it works great for students who must go on homebound status, are suspended, move in from another school, or have any unusual or unexpected scheduling problems.

Have your advisors open a ticket with the Virtual Support Center to begin the process. Transfer students must already be enrolled in the course in the traditional classroom and have a grade to transfer in with. A seat must also be available in the course, but NCVPS typically helps several hundred transfer students each semester.

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## Latest Messages Online

Sept. 10, 2015 [Teachers' Biweekly Message](#)

Sept. 11, 2015 [Finance Officers' Newsletter](#)





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