

Weekly Message – State Superintendent June Atkinson

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Inbox

To: Lynda Fuller <Lynda.Fuller@dpi.nc.gov>;

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Nov. 9, 2015



At one or more of the small group superintendent meetings I have attended over the past month, we have had discussions concerning standards and assessment alignment, student surveys and their purpose, teacher recruitment and retention, state law requirements regarding low-performing schools, status of standards, and summer school. I am meeting with western superintendents on Friday to conclude this round of fall meetings.

Based on these discussions, we have established the Task Force on Teacher Credentialing to help review current licensure requirements to determine changes that may need to be made. Our first meeting of superintendents who have volunteered to serve on this task force is Dec. 1 (time and location to come). If you would

like to serve on this committee, please send me an email.

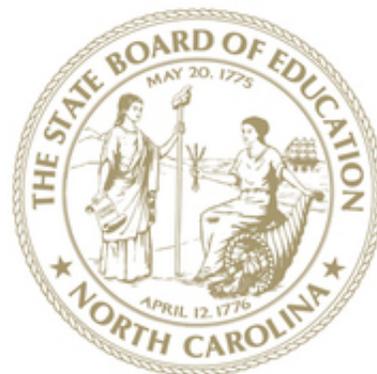
Also, we've established the Superintendents' Testing and Assessment Committee, which will hold its first meeting on Dec. 16 in Greensboro (time and location to come). Our initial meeting will cover the results of the Wisconsin study regarding alignment of NC standards and EOG and EOC tests, protocol, and steps used to develop EOCs and EOGs. To date, and with the help of Jack Hoke, we have approximately 12 superintendents on this committee, but we welcome anyone else who would like to participate. Just send me an email.

At this month's State Board of Education meeting, we presented for discussion proposed changes to the teacher evaluation system as a result of state law changes. WE NEED YOUR input so please join us for a webinar on Friday, Nov. 13, where we will review the proposed changes so that you can give us your feedback at our quarterly meeting in December (registration details below). Please help us think through the changes prior to the State Board's adoption.



State Board of Education Meeting Highlights

At last week's State Board of Education meeting, members approved the Annual Report on Teachers Leaving the Profession, revisions to the Healthful-Living Essential Standards, an alternative schools accountability model, and a number of reports to the North Carolina General Assembly. To view the complete list of this month's Board actions, please visit the Board's [website](#).



State Board Members Recognize Schools

Global-Ready School Designation

Piedmont Middle School (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools) last Thursday was designated as a Global-Ready School by the State Board of Education, the first school to receive such a designation under the Board's Global Education Strategic Plan.

Piedmont Middle was designated for attaining the "Prepared" level of achievement in the Global Schools initiative. Schools can receive the Global-Ready School Designation for attaining the Prepared or Model level of achievement on the Board's criteria and meeting student achievement goals. Schools that are engaged in implementing global education strategies toward designation also can receive an Acknowledgement and become part of the state networking around this initiative.

For more information about the Global Education initiative, please visit [the NC Global Education website](#).

STEM Schools of Distinction

Congratulations to the following schools for being recognized by the North Carolina State Board of Education for exemplary leadership and instruction in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education. These schools were the second set of schools to be recognized under the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's STEM Recognition Program:

Three schools met the Prepared Level of Achievement:

- James Kenan Jr. Sr. High School, Duplin County Schools
- Riverside Middle School, Martin County Schools

- East Cary Middle School, Wake County Schools

Four schools met the Model Level of Achievement:

- Greene Central High School, Greene County Schools
- Wake STEM Early College High School, Wake County Schools
- Brentwood Magnet Elementary School of Engineering, Wake County Schools
- Atkins Academic and Technology High School, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools

To receive this honor, schools underwent a rigorous application process that required detailed responses covering 40 key elements: examples of strategic class documents and video; a self-assessment; identification of the school's best practice of educational excellence; and a site visit from reviewers.

For more information on the NCDPI STEM Recognition Program, please visit NCDPI's [STEM web page](#).



Webinars Scheduled for this Week

Analysis of Student Work: Lessons Learned from 2014-15

An Analysis of Student Work: Lessons Learned from 2014-15 [webinar](#) will be held on Thursday, Nov. 12, from 3:30 – 5 p.m. NCDPI staff will be discussing the data, trends and information important to planning for success in the 2015-16 Analysis of Student Work (ASW) implementation.

This session is for all educators who will be impacted by Standard 6 ratings from the 2014-15 implementation of the ASW process, including teachers who have submitted Evidence Collections, district and school coordinators, and local trainers who will be conducting professional development for the 2015-16 ASW implementation.

Please note that staff cannot answer questions about an individual's ratings. Once you have registered for the webinar, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

This session will be recorded and the video archived along with the presentation slides and any other materials discussed during the webinar, and posted [online](#) early the following week.

Teacher Evaluation System Webinar this Friday

A webinar on the state's Teacher Evaluation System will be held this Friday, Nov. 13, beginning at 10 a.m. The purpose of the webinar is to discuss proposed changes to the teacher evaluation system. You may register [online](#). Once registered, you will receive an email containing information about how to join the webinar.

Vehicle Survey for General Assembly

NCDPI Transportation Services has received a request from the North Carolina General Assembly regarding vehicles operated by LEAs. Please respond to this [survey](#) regarding vehicles that are titled to your LEA and in your operational fleet. This includes those in the BSIP fleet maintenance system and those not in BSIP. The survey must be completed by **Nov. 24**. If you have any questions, please contact Transportation Services Section Chief [Derek Graham](#).

PowerSchool Update



PowerSchool recently announced that [Rackspace](#), a managed cloud service provider, has been chosen for its secure hosting solution. With this move, PowerSchool will be able to deliver ultra-high bandwidth, robust failover capabilities, data encryption, storage performance and systems monitoring that meet the needs of the state's large and small school districts.

Rackspace has proven experience in planning, deploying, and managing server, storage, and network configurations. Rackspace also has built its global infrastructure to deliver top speeds, while providing industry-leading service level agreements.

For more information about PowerSchool Hosting and Rackspace, please read the press release on the PowerSchool [website](#).



Multi-Tiered System of Support: Building a System that is Effective for All Starts with Core Instruction

What is a strong predictor of school outcomes? The answer is the strength of your Core (Tier 1). A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework involves installing seamless layers of instructional, curricular and environmental supports that meet the needs of all students.

Core is the foundation of this system and must be strong enough to support the academic and behavior needs of the majority of students across all subgroups of each school. Core is the only and best prevention each district, school and grade level has to ensure positive academic and behavioral outcomes.

We can no longer intervene our way out of an ineffective Core. This means our focus must be to problem-solve gaps in Core, rather than having intense, sole focus, on finding interventions in isolation from Core design. Some of the technical assistance being developed and offered by Integrated Academic and Behavior Systems is focused on using problem solving to strengthen Core.

For more information on MTSS check out this [factsheet](#).

Testing Update

Assessment Specification Information for the 2015-16 NC Final Exams

Assessment specification documents typically outline the purpose of the assessment, the structure of the assessment (e.g., item types, number of items, test sections, test administration time, delivery modes, supplemental materials), and percentage of items or score points measuring a specific goal or domain category.

The 2015-16 NC Final Exams specification documents also include the number of operational items assessing each objective or standard and links for teachers interested in writing or reviewing items for the NC Testing Program.



Assessment specification documents for the 2015-16 NC Final Exams are available [online](#). Assessment specification information for the spring exams of Grade 4 Science and Grades 4 & 5 Social Studies will be available in late January.

2015-16 NC Final Exams of Social Studies: Number of Items per Objective

The NCDPI Test Development Section staff produced a set of reference documents for the fall 2015-16 NC Final Exams (NCFE) of Social Studies (i.e., Grade 6, Grade 7, Grade 8, World History, American History I, American History II, American History: The Founding Principles, Civics, and Economics). The [documents](#) provide a table listing the assessed objectives, objective text and number of operational items per objective.

The assessed objective, number of operational items per objective and additional information about each exam is available in the [assessment specification documents](#).

This information will be shared with principals and teachers in upcoming messages. Questions may be directed to your [Regional Accountability Coordinator](#).



Global Education Update

Global Educator Digital Badge

The State Board of Education approved the expansion of eligible educator categories for the North Carolina Global Educator Digital Badge (GEDB) on Oct. 1. For the updated policy and each educator category criteria please visit the Global Education [website](#).

Do you have educators that are in the process of earning their Global Educator Digital Badge? Has their [Memorandum of Agreement](#) (MOA) been sent to NCDPI? The MOA alerts NCDPI that a candidate has officially started the process and allows NCDPI staff to continue to share resources and updates directly to the GEDB candidate.

Global-Ready School [Application and Guidance Document for 2015-2016 Available](#)

Schools may now apply for “Acknowledgement” as a school that has chosen to implement strategies towards the “Designation” status under the 2015-16 application cycle. These submissions will be reviewed to provide feedback, resource suggestions and Global-Ready School networking and professional development opportunities.

Schools that apply for the “Designation” status and meet both the criteria for “Prepared” or “Model” and the student achievement requirements will be notified in May. Those schools will be scheduled for a site visit in September. These schools also will be invited to Global-Ready School networking and professional development opportunities.

In order to receive a fill-in application, schools must complete the [Intent to Apply](#) form. The contact person listed will receive the form and information regarding webinars and workshops for applicants. This does not obligate the school to complete the application.

All applications for 2015-16 are due on or before April 4.

Observation Calibration Training – It Works!

NCDPI staff will provide school administrators with an online platform to improve their skills as a classroom observer using the NCEES rubric. Participants will be able to watch classroom videos, observe instruction, rate teachers and receive immediate feedback as to the recommended ratings.

When piloted, school administrators across the state showed significant improvement in observation skills from the beginning to the end. The more lessons observers completed, the more their scoring improved.

For a complete description of this exciting professional opportunity for school administrators, please visit the [Observation Calibration Training website](#). Questions may be directed to [Kimberly Simmons](#).

Latest Messages Online

Nov. 5, 2015 [Principals' Biweekly Message](#)

Nov. 6, 2015 [Finance Officers' Newsletter](#)





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