



Professional Development Initiative

# Proposal *for* Action

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Submitted to the North Carolina Education Cabinet  
by the Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group

**Prepared by:**

Jenni Owen, Director of Policy Initiatives  
Ann Skinner, Research Analyst  
Center for Child and Family Policy  
Duke University

**On behalf of:**

Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and the North Carolina Education Cabinet



## About the Center for Child and Family Policy

The mission of the **Center for Child and Family Policy** is to bring together scholars from many disciplines with policy makers and practitioners to solve problems facing children in contemporary society. The Center is addressing issues of early childhood adversity, education policy reform, and youth violence and problem behaviors. It is home to the largest violence-prevention study ever funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, the largest youth-violence-prevention experiment for middle schools ever funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a major effort to evaluate the effects of education reforms on children across North Carolina, and a new effort to promote healthy child development in the community of Durham, North Carolina by focusing on parent-child relationships.

The interdisciplinary Center for Child and Family Policy is led by **Kenneth A. Dodge**, Ph.D. and housed within the Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina.

## About the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation was established in 1936 as a memorial to the youngest son of the founder of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. The goals of the Foundation are: (1) to promote social, economic and environmental justice; (2) to strengthen democracy, through an educated and informed populace; (3) to encourage innovation and excellence in a dynamic non-profit sector; (4) to support progressive public policy and social change; (5) to foster cooperation and respect among all racial, ethnic, and socio-economic groups; and (6) to build strong, vibrant, economically sound, and peaceful communities.

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For more information or questions, contact:

**Jenni Owen**, Director of Policy Initiatives  
Center for Child and Family Policy  
p 919.613.7300  
jwowen@duke.edu

**Monteic A. Sizer**, Program Officer  
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation  
p 336.725.7541 x111  
msizer@zsr.org

**Center for Child and Family Policy**  
**Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy**  
**Duke University**

Box 90264, Durham, NC 27708-0264  
919.613.7319 phone  
www.childandfamilypolicy.duke.edu

*Bridging the gap between research and public policy to improve the lives of children and families*

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# implementation work group

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## Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Membership List

**Cathy Barlow**, Dean, Watson School of Education, UNC-Wilmington

**Melissa Bartlett**, Language Arts Teacher, Lakeshore Middle, Iredell-Statesville Schools

**Henry Foust**, Spanish Teacher, Northwood High, Chatham County Schools

**Bill Harrison**, Superintendent, Cumberland County Schools

**Sandra Jones**, Associate Superintendent, Edgecombe County Schools

**Janice Davis**, Deputy State Superintendent, Department of Public Instruction

**Ann McArthur**, Teacher Advisor, Office of the Governor

**Tim McDowell**, Vice-President for Government Relations, NC Association of Independent  
Colleges and Universities

**Ebbie Monroe**, Member, State Board of Education

**Delores Parker**, Vice President for Academic and Student Services, North Carolina Community  
College System

**Joyce Rhodes**, Dean of Continuing Education, Sandhills Community College

**Marge Ronco**, Principal, Ballentine Elementary School, Wake county Schools

**Ed Shearin**, Chair, Teacher Education Department, Mars Hill College

**Richard Thompson**, Vice-President for University-School Relations, University of North Carolina

**John Waszak**, Fifth Grade Teacher, New Hope Elementary, Orange County Schools

**Jane Worsham**, Executive Director, State Board of Education

**Note:** For most of the Initiative, Implementation Work Group membership included **JB Buxton**, Education Advisor to Governor Easley; **Zoe Locklear**, former Associate Superintendent, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction; and **David Fitzpatrick**, Principal, Kernersville Elementary, Winston-Salem/Forsyth Schools

# acknowledgments

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The **Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation** and the **Center for Child and Family Policy at Duke University** wishes to thank the many stakeholders – individuals and organizations – for sharing their feedback, experience and insight throughout the Implementation Work Group’s duration and during the development of this proposal. They include:

- Center for Child and Family Policy staff
- Department of Public Instruction staff
- Education Cabinet members
- Education Research Council staff
- Implementation Work Group members
- Stakeholders representing numerous districts, organizations and perspectives
- Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Staff



# executive summary

This Proposal for Action should be viewed as an integral piece of the state's response to both federal No Child Left Behind legislation and the state Supreme Court's *Leandro* decision, both of which demand significant improvement in professional development and its impact.

With the support of the Education Cabinet, the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation launched the Professional Development Initiative in early 2004. The Initiative's Implementation Work Group focused on four key areas to enhance North Carolina's system of professional development for K-12 teachers. Those areas are:

- 1. Professional Development Online Resource Center.**  
Design implementation plan for an online professional development resource center;
- 2. Statewide Professional Development Standards.**  
Develop plan for implementation of NC's statewide standards for professional development, which the State Board of Education adopted in March 2003;
- 3. Funding for Professional Development.**  
Produce an accounting of sources and uses of professional development funds to give decision makers a new, common base of information; and
- 4. Professional Development Data Collection.**  
Develop an understanding of available district-level professional development data to determine how best to use data to inform teacher quality and student achievement efforts.

Below is a summary of requested action and implementation steps for each focus area along with expected outcomes. The expected outcomes are critical as they reflect the Work Group's and Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation's confidence in the positive outcomes that will occur as a result of action by the Education Cabinet. Each focus area is spelled out further in the proposal – which highlights the goals, rationale and proposal for action for each component – and the accompanying appendices. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction is working with the Initiative to develop cost estimates for the components of the Proposal for Action.

The proposed online professional development resource center deserves additional mention. Requests for an online resource center for professional development (or “clearinghouse” as it has often been called) are not new. Several key issues have stood in the way of moving forward. These issues have been – and continue to be – identifying the financial resources to support the endeavor and determining the entity or entities responsible for it. While the Professional Development Initiative has made progress on each of these issues, only the Education Cabinet can resolve them. It is the firm hope of the Work Group that the Cabinet will actively respond to this challenge for the betterment of professional development statewide.

FOCUS AREA	PROPOSED ACTIONS STEPS BY FOCUS AREA	EXPECTED OUTCOMES BY FOCUS AREA (SEE CONCLUSION FOR DETAILS)
<p><b>STATEWIDE STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ State Board of Education enacts policy that includes procedures for:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informing and training necessary personnel in the use of standards for SIPs and professional development (PD) plans</li> <li>• Assuring that policy includes provisions for meeting <i>Leandro</i> mandates and NCLB regarding highly qualified teachers and student achievement</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Education Cabinet entities jointly develop training on standards and coordinate delivery of training</li> <li>➤ Each Education Cabinet entity disseminates standards to stakeholders</li> <li>➤ Place standards and related guidance on Department of Public Instruction (DPI) website with links to and from other Education Cabinet websites</li> <li>➤ Provide standards summary document and guidance for using standards to teachers applying for and renewing teaching licenses</li> <li>➤ Convene legislative or Education Cabinet study to thoroughly examine licensure renewal process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ State responds to key aspects of <i>Leandro</i> and NCLB</li> <li>➤ LEAs in better position to respond to NCLB</li> <li>➤ Standards become a recognized PD tool for crafting professional development plans as part of the SIP process thereby integrating with efforts to improve teacher quality and classroom practice</li> <li>➤ Teachers and other education leaders can now assess PD planning and implementation with common statewide standards.</li> <li>➤ Effort to integrate standards will, for the first time, be a collaboration between K-12 and higher education</li> </ul>

FOCUS AREA	PROPOSED ACTIONS STEPS BY FOCUS AREA	EXPECTED OUTCOMES BY FOCUS AREA (SEE CONCLUSION FOR DETAILS)
<b>ONLINE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE CENTER</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Launch PD online resource center that lists providers and opportunities and links them with NC’s standards for PD and State education priorities</li> <li>➤ Education Cabinet resolve issues related to ORC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify needed resources</li> <li>• Determine responsibility for oversight</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ State Board of Education issues an RFP to identify ORC’s managing entity</li> <li>➤ Education Cabinet convenes short-term committee to address quality component of ORC</li> <li>➤ State Board of Education enacts policy directing LEAs to spend a portion of state allotted PD dollars to address identified priority areas</li> <li>➤ NC Professional Teaching Standards Commission develops directory of PD providers as stand-alone resource and to support online resource center</li> <li>➤ Pilot ORC before statewide launch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Significant progress toward tying PD offerings to state standards, state priorities and the NC Standard Course of Study</li> <li>➤ Better informed consumers of PD</li> <li>➤ PD providers more deliberate about tying offerings to state priorities, PD standards, etc.</li> <li>➤ Universal and consistent access to accurate information about PD providers and opportunities</li> </ul>

FOCUS AREA	PROPOSED ACTIONS STEPS BY FOCUS AREA	EXPECTED OUTCOMES BY FOCUS AREA (SEE CONCLUSION FOR DETAILS)
<b>SOURCES AND USES OF FUNDING FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Disseminate document delineating professional development funding to stakeholders</li> <li>➤ Use data from funding report and data from the Professional Development Initiative’s survey of PD contacts to determine specifics about implementing collection of additional data about PD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Stakeholders better positioned to “read from the same page” when discussing public funding of PD and making decisions about that funding</li> <li>➤ Recognition that knowledge about expenditures on PD alone is not enough to make decisions about teacher quality</li> <li>➤ More accurate responses to legislative and other inquiries regarding PD spending</li> </ul>
<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ DPI develops and implements PD data collection requirements resulting in LEAs reporting about PD in a like manner and on a regular basis</li> <li>➤ DPI works with LEAs to determine which districts’ data collection systems need modifications and/or enhanced capacity to allow them to collect the requested data without unreasonable burden</li> <li>➤ Pilot new data collection system with a diverse group of districts</li> <li>➤ Use the data to evaluate the extent to which PD participation is aligned with state priorities, standards for PD, <i>Leandro</i> and NCLB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The state will be able to track PD trends for individual districts and the state as a whole</li> <li>➤ State and individual LEAs better able to analyze PD for its effects on certain areas of improvement in schools and LEAs</li> <li>➤ Increased potential for correlating PD data with areas of improvement in student achievement to determine possible impact</li> <li>➤ Allows LEAs to align PD opportunities with the state’s education priorities, statewide standards for PD and Standard Course of Study</li> </ul>

Implementation of the proposed actions will allow teachers and other customers of professional development to experience firsthand a commitment from all members of the Education Cabinet that professional development is a high priority, taken seriously and supported and carried out as an integral component of their career development and advancement. This in turn will make students true beneficiaries of the state's commitment to quality professional development for teachers.

**Note:** *Information on the related concurrent work of the First in America Survey of Teachers can be found in Appendix M.*



# setting the stage

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## Why the Professional Development Initiative?

NC's leaders in education at all levels agree that professional development for North Carolina's K-12 teachers is disjointed and uncoordinated. As some of North Carolina's education leaders have said, it is a "collection of opportunities" begging for a system that ensures quality. These leaders also agree, however, that the opportunities include numerous highlights reflected in the professional development opportunities offered by community colleges, the public and private university systems, the state Department of Public Instruction, individual school districts and private providers. If harnessed more effectively and efficiently these would result in more satisfied and highly qualified teachers, higher achieving students, a more equitable menu of professional development opportunities among the LEAs and greater access to that menu. While some districts and schools offer professional development opportunities tailored to meet needs of teachers and administrators, some do not, due either to lack of human or financial resources, lack of options, or both.

Bolstering the need for a system of professional development are federal No Child Left Behind legislation (see Appendix J) and the North Carolina Supreme Court's *Leandro* decision (see Appendix K). Furthermore and critically important, the call for such a system is supported by stakeholders' desire and need for improved student achievement along with the need to recruit and retain high-quality teachers who possess the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of diverse student learners that experts agree is impacted in part by high quality professional development.

Note: Throughout the proposal and related materials, "K-12" is used to describe the target population. North Carolina does not offer public pre-Kindergarten statewide; however, the Professional Development Initiative's proposal includes professional development for pre-K teachers where they are part of an LEA.

## The Professional Development Initiative

In late 2003, the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation launched the Professional Development Initiative with the support of the Education Cabinet. Leading up to the Initiative, the Foundation consulted a range of stakeholders and conducted background research, which led to its decision to make professional development a cornerstone of its current work.

Early in the Initiative, the following purpose statement was developed to help ensure that all involved had the same goals going forward. The statement continues to accurately reflect the Initiative's focus:

"Given the unique challenges facing public education in North Carolina today, the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation has launched the Professional Development Initiative, which will strive to help the state enhance its system of professional development for K-12 teachers.

Research strongly indicates that two of the most important factors influencing student success are teacher quality and school leadership; thus, the initiative will focus on K-12 teachers and will include school administrators. In order to recruit, retain, and nurture excellent teachers and administrators, an efficient, effective professional development system must exist. Although North Carolina has several outstanding professional development programs, state education leaders and practicing educators recognize the need to strengthen and coordinate the overall system.

With the Foundation’s support, the Education Cabinet and an Implementation Work Group will establish an action plan for implementation of specific components of an enhanced professional development system. The effort will draw on the significant work already done by state and district-level groups, as well as additional stakeholder input. Where useful, additional research will be conducted. Through its Professional Development Initiative, the Foundation will facilitate the implementation of concrete steps to help the state’s professional development system reach its potential, thus benefiting educators, students, and communities across North Carolina.”

## Implementation Work Group

An Implementation Work Group for the Professional Development Initiative was convened by ZSR with input from the Education Cabinet. (See Membership List.)

The Work Group focused on four components that together – if acted on – will help North Carolina achieve the establishment of a quality professional development system:

1. **Professional Development Resource Center.** Design of implementation plan for an online professional development resource center. Implementation would mean the launch of a resource center.
2. **Statewide Professional Development Standards.** Plan for implementation of statewide standards for professional development. The State Board of Education adopted standards in March 2003.
3. **Funding.** An accounting of sources and uses of professional development funds.
4. **Professional Development Data Collection.** Survey of all LEAs to determine to what extent and through what systems districts collect data about professional development and what information is available from those systems. Implementation would mean uniform LEA/state collection of professional development data to inform teacher quality and student achievement efforts.

## Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and Center for Child and Family Policy

The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation asked **Jenni Owen** of the Center for Child and Family Policy at Duke University to manage and facilitate the Professional Development Initiative. The Center emphasizes the importance of linking research and policy. Owen and colleagues **Ann Skinner** and **Amy Schulting** began work on the Initiative in late 2003. Among the first tasks was to conduct background research into previous policy recommendations related to professional development to supplement what the Foundation's work had already revealed. In addition, there were individual meetings with members of the Education Cabinet and a joint meeting with members of the Cabinet. This was critical as it helped to ensure that the Cabinet had ample opportunity to provide specific guidance for the direction of the initiative and solidified the expectation that the Initiative would deliver a substantive proposal for action to the Cabinet.

After this initial stage, the Center for Child and Family Policy convened the Implementation Work Group and its subcommittees, which met approximately every other month from February through September. Between meetings, the Center for Child and Family Policy used the Work Group's and Subcommittees' input to move forward with developing specific recommendations for components of an enhanced system of professional development for North Carolina and strategies for implementing those components. Education Research Council staff members **Elizabeth Cunningham** and **Rebecca Zulli** provided significant ongoing support throughout the Initiative.

It is important to note that while the Work Group includes representatives of each Education Cabinet member, as well as practitioners from several school districts, it is not charged with carrying out actual implementation. Rather, the purpose of the Initiative and Work Group is to provide the Cabinet and its entities with direction for concrete action that when *implemented* will help accomplish the stated goal of a system of quality professional development for North Carolina.

### Building on an Existing Foundation

The Professional Development Initiative's focus grew to a great extent out of recommendations put forth by earlier efforts and reports related to North Carolina's system of professional development. These include, among others:

1. **Governor Easley's Education First Task Force (2002)**  
*Let's Finish the Job*  
[http://www.ncforum.org/doclib/publications/collateral/Finish\\_the\\_%20Job.pdf](http://www.ncforum.org/doclib/publications/collateral/Finish_the_%20Job.pdf)

2. **A report by the Public School Forum (2003)**  
*Meeting the Education Challenge of 2003*  
<http://www.ncforum.org/doclib/publications/collateral/nclb.pdf>
3. **The North Carolina Professional Development Committee (2002-03)**  
*Improving Student Achievement through Professional Development*  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/humanrsrcs/prodevreport/report.pdf>
4. **The North Carolina Education Research Council (2003)**  
*Research on Professional Development to Improve Student Performance*  
**Full report -**  
<http://erc.northcarolina.edu/docs/publications/Professional%20Development%20--%20full%20report.pdf>  
**Executive summary -**  
<http://erc.northcarolina.edu/docs/publications/Professional%20Development%20Exec%20Sum.pdf>
5. **The National Staff Development Council (2002)**  
*Study of Professional Development Programs for Public School Professionals*  
[http://www.ncleg.net/committees/jointlegislativ\\_1/bfinalreportast/bfinalreportast.pdf](http://www.ncleg.net/committees/jointlegislativ_1/bfinalreportast/bfinalreportast.pdf)

## Striving for Implementation

The efforts listed above included extensive and meaningful research and recommendations. Lacking, however, has been implementation of the recommendations in part because of a lack of coordination and agreement among stakeholders. To address this, the Professional Development Initiative has taken each of the ‘snapshots’ provided by previous committees, taskforces and so on and pulled the pieces together with *all* major state education leaders represented throughout the Initiative. The Initiative’s charge is to ensure implementation. It strives to do so by positioning the Education Cabinet as a whole and the members individually with the best possible information, guidance and strategies to follow as they move forward with the implementation that all stakeholders want and need.

# statewide standards for professional development: goals, rationale, strategies

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## Goals

- All professional development stakeholders – consumers and providers – are knowledgeable about statewide standards for professional development.
- Standards for professional development are integrated in meaningful ways at the school level, as evidenced in school climate, and at the classroom practice and curriculum level as demonstrated through the development of School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and Individual Growth Plans (IGPs).

See Appendices A, B and C for supporting information regarding the Standards component of the Professional Development Initiative.

## Rationale

In March of 2003, the State Board of Education approved North Carolina’s Standards for Professional Development. There has not been a comprehensive effort, however, to ensure that teachers are knowledgeable about the standards and that School Improvement Teams and building administrators are using them to create professional development plans. As a result, *teachers’* knowledge about the existence of North Carolina’s standards for professional development is extremely limited and an understanding of the significance of the standards even more so.

At the same time, teachers, administrators, deans of schools and programs of education and others believe that the standards are important and meaningful and support their implementation and integration into the K-12 system. An effort to implement and integrate the standards, launched collaboratively by state-level stakeholders, is necessary to ensure constant attention to high quality professional development at the state, district and school level.

Furthermore, few if any stakeholders contradict the extensive anecdotal information that says “anything goes” when it comes to earning CEUs. If the state is truly committed to a system of quality professional development that is designed to meet the needs of every teacher in the state, it must move towards tying the licensure renewal process more closely to quality professional development in the teacher’s licensure area.

## Strategies

- The Professional Development Initiative informally polled teachers and other stakeholders to determine the extent of their knowledge about the standards.
- The Professional Development Initiative created a condensed summary of the North Carolina Standards for Professional Development that presents content, context and process standards on one page. (See Appendix A.)
- The Professional Development Initiative prepared recommendations for the State Board of Education to consider when drafting policy regarding the dissemination and implementation of the standards. (See Appendix B.)

## Proposal for Action

- The State Board of Education should enact policy that includes procedures for ensuring that schools have the information and training necessary to use the standards in the development of School Improvement Plans and Professional Development Plans. The policy should include provisions necessary to enhance the State's and LEAs' ability to meet the NCLB and *Leandro* mandates regarding highly qualified teachers and student achievement. (See Appendix B for further guidance regarding standards policy.)
- Each Education Cabinet entity should disseminate the standards with accompanying guidance and information to all of its stakeholders – consumer and providers alike.
- Place complete text of standards and summary prepared by the Professional Development Initiative (see Appendix A) on the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) website. Provide links to standards information to and from all Education Cabinet web sites to DPI's site.
- Provide standards summary document to teachers applying for and renewing teaching licenses. (See Appendix A.)

As the implementation of standards takes place, data collection develops and a professional development online resource center is launched, the collective entities of the Education Cabinet should thoroughly examine the licensure renewal process under the auspices of a legislative or Education Cabinet study.

online resource center:

# goals, rationale, strategies

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## Goals

The Online Resource Center’s primary goal is to level the playing field regarding access to information about professional development providers and opportunities by:

- Providing consumers with the information they need to select appropriate, useful and meaningful professional development that will positively impact teacher quality and student achievement.
- Providing consumers with a more targeted menu from which to consider selection of professional development opportunities in carrying out their school improvement plans.
- Requiring providers to establish linkages between the professional development opportunities they offer and North Carolina’s Standard Course of Study, the state’s standards for professional development, and the state priorities for K-12 education.
- Obtaining information about who’s using the resource center, location and accessibility of offerings and other information that will enhance knowledge about professional development.

See **Appendices D and E** for supporting information regarding the Online Resource Center component of the Professional Development Initiative.

## Rationale

There is agreement that professional development opportunities often are not of the caliber they can and should be to improve teacher quality and student achievement. Part of the explanation for this widely held view is the lack of consistent access to accurate information about the professional development providers and opportunities available. To address this, there has for years been a call for a statewide electronic “clearinghouse” for professional development in North Carolina, referred to here as a professional development “online resource center.”

The proposed resource center would link to professional development standards and incorporate tools to help assess the quality of professional development opportunities. Such a resource center would equip users and providers with knowledge about what determines quality professional development and how to select the best possible opportunities.

In doing so, it would make it more difficult to leave consumers out of the decision making process, which is a concern among teachers. Furthermore, the universal nature of the proposed resource center would go far towards removing some of the current inequities concerning information about and access to professional development. This has implications not only for the state's *Leandro* case (see Appendix K) and No Child Left Behind legislation (see Appendix J), but also serves as model of providing access to quality professional development for all teachers across the state.

## Strategies

- The Professional Development Initiative researched current and former professional development “clearinghouses” in other states as well as the related recommendations of the 2003 Professional Development Committee Report to the State Board of Education.
- The Professional Development Initiative consulted stakeholders to learn whether such a resource would be useful and why and what would be the most beneficial attributes for potential users.
- The Professional Development Initiative developed guidance for the online resource center that addresses both its infrastructure and its content. (See Appendix D.)

## Proposal for Action

- North Carolina should establish and launch an online resource center for professional development that features providers and opportunities that will help the state move forward in the key areas identified as needing improvement for the state as a whole to succeed in K-12 education. (See Appendix D, Section III for more on the key areas.)
- The Education Cabinet should resolve certain issues pertaining to the Resource Center that only their leadership can determine:
  - Identify funding to support the resource center; and
  - Determine responsibility for developing and operating the resource center.
- The State Board of Education should issue an RFP to identify an entity with the interest and skills to manage the resource center. In doing so, the Board should follow the guidelines developed by the Professional Development Initiative (See Appendix D) along with other input as desired regarding the capabilities and design of the resource center. All Education Cabinet entities should be invited to provide input during the development of the RFP and in the selection of a provider.
- In the short-term and in conjunction with the RFP process, the Education Cabinet should convene a group of individuals with the appropriate expertise to address the inclusion of a quality component as part of the online resource center.

- The State Board of Education should adopt policy that directs LEAs to spend a designated amount of their *state* allotted professional development dollars to address those priority areas denoted in the analysis of the state and their individual district ABCs/AYP data.
- The North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission has indicated its plans to develop an online directory of professional development providers. The commission should be charged with producing the online directory, making it and the information used in compiling it available to the entity that takes on responsibility for the online resource center. This should be done with the explicit input of representatives of all Education Cabinet entities. (Note, the Professional Development Initiative has collected preliminary provider information based on a search of every NC school district's web site and can make that information available to the Commission.)
- The online resource center should be piloted before official launch.

# goals, rationale, strategies

funding:

See **Appendices F and G** for supporting information regarding the Funding component of the Professional Development Initiative.

## Goal

Equip state education leadership and other stakeholders with accurate information regarding sources and uses of professional development funds.

## Rationale

There is a lack of widely available information about sources and uses of professional development funds. In 2002-03 NC school districts spent \$66.5 million on professional development. This figure is not widely known. Even less well known are the sources from which the \$66 million come and the purposes on which it was spent. Making such information available in a way that is both accurate and easy to comprehend would serve a range of meaningful purposes including:

- Enhanced understanding of how districts spend funds for professional development;
- Greater ability to discern what additional data might be needed to make informed decisions about spending on professional development that leads to quality teaching and student achievement;
- Greater consistency of assertions about LEAs' professional development expenditures; and
- More thorough responses to legislative and other inquiries regarding professional development spending.

## Strategies

The Professional Development Initiative developed an accounting of professional development funding (see Appendix F) that:

- Specifies sources and uses of public and foundation funds given to school districts to support professional development; and
- Describes what is known at the state level about NC school district *spending* on professional development stemming from federal, state and local funding.

## Proposal for Action

- Education Cabinet entities disseminate accounting of professional development funding (Appendix F) to relevant stakeholders.
- State and local professional development decision makers and providers should use the funding document to supplement other available information in making professional development decisions.
- DPI and other education cabinet entities should use knowledge and information from accounting of funding in conjunction with data obtained from the Professional Development Initiative's survey of professional development contacts to determine specifics about implementation of a professional development data collection effort. (See Data Collection and Appendix H.)

# data collection: goals, rationale, strategies

See **Appendices H and I** for supporting information regarding the Data Collection component of the Professional Development Initiative.

## Goals

- Expand knowledge of professional development activities across LEAs to help with development of strategies for a state system of quality professional development.
- Determine availability and nature of professional development data at the local level to assist with detailing the merits of developing an enhanced professional development data collection system.

## Rationale

➤ The state collects minimal professional development data from school districts about either the substance or logistics of professional development. Knowledge and understanding of aspects of professional development such as cost, topic, provider, content, duration and funding source are essential to ensuring that every teacher has access to high quality professional development opportunities. Using common data from a professional development data collection system would allow the state and LEAs to move further towards:

- a. Assessing connections between district spending on professional development and professional development that is considered high quality; and
- b. Aligning the selection of professional development at the local level with the state's education priorities, statewide standards for professional development and the Standard Course of Study.

Furthermore, such a system would allow LEAs to develop individual "professional development profiles" that could be of significant use both at the district and state level. Among the uses would be to inform both state and district stakeholders about trends in professional development, potential links between districts' professional development profiles, and their successes and challenges in other areas, namely teacher quality, teacher retention, and potentially, student achievement.

## Strategies

- The Professional Development Initiative used information available from the funding accounting report (see previous section), considered information that was not available, and solicited input from a range of other sources to gauge how professional development data collection at the state level might assist with the overall goal of a system of quality professional development;
- The Professional Development Initiative considered what would be most pertinent to the State and LEAs in terms of data-based decision making for professional development;
- The Professional Development Initiative compiled a list of professional development contacts for every LEA in the state;
- The Professional Development Initiative developed and conducted an online survey of professional development contacts in every LEA regarding available professional development data and other issues related to the Professional Development Initiative; and
- Analyzed survey responses.

## Proposal for Action

For all proposed action steps below it will be important to consider the existing data collection efforts of the Teacher Working Conditions survey as well as the Department of Public Instruction's efforts to gather information from LEAs regarding the high quality professional development requirements of No Child Left Behind.

- The State Department of Public Instruction should develop and implement a professional development data collection effort that allows LEAs, regardless of the system they are using, to report professional development data in a like manner. Districts would report on certain professional development items on a regular basis. The Department of Public Instruction would determine the data required as well as the frequency of reporting with input from district professional development contacts and representatives of the other Education Cabinet entities.
- The scope of reporting required should be substantial, but at the same time lean enough to prevent the need for significant new resources at either the state or district level. One possibility would be the submission by LEAs of a bi-annual professional development data report, with half of the districts reporting each year. Substantive feedback from the state on these reports both collectively and to LEAs individually would be an essential attribute of the system.

- In developing the proposed data collection effort, DPI should determine which districts' systems would need modifications and/or enhanced capacity to allow them to collect the data without unreasonable burden. Results of the Professional Development Initiative survey of district professional development contacts (see Appendix H) can inform the state as it begins to assess those needs.
- The proposed data collection should be piloted in a diverse group of districts before statewide launch.
- The State should use the data to evaluate the extent to which professional development participation is aligned with state priorities and standards for professional development as well as with No Child Left Behind and *Leandro* requirements. (See Appendices J and K.) Data from the Teacher Working Conditions survey should be used to assist with looking at what is already known about such alignments at the district and state levels. (See Teacher Working Condition's survey information at <http://www.governor.state.nc.us/Office/Education/TeacherWorkingConditionsSurvey.asp> or at [www.learnnc.org](http://www.learnnc.org).)
- To the extent possible, the State should use the data to evaluate the impact of professional development on teacher quality and student achievement in North Carolina.
- The State should use the professional development contact list developed by the Professional Development Initiative and the Department of Public Instruction to begin activities toward building a professional development community across the state. All Education Cabinet entities could significantly contribute to and benefit from development of such a community. This proposal is consistent with the Professional Development Committee's 2003 report to the State Board of Education that recommends establishing "area collaboratives for professional development..."

conclusion:

# anticipated outcomes

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The success of the Professional Development Initiative is in large part dependent on the outcomes stemming from implementation of the Proposal for Action. This conclusion therefore, focuses on anticipated outcomes.

The Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group believes that implementation of its Proposal for Action will result in progress towards a system of quality professional development in North Carolina in the following ways:

- Teachers and other consumers of professional development will experience firsthand a commitment from all members of the Education Cabinet that professional development is a high priority, taken seriously and supported and carried out as an integral component of their career development and advancement. This in turn will make students true beneficiaries of the state's commitment to quality professional development for teachers.
- The State will have new strategies for addressing key aspects of No Child Left Behind and *Leandro*.
  - LEAs will be better positioned to meet NCLB provisions that require districts to offer professional development that is:
    - Not limited to one-session offerings, but sustained over time;
    - Developed as part of a school wide plan for improving academic achievement;
    - Research-based; and
    - Part of an overall plan to provide high quality teachers in every classroom.
  - In terms of *Leandro*, the State Board of Education will be responding in part to mandates in the decision regarding the State's responsibility to ensure a high quality education for every student in North Carolina.
- Implementation of statewide standards for professional development will begin to provide a common set of benchmarks against which policymakers, practitioners and administrators can assess the quality of professional development providers and opportunities.
- Standards will become a recognized professional development tool for crafting school improvement plans further integrating their use with efforts to improve teacher quality and classroom practice.
- Establishment of an online professional development resource center will be

the initial step towards tying professional development offerings to state standards, priorities and Standard Course of Study. In doing so it will lead to better equipped and informed consumers in ways that should positively influence the professional development selection process. This in turn should have a positive impact on teachers' experience with professional development and their desire for further professional development opportunities.

- Knowledge of information presented in the document accounting source and uses of professional development funds will encourage stakeholders to “read from the same page” when discussing public funding of professional development and making decisions about that funding.
  - The funding information, presented in this format for the first time, mitigates the frequent incorrect claims and assumptions regarding sources and uses of funds for professional development in North Carolina. It will likely lead to more thorough and accurate responses to legislative and other inquiries regarding professional development spending.
  - Furthermore, it is hoped that the funding explanation will help to reiterate that knowledge of expenditures on professional development alone is not sufficient to make judgments or decisions about teacher quality.
- The proposed system of data collection regarding professional development would enable the state and LEAs to track professional development trends for individual districts and the state as a whole. Data stemming from the system would also provide new opportunities for cross-fertilization among districts in terms of replication of best practices and resource sharing, a benefit that would be particularly attractive to low-resource districts.
- Access to enhanced professional development data would equip the state and individual LEAs with a greater ability to analyze professional development for its effects on certain areas of improvement (or decline) in schools and LEAs. There should be an effort to correlate the enhanced professional development data with other areas to further determine the impact of professional development.



# Professional Development Initiative Proposal *for* Action

## Appendices



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# I. Standards

- A. Summary of Standards for Professional Development
- B. Policy Guidance for State Board of Education
- C. Summary of Subcommittee Activities

# summary of standards

The 12 North Carolina Standards are research-based and organized around three broad areas to support the research: Content, Context, and Process. All are necessary to ensure that professional development improves learning. If one dimension is ignored, the intended results are less likely to be achieved.

**Note:** The wording in this standards chart, created by the Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, comes directly from *Improving Student Achievement through Professional Development*, a report by The North Carolina Professional Development Committee (2002-3), chaired by Cumberland County Superintendent Dr. Bill Harrison. The report contains the full text of the standards and can be found at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/humanresources/prodevreport/pdf>.

## Professional development that improves the learning of all students...

Context	LEARNING COMMUNITIES	1.	...organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district
	LEADERSHIP	2.	...requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement
	RESOURCES	3.	...requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration
	DATA-DRIVEN	4.	...uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress and help sustain continuous improvement
	EVALUATION	5.	...uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact
Process	RESEARCH-BASED	6.	...prepares educators to apply research to decisionmaking
	DESIGN	7.	...uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal
	LEARNING	8.	...applies knowledge about human learning and change
	COLLABORATION	9.	...provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate
	EQUITY	10.	...prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students, create safe, orderly, caring and supportive learning environments and hold high expectations for their academic achievement
Content	QUALITY TEACHING	11.	...deepens educators' knowledge, provides them with research-based instruction strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately
	FAMILY INVOLVEMENT	12.	...provides teachers and school leaders with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately

**Note:** The State Board of Education adopted North Carolina's Standards for Professional Development in March 2003.

# guidance for state board of education policy

In March 2003, the State Board of Education adopted standards for professional development, stemming from the Professional Development Committee's "Harrison Report" (see Setting the Stage). The Professional Development Initiative developed the following specific guidance regarding possible State Board of Education Policy for implementation of the standards and training related to the implementation.

## Recommended Components of State Board of Education Policy

- Dissemination of professional development standards by the Department of Public Instruction to teachers in all LEAs and charter schools, and to the relevant central office staff of all other Education Cabinet entities.
- Information and education provided to all Department of Public Instruction (DPI) staff with professional development responsibilities about the relevance of standards to staff roles within the Department.
- Development of training regarding standards to include:
  - **Content**
    - Best practices for implementing standards at the school level in ways that impact the development of School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and Individual Growth Plans (IGPs)
  - **Structure**
    - Identification of approved trainers for standards implementation, including at least one higher education representative from each region
    - Pilot training that is evaluated and revised before being implemented state-wide
    - Plan for ensuring that training is provided to new professional development coordinators and other key school personnel (see below) when turnover occurs
  - **Audience**

Suggested attendance at training for each school includes:

    - Building administrator
    - SIP chairperson
    - Professional development coordinator/contact
    - Up to 2 other personnel of school's choice
    - Others as determined by LEA
  - **Cost**
    - To be as relevant and cost-effective as possible, the Professional Development Initiative recommends that the training be conducted in conjunction with existing training (Title II training, for example)
  - **Follow-up and evaluation**
    - Design a schedule and methods for evaluating the use of standards in developing IGPs and SIPs and the impact of such use
    - Obtain confirmation from professional development contact/coordinator in each LEA that training occurred in all schools and is ongoing as personnel changes
    - Obtain confirmation by professional development contact/coordinator in each LEA that the standards are implemented following the training

# standards subcommittee summary of activities

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## **Subcommittee membership:**

**Judy Babb** (for Bill Harrison), **Cathy Barlow**, **Debbie Rollins** (for Zoe Locklear), **John Waszak**. The **Duke Center for Child and Family Policy** facilitated the committee.

## **Subcommittee meetings:**

Three times between March and August and one additional time via a conference call with **Pat Roy** from the National Staff Development Council

**Initial activities** during subcommittee meetings March-May 2004 included:

- Review of documents relating to implementing standards, including:
  - Related text from No Child Left Behind
  - NSDC's *Innovation Configurations* and related documents
  - DPI's *Facilitators Guide for training on NSDC's Staff Development Standards (1997)*
  - DPI's *Designing Powerful Professional Development and Professional Development in North Carolina* (Locklear and Rollins)
  - NSDC's *Standards Assessment Inventory*

DPI staff shared information about past work related to professional development standards at the state level. With anecdotal information that knowledge of the standards is limited and deliberate use of the standards even more limited, the committee decided to summarize the standards into a one-page "teacher-friendly" document.

**Through subsequent meetings** and discussions in June and July, the following trends emerged:

- Any proposal stemming from the Professional Development Initiative must consider any existing plans at the state level regarding standards
- At a minimum, dissemination of the standards should occur. Ideally training would accompany or closely follow dissemination and would be supported by state-level policy regarding implementation of standards.

## **Ongoing work of the subcommittee:**

During July and August of 2004, work related to the subcommittee involved:

- Meeting with State Board Chairman **Howard Lee** about drafting policy for standards implementation and other issues
- Development of recommended goals and implementation steps for
  - Disseminating standards to LEAs, IHEs and other relevant stakeholders
  - Developing training/guidance for LEAs, IHEs related to the implementation of standards
  - Detailed recommendations related to steps and process by which above items could occur (see Appendix B)
- A determination that the above goals would best be accomplished through a combination of: 1) State Board of Education policy regarding implementation of standards; and 2) the active involvement of all Education Cabinet entities in ensuring the application of standards in practice at both the professional development provider and teacher level.

# II. Online Resource Center

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D. Description and Guidance

E. Summary of Subcommittee Activities

# description and guidance

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## I. Purpose

The North Carolina Professional Development Online Resource Center will be an Internet-based information resource devoted to quality professional development. It is targeted towards a range of professional development stakeholders, key among them LEAs' professional development coordinators, teachers, principals and other K-12 personnel. It will:

- Include a searchable database of professional development providers;
- Include a searchable database of professional development opportunities that reflect key areas identified by the State Board of Education in which North Carolina must progress to realize improved teacher quality and student achievement; and
- Provide information and guidance about how consumers might assess whether an opportunity is of high quality by demonstrating alignment with North Carolina's
  - Standard Course of Study
  - Standards for professional development
  - State priorities for K-12 education

## II. Goals

The Resource Center's primary goal is to level the playing field regarding access to information about professional development providers and opportunities by:

- Providing consumers with the information they need to select appropriate, useful and meaningful professional development that will positively impact teacher quality and student achievement.
- Providing consumers with a more targeted menu from which to consider selection of professional development opportunities in carrying out their school improvement plans.
- Requiring providers to establish linkages between the professional development opportunities they offer and North Carolina's Standard Course of Study, the state's standards for professional development, and the state priorities for K-12 education.
- Obtaining information about who's using the resource center, location of offerings, accessibility of offerings and other related information in order to enhance knowledge about professional development.

### III. Key Components

#### *The Resource Center will:*

- 1) Include a directory of professional development providers, which will focus on including those that address the key areas of improvement but from which no provider is excluded;
- 2) Include a menu of professional development opportunities that address the set of areas identified by the State Board of Education as requiring improvement for the state as a whole to progress. According to the State Board, based on analysis in 2003-04, these areas are:
  - Student performance in middle, high and alternative schools;
  - Student proficiency in following subgroups: Hispanics, students with disabilities, Limited English Proficiency, free and reduced lunch; and
  - High school performance, particularly among African-American and free and reduced lunch students;
- 3) Allow (and possibly require in some instances) user feedback about providers and offerings; and
- 4) Provide opportunities for data collection such as tracking usage patterns. The Resource Center will not necessarily, however, be a reliable source of data to answer substantive questions surrounding professional development in North Carolina.

#### *Caveats:*

Inclusion in the resource center will not be a proxy for approval of a specific provider or offering. In designing the Resource Center, efforts will be made to mitigate the extent to which users and providers assume that inclusion means approval.

The Resource Center will not provide a quality “guarantee” for the providers or offerings included. Quality, however, will be addressed by requiring providers to explain how their offerings align with the state’s five priorities for K-12 education, standards for professional development and Standard Course of Study.

### IV. Governance and Infrastructure

#### *1) The Resource Center will include the following components at a minimum:*

- a. **Oversight** – The NC Education Cabinet will have ultimate approval of the final design and capabilities of the Resource Center.
- b. **Operations management** – As determined by the results of an RFP, one entity will manage Resource Center operations. All operations activities, however, such as the technological aspects (see c. below), would not necessarily be carried out by the managing entity. The managing entity, however, *would* be accountable for all aspects of the Resource Center.
- c. The **technological component** will be key to operations. This expertise could be carried out by the managing entity or in a separate entity that essentially reports to the entity responsible for managing operations.

- 2) **Cost.** It is not feasible to calculate the cost of starting up and maintaining such a resource center without knowing which model the State will choose to implement. A directory of providers could be initiated at virtually no cost other than staff time, which would consist of short-term intensive work followed by updates on a regular basis. The NC Professional Teaching Standards Commission is prepared to begin this effort. Depending on the model selected, preliminary inquiries suggest that development, initial launch and initial maintenance could be accomplished for \$100,000 to \$500,000. Key decisions regarding listing approval process, overall capacity and so on will significantly impact actual start-up and maintenance costs.

## V. Guidance pertaining to an RFP to select an entity to manage and operate online resource center

### A. Provider Directory

#### *Provider registration process*

*Providers would be asked to make the following assurances:*

- Their professional development opportunities reflect the NC Standard Course of Study;
- They understand NC's approved Standards for Professional Development;
- The opportunities they provide that are listed in the resource center align with the Professional Development Standards;
- They understand that any review of their submission concerns only completeness of the information they submit; and
- They understand that inclusion in the system does not imply endorsement of quality and/or approval.

Providers would also be asked to supply information about their record of service in North Carolina and other states (clients, track record, etc.).

#### **Information submission and review:**

- Before being allowed to register, the complete listing as entered by the provider will be sent back to the provider (instantly) for review. The provider will be required to review the listing to confirm accuracy and appropriateness.
- Before going live the submission will be reviewed by Resource Center staff. After review, the submission will automatically be added. Review will be for completeness on required fields not for content of individual professional development opportunities.
- To assess accuracy of listed information, there will be ongoing spot-checking of information submitted by providers. At the outset this checking will be more intensive to get a sense of how likely it is that providers submit inaccurate information (presumably unintentionally). This would help to identify potential problems for consumers using the system and steps needed to limit errors.
- Once registered, providers will receive a user ID and password that will allow them to submit events for listing in the calendar and for editing/updating their entries.

- After a specified time period, an email will be sent to registered providers who have not logged in requiring them to log in and update their registration information. Any provider that does not log in and check that they have updated their information could potentially be removed from the registry.

### **Provider characteristics**

The resource center will include a listing for each provider who completes the registration form, which will include the following provider information:

- Name
- Type/classification of the provider such as state-funded, not-for-profit, for-profit etc. (classifications would be proposed by the Professional Development Work Group for Education Cabinet approval)
- Contact information
- Public email address
- Email address for professional development portal info contact
- Geographical area served
- Link to provider website
- Professional development areas of expertise
- Other information as relevant

### **B. Menu of professional development opportunities**

- Providers whose offerings meet the specified specific above will be invited to submit details about specific professional development opportunities after registering with the online resource center. In addition, resource center staff will continuously add relevant opportunities.
- Providers will supply information on topics such as the following (all of which will be searchable categories):
  - Event Title
  - Date and Time
  - Location
  - Instructor
  - Type of Event
  - Intended Audience
  - Instructional Setting
  - Grade Level
  - Alignment with which competencies of the NC Standard Course of Study
  - Alignment with which NC Professional Development Standards
  - Event Description
  - Prerequisites
  - Credit Options
  - Cost/fee
- Review of submissions will be conducted to ensure completeness (not to approve).
- Calendar listings will go “active” on pre-determined dates and will be cleared from the system after the start date of the activity.

### **C. Detailed system capabilities**

- Searchable/Browseable – The resource center will be searchable by multiple fields, such as provider and opportunity characteristics above, as well as by state’s identified key focus areas.
- User Ratings – Users who wish to post feedback about a provider can assess the provider based on selected criteria. This capability would also invite users to share findings about the potential impact of specific professional development on student achievement.
- Wizard/Walk Through – When a cursor moves over different fields on the webpage, non-intrusive window boxes with guidance and links to more information pop up on the screen.
- Consumer Registration – Consumers can register with the system to receive notifications when particular types of providers or opportunities are posted.
- Usage Patterns – The resource center will be able to contribute to data collection on a range of items, such as resource center usage patterns, number of hits and repeat visitors.

### **D. Additional Recommendations**

- Visibly place information on the site about North Carolina’s Standard Course of Study, state priorities and standards for professional development.
- As part of the resource center, provide a rubric tied to standards to help consumers choose the “right” professional development opportunities.
- Include information in the resource center about research that looks at quality professional development.
- Include a mechanism to address technological problems and a means for users to report problems and request assistance.

### **E. Preparing for launch**

It is critical not to launch the resource center – even as a pilot – until it can provide sufficient information to be useful to a cross-section of professional development consumers and stakeholders. With this in mind,

- Ensure that initial directory is as comprehensive as possible by: 1) scouring all Education Cabinet entities for *appropriate* providers to include given the goals of the resource center; and 2) communicating with stakeholders about how to submit provider information.
- Ensure that a process is in place for additional providers to register (possibly by providing a link where providers can submit contact information and see a timeline for their addition).
- Ensure that the menu of opportunities focused on key areas for improvement includes a wide selection of choices in terms of characteristics such as location, provider, and cost.

- Ensure that process is in place for adding opportunities as appropriate.
- Pilot the launch – conduct live test of the site for an initial period with a diverse group of LEAs, providers and other stakeholders.
- Ensure access for all school districts in the state prior to launch (barring technological hindrances).

# summary of subcommittee activities

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**Note:** *The Professional Development Initiative adopted the term “online resource center” in place of clearinghouse.*

## **Subcommittee membership:**

**Henry Foust, Karen Gerringer** (for Richard Thompson), **Zoe Locklear, Ann McArthur, Ebbie Monroe, Tim McDowell, Delores Parker, Mike Pittman** (for Delores Parker), **Joyce Rhodes, Debbie Rollins** (for Zoe Locklear), **Ed Shearin, Richard Thompson, Jane Worsham**. The **Duke Center for Child and Family Policy** facilitated the committee.

## **Subcommittee meetings:**

Three meetings between April and July.

**Initial activities** regarding the online resource center: Prior to the first meeting, the Professional Development Initiative researched “clearinghouses” in other states. This revealed numerous issues for consideration, including: the legal issues that would emerge if the state pursued a professional development provider approval process; the fact that even if the clearinghouse did not “approve” professional development offerings, inclusion in the clearinghouse could imply approval; and the likely challenges of maintaining the clearinghouse. Detailed information about professional development offerings/systems for each LEA in NC was also collected.

- The following activities occurred in anticipation of the first subcommittee meeting in April:
  - Gathered information about several existing entities that might prove relevant to the online resource center under consideration, including LEARN NC, the Piedmont Triad Consortium, and AHEC;
  - Contacted **Tom Ziko** in the NC Attorney General’s office regarding the feasibility/potential liabilities with a rating system for providers and professional development opportunities;
  - Produced a summary of the professional development information currently available on the Internet for all LEAs in the state. The summary includes information that surfaces when a search is done in each LEA for “Professional Development” or “Staff Development”;
  - Determined that **Rebecca Zulli** of the Education Research Council would provide staff support to the Center for Child and Family Policy in facilitating the clearinghouse subcommittee; and
  - Held individual conversations with every Education Cabinet representative in light of the many issues surrounding development of an online resource center.
  
- The Clearinghouse Subcommittee met for the first time on April 13<sup>th</sup>. The committee agreed that “what is meant by clearinghouse” needed further definition. Much discussion centered not on the potential content of the clearinghouse, but on its oversight and governance. In addition, it was decided that the clearinghouse should not ultimately be limited to a “yellow pages” of professional development opportunities, but must include a quality component. The committee identified the following items, among others, to address in moving forward:

- Possibilities of where the clearinghouse would “reside,”
- Who could monitor and/or govern its activities,
- What portals could be used for access,
- Identifying content samples, etc., and
- Investigating the possibility of introducing legislation to establish the clearinghouse and its support with start-up funds.

**Through subsequent meetings and discussions** the following trends emerged:

- Discussions concerning the clearinghouse began to focus more on its content and use, recognizing that much remains to be decided in terms of its governance and infrastructure but that only the Education Cabinet could resolve those issues. It became evident that a funding commitment would be necessary fairly soon to ensure real progress towards development of a clearinghouse. It appeared that legislation requiring a commitment to both the development and implementation of the clearinghouse might be desirable. It was also determined that the clearinghouse would now be referred to as the “online resource center” for professional development.
- At the full Implementation Work Group meeting in June, the online resource center subcommittee presented a detailed preliminary proposal concerning the possible design, infrastructure and governance of the center.

Additional activities during May and June included:

- Continued research into clearinghouse models from other states;
- Further development of subcommittee recommendations with support from the Education Research Council;
- Meetings with stakeholders to obtain feedback on the preliminary proposal for the online resource center.

**Continuing work related to the subcommittee:**

- At the July subcommittee meeting it was determined that identifying financial resources was the most critical element of ensuring the success of the Online Resource Center. Other than creating an initial directory of providers little could be done towards establishment of the resource center without funding. Several work group members who represent Education Cabinet members expressed that “this is as far as we’ve ever gotten with a clearinghouse;” however, ongoing skepticism was expressed regarding the commitment to make the Center a reality. Also at the July meeting, Jim Barber and David Walbert of LEARN NC offered lessons learned from their experience with launching an effort that has relevance for the resource center.
- At the August 27<sup>th</sup> full Implementation Work Group meeting, members agreed that with the goals established and a preliminary proposal for the resource center complete, time would be best spend engaging with other stakeholders and working on a proposal to the Education Cabinet for the development of the resource center.



# III. Funding

**F. Sources and Uses of Funds for Professional Development**

**G. Summary of Subcommittee Activities**

## K-12 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING IN NORTH CAROLINA

In late 2003, with the support of North Carolina's Education Cabinet, the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation launched the *Professional Development Initiative* to help the state enhance its system of professional development for teachers. With input from the Education Cabinet, the Foundation convened an Implementation Work Group for the *Initiative*. With the Foundation's support and drawing in part on work done previously through related efforts, the Work Group is developing several specific strategies designed to help North Carolina enhance its system of professional development.

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Creating a powerful system of professional development that contributes to the improvement of teaching and learning demands a detailed understanding of the use of funds devoted to professional

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Among the efforts undertaken by the Work Group was the development of the following "funding map" specifying the sources and uses of funds given to school districts and charter schools to support professional development. The Work Group noted the lack of widely available information regarding how districts and schools allocate funds for professional development and developed this document to provide an accurate picture of what is known at the state-level about school district and charter school spending on professional development. While the available information is limited, this document describes what is known about the use of these funds at the local level.

### Scope of Report

This report pertains only to funds that school districts and charter schools spend on professional development activities. It provides information on professional development funds allocated to school districts and charter schools by the North Carolina General Assembly, the federal government, local government entities such as school boards, county commissions, and city councils, and private foundations. The report does not include information on funds allocated by government or private sources to specific providers, such as those within the UNC Center for School Leadership Development, universities and community colleges, or the Department of Public Instruction.

### Professional Development Activities in North Carolina School Districts and Charter Schools

North Carolina requires teachers and administrators to complete fifteen units of professional development renewal credit every five years in order to maintain state licensure. To support these professional development activities, state, federal, and local governments and private foundations provide funds directly to local school districts and charter schools.

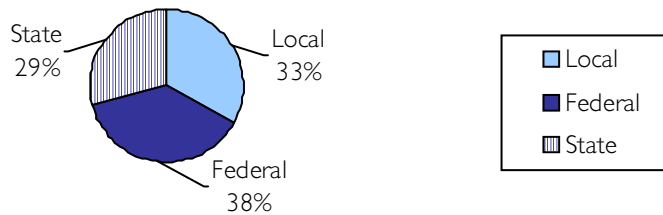
In 2002-03, North Carolina school districts and charter schools spent nearly \$66.5 million dollars on professional development activities. The federal government provided the largest

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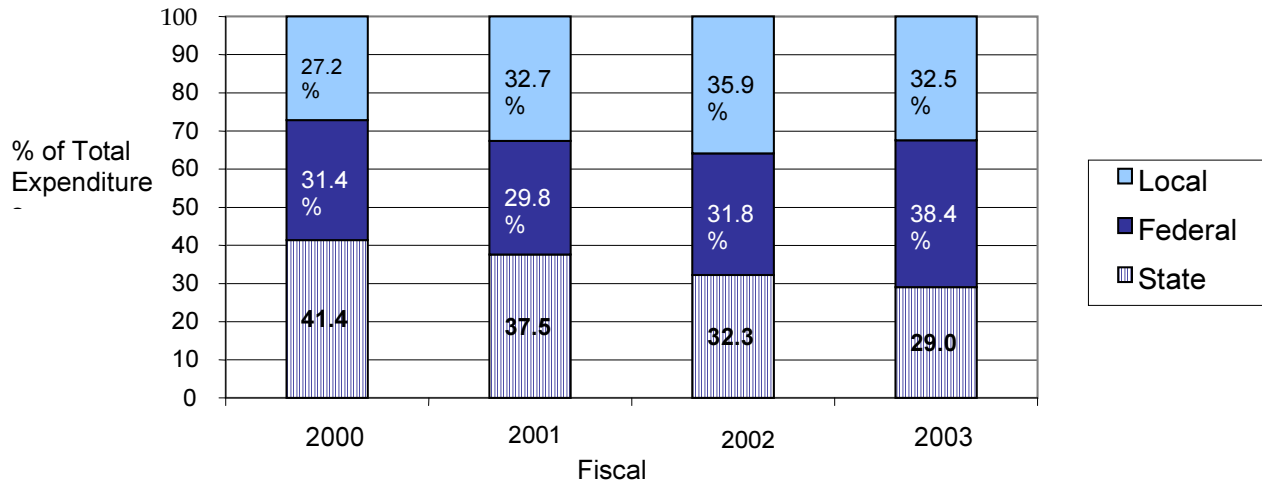
Data Source: NC Department of Public Instruction, Financial and Business Services, School Business, Information Analysis and Support, *Analysis of Staff Development Expenditures* (including School Districts and Charter Schools), 2002-03.

share of professional development funds expended by school districts and charter schools – approximately \$25 million or 38 percent of district professional development expenditures. The North Carolina General Assembly provided nearly \$19 million, or 29 percent, and local governments and private foundations provided \$22 million, or 33 percent, of district professional development expenditures.

2002-03 Professional Development Expenditures



Since 2000, school district and charter school spending on professional development has increased from \$52 million to the current \$66.5 million. This expansion can be attributed to an increase in federal and local allocations for professional development. From 2000 to 2003, the percentage of professional development funds allocated by the state of North Carolina declined from 41 percent to 29 percent, while federal and local allocations increased. Federal funds currently account for 38 percent of district professional development expenditures, up from 31 percent in 2000. Local funds account for nearly 33 percent of these expenditures, up from 27 percent in 2000.



## Federal Funding for Professional Development

In 2002-03, North Carolina school districts and charter schools spent more than \$25 million in federal professional development funds. More than seventeen different federal programs included funds for professional development.

Federal Program Area	Allocation	Percentage of Total Federal Professional Development Funds
Title I	\$ 8,465,988.65	34%
Title II - Improving Teacher Quality	5,899,066.02	23%
Eisenhower Professional Development	2,325,573.87	9%
Vocational Education - Program Improvement	1,366,404.77	5%
Educational Technology	1,235,135.17	5%
IDEA Title VI-B	1,160,465.18	5%
FIE Comprehensive School Reform (CSR)	762,465.88	3%
Title IV - Safe & Drug-Free Schools/Communities	607,565.81	2%
Title V - Innovative Education Program Strategies	521,057.88	2%
Federal Aid to Charter Schools	388,992.91	2%
Vocational Education - Federal Tech Prep	373,497.94	1%
Class Size Reduction	335,041.10	1%
Technology Literacy Challenge Fund	129,779.56	.5%
School Improvement Grants (Goals 2000)	117,061.65	.5%
Competitive Safe and Drug-Free Schools	88,452.23	.4%
Goals 2000 - Low-Performing Schools	77,567.37	.3%
Other	1,406,231.06	6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 25,260,347.05</b>	<b>100%</b>

## State Funding for Professional Development

In 2002-03, school districts and charter schools spent nearly \$19 million in state professional development funds. Fifty-one percent (51 percent) of the professional development funds provided by the North Carolina General Assembly may be used for any type of professional development. The remaining 49 percent of state funds must be used to provide professional development to support particular state programs.

State Program Area	Allocation	Percentage of Total State Professional Development Funds
Staff Development (Unrestricted)	\$ 9,649,257.02	51%
Low-Wealth/Small County	1,553,350.00	8%
Children With Special Needs (Includes Willie M.)	1,287,617.60	7%
Vocational Education - Program Support	1,209,105.64	6%
At-Risk/ Alternative Schools	1,087,421.04	6%
School Technology Fund	1,067,910.08	6%
Academically/Intellectually Gifted	817,894.49	4%
Student Accountability Standards	791,972.49	4%
Charter Schools	414,526.11	2%
Transportation of Pupils	358,843.72	2%
Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	277,700.24	2%
Other	329,294.16	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 18,852,972.76</b>	<b>100%</b>

Once state professional development funds reach a school district or charter school, they are relatively unrestricted. North Carolina mandates that at least 75 percent of state funding for staff development be forwarded directly to school principals. A district central office may retain up to 25 percent of state funds for use in district-wide professional development programming. However, a number of districts forward 100 percent of their funds to school principals.

Principals, in varying levels of cooperation with Superintendents, determine the goals, purpose, content, and scope of professional development activities for their staff. School districts can, and often do, provide professional development “in-house,” by their own staff or consultants. To offer professional development, schools and districts also partner with various programs across the state, such as regional education service alliances, community colleges, university teacher education programs, the NC Department of Public Instruction, and the UNC Center for School Leadership Development.

State funds not spent by the end of the fiscal year (June 30<sup>th</sup>) may be retained and used by school districts and charter schools prior to December 31<sup>st</sup>. In 2002-03, school districts and charter schools carried over nearly \$3 million in unspent professional development funds. Most of these funds were ultimately spent on summer professional development programs.

### Local Funding for Professional Development

School districts and charter schools are required to report to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction on all local government and grant funds expended to support professional development. In 2002-03, North Carolina school districts and charter schools spent \$22 million in local professional development funds. Their reports do not distinguish between funds received from local governments and those received from private sources. Nonetheless, the Department of Public Instruction does note that county and city governments provide the vast majority of local funds.

## The Use of Professional Development Funds

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's *Uniform Chart of Accounts* is the only state-level mechanism for tracking the use of school district and charter school professional development funds. All school district and charter school professional development expenditures must be reported to the Department of Public Instruction. Expenditures recorded in the *Chart of Accounts* are coded by source (federal, state, or local) and by type. The primary professional development expenditure types are:

- 1) Workshop expenses, including supplies, travel, facility costs, and related items.
- 2) Substitute pay and benefits,
- 3) Salaries and benefits for teachers serving as professional development instructors, and
- 4) Contracted services, including salaries for non-payroll instructors.

Approximately 80 percent of all federal, state, and local professional development funds are spent on workshop expenses, including supplies, travel, facility costs, and related items. Nearly 15 percent of professional development funds are used to provide pay and benefits for substitute teachers replacing teachers while they are engaged in professional development activities. The remaining 5 percent of funds are used primarily to pay teachers and other consultants who are serving as professional development instructors.

### Conclusion

While the *Uniform Chart of Accounts* provides an accurate accounting of the flow of professional development dollars, it does not provide the more detailed information needed to track the substantive professional development choices made by local school districts and charter schools. For instance, the *Chart of Accounts* does not provide information on the providers, topics, or format of the professional development provided by school districts and charter schools. If the state wishes to move forward with enhancing professional development-related data collection, it is relevant to note that because it is an accounting system, and not a data collection system, the *Chart of Accounts* is not likely to be an appropriate mechanism for gathering this type of information.

North Carolina school districts and charter schools are required to maintain a record of the professional development activities in which their teachers and principals participate. However, they are not asked to provide this information to the Department of Public Instruction or any other state entity. In many districts, electronic data collection systems record information on the provider, topic, format, length, and other characteristics of the professional development selected by teachers and principals. Because data collection systems vary from district to district, the breadth, accessibility, and utility of this information are not currently known.

The *Z. Smith Reynolds Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group* is examining several options for the establishment of a system for collecting, synthesizing, and analyzing data on teacher professional development in North Carolina. Creating a powerful system of professional development that contributes to the improvement of teaching and learning demands a detailed understanding of the use of funds devoted to professional development activities. The Work Group believes that a full understanding of this information may be essential to ensuring that every teacher has access to high quality professional development opportunities.

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Data Source: NC Department of Public Instruction, Financial and Business Services, School Business, Information Analysis and Support, *Analysis of Staff Development Expenditures* (including School Districts and Charter Schools), 2002-03.

Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

# summary of subcommittee activities

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## **Subcommittee membership:**

Melissa Bartlett, Sandra Jones, Ebbie Monroe, Marge Ronco, Jane Worsham. The Duke Center for Child and Family Policy facilitated the committee.

## **Subcommittee meetings:**

Two meetings between March and July.

**Initial activities** regarding development of a document that captures the sources and uses of professional development funding:

- Prior to the first subcommittee meeting in April, the Professional Development Initiative collected information about sources and uses of professional development funds in NC, with assistance from Education Research Council staff.
- At its first meeting, the committee reviewed the initial compilation of information about professional development funding and focused on:
  - How to present available professional development funding information in a manner that makes it easy as possible for all stakeholders to comprehend, while maintaining as much detail as possible
  - Whether to recommend additional reporting items concerning professional development funding. Considerations included the balance between possible benefits to schools, districts and the state of having more thorough information about professional development expenditures with the possible added workload resulting from collection and analysis of new data. A key question was whether or not additional information exists about professional development funding that would further inform the connection among professional development, teacher quality and student achievement.
- At its May meeting and in discussions that followed, the committee decided to:
  - Finalize the accounting of professional development funding, which would include a breakdown of spending by source and category of expenditure; narrative explanations of the information; and acknowledgement that the funding document *does not*, in its current iteration, provide specific insight about the quality of professional development offered.
  - Explore the possibility of proposing a more comprehensive system of data collection regarding professional development.
- **Through subsequent work**, the funding subcommittee completed the accounting of professional development funds. The product details what is currently known about the sources and uses of funds for professional development, and is part of the Professional Development Initiative's proposal for action. The full Implementation Work Group agreed that knowledge of such information is critical to ensuring that the education leadership of the state and other key stakeholders have a common understanding of professional development spending. The Work Group determined, however, that the document does not answer ongoing questions from legislators and others about the quality of professional development purchased with the funding and the impact on teacher quality and student

achievement. Recognizing that the Work Group would not likely unearth a direct link between professional development and student achievement that research to date has not been able to confirm, it decided to further pursue the issue of data collection with the goal of ultimate benefit to the state and LEAs in making the best decisions about professional development.

**Committee work concluded:**

The Funding Subcommittee completed its work. Existing members of the committee along with several new members became the data collection subcommittee.



# **IV. Data Collection**

**H. Survey of District Professional Development Contacts:  
Results and Analysis**

**I. Summary of Subcommittee Activities**

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# Survey of District Professional Development Contacts

Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council  
in consultation with the  
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative  
Implementation Work Group

September 2004

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Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the  
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

## Survey of District Professional Development Contacts

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- The Professional Development Work Group and representatives from the Department of Public Instruction gathered the first list of “professional development contacts” for each of the 115 school districts in the state. Each North Carolina school district was asked to identify a district “professional development contact” – the district staff member with primary responsibility for professional development activities.
- Each professional development contact received an email containing a brief description of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative and requests to assist the Initiative’s Implementation Work Group by completing an online survey.
- 88 of the 115 school districts completed the online survey – a response rate of approximately 77%.

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Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

## Survey of District Professional Development Contacts

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- The 88 school districts that responded to the survey are representative of range of districts across the state in terms of size, wealth, ABCs performance, and geographic location.
  - Data on the size, wealth, ABCs performance, and geographic location of each district were examined for commonalities among districts who offered similar responses to each of the survey questions. Where meaningful commonalities appeared, they have been noted in the following analysis.
-

# Survey Respondents

Number of Respondents:

88

Profile of Respondents:

Primary Job Responsibilities	# and % of Respondents
<p>Full-time professional development coordinators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charlotte, Cumberland, Gaston, Wilson, &amp; Buncombe</li> <li>All with significantly more students than the average LEA in state</li> </ul>	5 (6%)
Primary responsibility for professional development, with other duties	31 (35%)
Primary responsibility in other areas, with some involvement in professional development	52 (59%)

Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

## Survey Respondents

In which of the following activities do you engage on a regular basis?  
(Check all that apply.)

Professional Development Responsibilities	% of Respondents
Distribute information received about professional development opportunities	96%
Plan professional development programs	86%
Select professional development providers for teachers and principals in the district	81%
Maintain Continuing Education Unit records for teachers and principals in my district	64%
Serve as an instructor for professional development programs	57%

Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

# Knowledge of Professional Development Standards

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How familiar are you with North Carolina's statewide standards for professional development, which the NC State Board of Education approved in March 2003?

15 respondents (17%) indicated that they were not aware of the existence of the NC professional development standards. These respondents were predominantly from counties:

- in the eastern coastal and western mountain regions,
- with fewer students than the state average, and
- with more students in poverty than the state average.

Nearly three-quarters of respondents indicated that they were somewhat (44%) or very (28%) familiar with the NC standards.

- 62% of these respondents learned of the standards from personnel, conferences, or communications from the NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI).
- More than 20% of these respondents learned of the standards from their superintendent or other district colleagues.

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Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

## Factors for Selecting Professional Development

Indicate the 3 most important factors you consider when selecting or recommending a professional development program for teachers in your LEA.

Factor Identified	% of Respondents
Topic	73%
Research support	60%
Cost	47%
Recommendations from personnel in their LEA	31%
Provider	23%
Evaluations from past participants	15%

- 14 respondents (15%) used the “Other” category to report that they consider the goals and needs of the district, schools, and teachers participating when selecting or recommending a professional development program.

Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

# Identifying High Quality Professional Development

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Is it difficult for you to determine if professional development opportunities available to teachers and principals in your district are of high quality?

60 respondents (68%) reported that they do not have difficulty determining whether available professional development is of high quality.

22 respondents (25%) did report having difficulty determining whether available professional development is of high quality. These respondents:

- were not from districts that consistently varied from other districts in terms of size, wealth, location, or performance,
- identified the same primary factors for selecting professional development (topic, cost, research support, recommendation from others in LEA , provider, and evaluations from past participants), and
- were less likely to be aware of the existence of state professional development standards.

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Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

# Finding High Quality Professional Development

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Is it difficult for you to find quality professional development opportunities for teachers and principals in your district?

Three-quarters of respondents (66) reported that they do not have difficulty finding quality professional development for the teachers and principals in their district.

The 19 respondents (22%) that did report having difficulty finding high quality professional development:

- were less likely than other respondents to identify themselves as having primary responsibility for professional development in their district,
- were less likely to be aware of the existence of state professional development standards.
- identified the same primary factors for selecting professional development (topic, cost, research support, recommendation from others in LEA , provider, and evaluations from past participants), and
- reported having slightly more difficulty determining if available professional development activities are of high quality.

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Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

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# Selecting Professional Development

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Who selects the professional development activities in which teachers in your district participate?

- Respondents indicated that district personnel, teachers, and school improvement teams select most of the professional development in which their teachers participate.
- Nearly one-third of respondents reported that responsibility for the selection of professional development is shared by four or five groups – state personnel, district personnel, school improvement teams, principals, and teachers.
- State personnel were least often identified as having responsibility for the selection of professional development.

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Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

# Delivering Professional Development

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## Who delivers the professional development in which teachers in your district participate?

- Respondents indicated that district personnel, school personnel, private providers or consultants, and state personnel deliver most of the professional development in which their teachers participate.
- More than half of respondents (57%) indicated that their district relies primarily on one provider, most often district personnel.
- 26% of respondents reported that professional development is delivered by four or five groups – state personnel, district personnel, school improvement teams, principals, and teachers.
- Private universities and community colleges were least often identified as a source of professional development.

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Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

# Data on Professional Development

What system does your district use to record the professional development activities in which teachers and principals participate?

System	# and % of Respondents
SEA System (System for Evaluating and Assessing Professional Development )	32 (36%)
District computer-based system	23 (26%)
District paper-based system	18 (21%)
HRMS (Human Resource Management System)	9 (10%)
Other (Avatar Course Insite, eSchool Solutions, SchoolLink, SolutionWhere)	5 (6%)

Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

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## Data on Professional Development

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What information does your professional development system record?

- Respondents using any of the data systems generally reported that their system records the following information:
  - Topic
  - Title or Course Name
  - Date of Program
  - Length of Program
  - Participant Identifier
  - CEU's (Continuing Education Units) Provided

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Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

# Data on Professional Development

What information does your professional development system record?

- The majority of respondents reported that their data system does not record the following information:

Data System	Information
SEA System	Provider Location of Program
District computer-based system	Cost Source of Funds Used for Teacher's Participation Program Quality
District paper-based system	Cost Source of Funds Used for Teacher's Participation Program Quality
HRMS	Location of Program Cost Source of Funds Used for Teacher's Participation Program Quality

Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

## Data on Professional Development

Identify any limitations to examining a summary of all of the professional development activities in your district in a given school year.

- 29 respondents (33%) indicated that their district could produce and examine a summary of all professional development activities without difficulty.
- The remaining 59 respondents reported the following potential difficulties:

Limitations of Data Systems	% of Respondents
Information is difficult or time consuming to access	35%
System does not include information on all activities	34%
Information is in multiple systems that are not easily coordinated	17%
System does not include information for all teachers and principals	16%
Information is costly to access	7%

Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

# Data on Professional Development

System	Limitations Reported	# of Times Reported by Users	% of Users Reporting
SEA System (32 users)	Does not include information for all activities	13	41%
	No Limitations	12	38%
	Difficult or time consuming to access information	6	20%
	Does not include information for all teachers/principals	6	20%
District computer-based system (23 users)	Does not include information for all activities	11	48%
	Difficult or time consuming to access information	9	39%
	No limitations	8	35%
District paper-based system (18 users)	Difficult or time consuming to access information	11	61%
	Data in multiple systems and not easily coordinated	6	33%
	No limitations	4	22%
HRMS (9 users)	Difficult or time consuming to access information	3	33%
	Does not include information for all activities	2	22%
	No Limitations	2	22%

Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

## Summary of Survey Responses

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**Profile of Respondents:** In the sample, full-time professional coordinators were only employed by districts with more students than the state average. In most districts, professional development activities are managed by district staff members whose primary responsibilities are unrelated to professional development.

**Knowledge of PD Standards:** Through the efforts of DPI and district leaders, most respondents indicated that they were aware of the existence of state professional development standards. Respondents from smaller, more remote districts were less likely to report being aware of the standards.

**Factors for Selecting PD:** Respondents reported most often considering the topic, research support, cost, and recommendations of other district staff when selecting a professional development activity for teachers in their district.

**Identifying High Quality PD:** Most respondents indicated that they had little trouble identifying high quality professional development. Respondents that did report having difficulty identifying quality programs were less likely to be aware of the existence of the state professional development standards.

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Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the  
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

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## Summary of Survey Responses, continued

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**Finding High Quality PD:** Most respondents reported having little trouble finding high quality professional development. Respondents that did report having difficulty finding quality programs were less likely to identify professional development as their primary job responsibility and less likely to be aware of the existence of the state professional development standards.

**Selecting PD:** Respondents indicated that district personnel, teachers, and school improvement teams share responsibility for selecting most of the professional development in which their teachers participate.

**Delivering PD:** Respondents indicated that district personnel, school personnel, private providers or consultants, and state personnel deliver most of the professional development in which their teachers participate.

**Data on PD:** Respondents indicated that their districts use a variety of self-created and commercially-available data systems to record information on professional development participation. The format, information recorded, and ease of use varies widely across data systems.

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Prepared by the North Carolina Education Research Council in consultation with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Professional Development Initiative Implementation Work Group, August 2004.

# summary of subcommittee activities

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**Subcommittee membership:**

Judy Babb, Debbie Rollins (representing DPI), Karen Geringer (representing Richard Thompson), Sandra Jones, Ann McArthur, Ebbie Monroe, Marge Ronco, Jane Worsham. The Duke Center for Child and Family Policy facilitated the committee.

**Subcommittee meetings:**

Met 2 times between July and August.

**Initial activities** regarding data collection:

- The Data Collection Subcommittee first met in July. It grew out of the funding subcommittee to address issues that arose related to the development of the professional development funding document. Among these issues is the need for a system of data collection for professional development that would provide both the state and LEAs with specifics about how professional development funding is spent at the local level and how those spending decisions may impact the extent to which teachers receive high quality professional development. The committee pledged that any proposal related to new data collection would take into account the potential workload for the state and LEAs.
- The major component of the subcommittee's work was a survey of each LEA's contact/coordinator for professional development. In conjunction with DPI, the Professional Development Initiative had worked since the Initiative's launch to compile a list of professional development contacts for each LEA for use with such a survey and other purposes. The committee and full Implementation Work Group provided questions for the survey, which Education Research Council staff used to develop the online survey instrument. The survey asked questions about the current state of professional development data collection at the district level, the role of professional development contacts/coordinators and the Initiative's focus areas (standards, online resource center, funding). The survey was sent to 115 LEAs contacts in August and generated a remarkable 88 responses.

**Subsequent meetings and discussions:**

- The subcommittee met in late August to review preliminary survey results and discuss next steps. There was consensus that initial results provided much-needed information regarding existing professional development data collection at the local level. Results also provide insight about LEAs' capacity to collect such data in a systematic way should the state decide to pursue such an effort.

**Continuing work related to the subcommittee:**

- The Data Collection Subcommittee wed the survey results to analysis to inform its proposal for action regarding state-level data collection for professional development.

# Resource Materials

- J. No Child Left Behind and Professional Development
- K. The *Leandro* Decision and Professional Development
- L. Research Bibliography
- M. *First in America* Teacher Survey and Professional Development Responses
- N. Stakeholder Input

# no child left behind and professional development

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The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, was signed into law by President George W. Bush on January 8, 2002. NCLB requires increased accountability for States, school districts, and schools; greater choice for parents and students, particularly those attending low-performing schools; more flexibility for States and local educational authorities (LEAs) in the use of Federal education dollars; and a stronger emphasis on reading. (Source: [www.ed.gov/nclb](http://www.ed.gov/nclb))

Implementation of the Professional Development Initiative's proposal for action would help the state with its response to NCLB requirements. If the recommended actions are implemented, the State will be in a far better position to document that the professional development pursued by North Carolina teachers is research-based, cost effective, based on state and local goals, and has the greatest potential for improving student achievement. In addition, the Professional Development Initiative's proposal for action provides a vehicle for making the delivery of professional development a more collaborative effort.

**Excerpt:**

NCLB Section 2112, State Applications (below) clearly describes how states are to carry out professional development using this federal funding. (**Bold and underlined** added to this document for clarity.)

**SEC. 2112. STATE APPLICATIONS.**

- (a) IN GENERAL- For a State to be eligible to receive a grant under this part, the State educational agency shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may reasonably require.
- (b) CONTENTS- Each application submitted under this section shall include the following:
- (1) A description of how the activities to be carried out by the State educational agency under this subpart will be **based on a review of scientifically based research and an explanation of why the activities are expected to improve student academic achievement.**
  - (2) A description of how the State educational agency will ensure that a local educational agency receiving a subgrant to carry out subpart 2 will comply with the requirements of such subpart.
  - (3) A description of how the State educational agency will ensure that activities assisted under this subpart are aligned with challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards, State assessments, and State and local curricula.
  - (4) A description of how the State educational agency will use funds under this part to improve the quality of the State's teachers and principals.
  - (5) (A) A description of how the State educational agency will **coordinate professional development activities authorized under this part with professional development activities provided under other Federal, State, and local programs.**

(B) A description of the comprehensive strategy that the State educational agency will use, as part of such coordination effort, to ensure that teachers are trained in the use of technology so that technology and applications of technology are effectively used in the classroom to improve teaching and learning in all curricula and academic subjects, as appropriate.

(6) A description of how the State educational agency will encourage the development of **proven, innovative strategies to deliver intensive professional development programs that are both cost-effective and easily accessible, such** as strategies that involve delivery through the use of technology, peer networks, and distance learning.

(7) (A) A description of how the State educational agency will ensure **compliance with the requirements for professional development activities described in section 9101 and how the activities to be carried out under the grant will be developed collaboratively and based on the input of teachers, principals, parents, administrators, paraprofessionals, and other school personnel.**

(B) In the case of a State in which the State educational agency is not the entity responsible for teacher professional standards, certification, and licensing, an assurance that the State activities carried out under this subpart are carried out in conjunction with the entity responsible for such standards, certification, and licensing under State law.

(8) A description of how the State educational agency will ensure that the professional development (including teacher mentoring) needs of teachers will be met using funds under this subpart and subpart 2.

(9) A description of the State educational agency's annual measurable objectives under section 1119(a)(2).

(10) A description of how the State educational agency will use funds under this part to meet the teacher and paraprofessional requirements of section 1119 and how the State educational agency will hold local educational agencies accountable for meeting the annual measurable objectives described in section 1119(a)(2).

(11) In the case of a State that has a charter school law that exempts teachers from State certification and licensing requirements, the specific portion of the State law that provides for the exemption.

(12) An assurance that the State educational agency will comply with section 9501 (regarding participation by private school children and teachers).

The following excerpt from section 9101 of the ESEA defines professional development and is referenced in section 2112, above (see [7]).

- 34) **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT-** The term professional development' –
- (A) includes activities that –
- (i) improve and increase teachers' knowledge of the academic subjects the teachers teach, and enable teachers to become highly qualified;
  - (ii) are an integral part of broad schoolwide and districtwide educational improvement plans;
  - (iii) give teachers, principals, and administrators the knowledge and skills to provide students with the opportunity to meet challenging State academic content standards and student academic achievement standards;
  - (iv) improve classroom management skills;

- (v) (I) 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; and
    - (II) are not 1-day or short-term workshops or conferences;
  - (vi) support the recruiting, hiring, and training of highly qualified teachers, including teachers who became highly qualified through State and local alternative routes to certification;
  - (vii) advance teacher understanding of effective instructional strategies that are –
    - (I) based on scientifically based research (except that this subclause shall not apply to activities carried out under part D of title II); and
    - (II) strategies for improving student academic achievement or substantially increasing the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers; and
  - (viii) are aligned with and directly related to –
    - (I) State academic content standards, student academic achievement standards, and assessments; and
    - (II) the curricula and programs tied to the standards described in subclause (I) except that this subclause shall not apply to activities described in clauses (ii) and (iii) of section 2123(3)(B);
  - (ix) are developed with extensive participation of teachers, principals, parents, and administrators of schools to be served under this Act;
  - (x) 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 services to those children, including the appropriate use of curricula and assessments;
  - (xi) 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;
  - (xii) 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;
  - (xiii) provide instruction in methods of teaching children with special needs;
  - (xiv) include instruction in the use of data and assessments to inform and instruct classroom practice; and
  - (xv) include instruction in ways that teachers, principals, pupil services personnel, and school administrators may work more effectively with parents; and
- (B) may include activities that –
- (i) 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;
  - (ii) create programs to enable paraprofessionals (assisting teachers employed by a local educational agency receiving assistance under part A of title I) to obtain the education necessary for those paraprofessionals to become certified and licensed teachers; and
  - (iii) 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.

# north carolina supreme court

## *Leandro* decision and professional development

### **Brief History of *Leandro***

As summarized on [www.ncjustice.org](http://www.ncjustice.org), the *Leandro* ruling's history is as follows:

In May of 1994, parents, school boards and students from 5 low wealth counties filed a lawsuit contending that the State did not provide enough money for them to provide their children with a quality education. Six urban school districts also asked to be parties in the lawsuit, stating that the state funding formula did not provide them with sufficient money to educate their at-risk students and students for whom English is not their first language. In 1997, the NC state supreme court issued its historic ruling that the state constitution guarantees "every child of this state an opportunity to receive a sound basic education in our public schools". The case was then sent back to Superior Court with instructions for the lower court to assess whether or not the State had met its constitutional obligation to provide an equal opportunity for a sound basic education. After the Superior Court trial, Judge Howard Manning issued a series of findings and rulings specifying entitlements for every public school student.

### ***Leandro and the Professional Development Initiative***

Article 1) of the ruling (below) clearly concerns professional development. The Professional Development Initiative's proposal for action could be considered a partial response to the ruling. The Initiative's proposal for action calls for equalized access to information about and opportunities for quality professional development, stricter attention to what constitutes quality professional development at both the state and district level and strategies for moving towards an overall system of professional development that would enhance the competency of teachers across the state. Also related to the Initiative, the ruling emphasizes the *State's* responsibility for providing a "sound basic education" to all students.

### **The Status of *Leandro*** (Status provided here is as of November 1, 2004.)

In the 2004 short session, the State Board of Education requested \$22 million from the General Assembly to address the *Leandro* ruling. (See [www.ncpublicschools.org/news/](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/news/) for a related letter from then Superintendent Mike Ward and State Board of Education Chairman Howard Lee to Judge Manning.) The General Assembly did not appropriate the funds. After the session adjourned, Governor Easley allocated \$12 million for the requested purposes.

*Leandro* activity continues. Judge Manning held hearings on October 7 and October 25, 2004 to address outstanding issues regarding *Leandro*. Just before the first hearing, Governor Easley announced an additional \$10 million in responses to *Leandro*. Just before the second, the state submitted a preliminary plan for addressing the challenges outlined in the case and its rulings. Judge Manning has scheduled the next hearing for December 7, ordering the state to submit a more detailed plan by December 3 to allow all parties to review its contents in advance of the hearing.

**Excerpt from the fourth ruling, pp. 110-113:**

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED:**

1. *Article I, Section 15 and Article IX, Section 2 of the North Carolina Constitution, as interpreted by Leandro*, guarantee to each and every child the right to an equal opportunity to obtain a sound basic education requires that each child be afforded the opportunity to attend a public school which has the following educational resources, at a minimum:

First, that every classroom be staffed with a competent, certified, well-trained teacher who is teaching the Standard Course of Study by implementing effective educational methods that provide differentiated, individualized instruction, assessment and remediation to the students in that classroom.

Second, that every school be led by a well-trained competent Principal with the leadership skills and the ability to hire and retain competent, certified and well-trained teachers who can implement an effective and cost-effective instructional program that meets the needs of at-risk children so that they can have the equal opportunity to obtain a sound basic education by achieving grade level or above academic performance.

Third, that every school be provided, in the most cost effective manner, the resources necessary to support the effective instructional program within that school so that the educational needs of all children, including at-risk children, to have the equal opportunity to obtain a sound basic education, can be met.

2. That there are children at-risk of educational failure who are not being provided the equal opportunity to obtain a sound basic education because their particular LEA, such as the Hoke County Public Schools, is not providing them with one or more of the basic educational services set out in paragraph 1, above.

3. That the State of North Carolina is ultimately responsible for providing each child with access to a sound basic education and that this ultimate responsibility cannot be abdicated by transferring responsibility to local boards of education. *Leandro* pp. 347,351

4. That the State of North Carolina is ORDERED to remedy the Constitutional deficiency for those children who are not being provided the basic educational services set out in paragraph 1, whether they are in Hoke County, or another county within the State.

5. The nuts and bolts of how this task should be accomplished is not for the Court to do. Consistent with the direction of *Leandro*, this task belongs to the Executive and Legislative Branches of Government. By directing this be done, the Court is showing proper deference to the Executive and Legislative Branches by allowing them, initially at least, to use their informed judgment as to how best to remedy the identified constitutional deficiencies.

6. This Court's prior Memoranda of Decisions entered on October 12, 2000 (Section One); October 26, 2000 (Section Two); March 26, 2001 (Section Three) as amended by Order entered May 29, 2001, are incorporated as part and parcel of this Memorandum of Decision and Judgment. All Four Memoranda of Decision constitute the Decision and Judgment of this Court.

7. The State of North Carolina is directed to keep the plaintiff-parties fully informed of the progress of its efforts to remedy the constitutional deficiencies identified and the plaintiff-parties are directed to fully cooperate with the State of North Carolina in accomplishing its task.

8. The State of North Carolina is directed to keep the Court advised of the remedial actions taken by the State by written report filed with the Court every 90 days, or as otherwise may be directed by the Court.

9. This Court retains jurisdiction over this matter for purposes of resolving any remaining issues, including, but not limited to, enforcement of this Judgment as provided by Leandro.

This the \_\_\_\_\_ day of April, 2002.

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Howard E. Manning, Jr.  
Superior Court Judge

# professional development initiative a bibliography

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The following are samples of articles reporting studies conducted to examine the effect of professional development activities on teacher quality and student achievement. For ease in locating them, articles and studies available on the Internet are highlighted in this list. Challenges emerged in searching for these articles:

- 1) Most of the studies examining professional development have only been conducted in the past 15 years and a wide variety of professional development activities have been included. As a result, consistent findings regarding specific forms of professional development are lacking.
- 2) Many organizations, such as the NEA, the Center for Teaching Quality, and the National Council of Staff Development, have a number of studies on professional development. The general consensus is that professional development is good for the teachers and the students. However, much of the data is qualitative, such that teachers, principals, students, or other members of the school community discuss how professional development has helped improve teaching in the classroom but this data is usually in the form of personal opinions. Very few studies have directly linked teacher professional development and student achievement as measured by grades, test scores, or other “hard” numbers.

Many additional articles exist that are not included in this bibliography, partly to contain the length of the bibliography, partly to select the studies that best represent how professional development affects teacher quality and student achievement, and partly to focus on information that is easily accessible. A number of additional articles are available in professional journals. Several of these are mentioned at the end of this bibliography.

**“Alabama’s Reading Initiative promotes high quality professional development.” (2001). *Teaching Quality in the Southeast: Best Practices and Policies*, #6. [On-line] Available: <http://www.teachingquality.org>**

This article examines an effort in Alabama, begun in 1998, called the Alabama Reading Initiative to work to combat the state’s low reading scores. In 1998, over 100,000 students were reading below grade-level. By 2001, 17,000 teachers had received training in a research-based literacy approaches. Since the Initiative began, schools have seen marked increases in reading achievement across the state. At one school, for instance, 62.5% of students who had been identified as marginal readers in the previous year were reading at grade level or above the next year.

**Berry, B., Turchi, L., Johnson, D., Hare, D., & Owens, D. (2003). “The impact of high-stakes accountability on teachers’ professional development: Evidence from the South – A final report to the Spencer Foundation.” [On-line] Southeast Center for Teaching Quality. Available: <http://www.teachingquality.org>**

This report focused on a cross-state examination of the influence of high stakes accountability on teacher learning and the support that teachers receive to use instructional practices designed to better student achievement. The study asked three questions about professional development for teachers: 1) how do different state accountability systems affect teachers' responses to their own professional development, 2) how do teachers from schools with different accountability ratings respond to their own professional development, and 3) how do schools and districts mediate high stakes accountability, professional development, and student achievement. Overall, the teachers surveyed felt that their professional development had been improving with more emphasis on the state curriculum standards. However, the authors found "little evidence of systematic professional development that allowed teachers opportunities to problem solve how to teach certain concepts or analyze the work of specific students in order to build amore adaptive curriculum" (36).

**Cohen, D.K. & Hill, H.C. (1998). "State policy and classroom performance: Mathematics reform in California." CPRE Policy Briefs, RB-23. [On-line] Available: <http://www.cpre.org>**

Cohen and Hill examined 1994 data for the California Learning Assessment System (CLAS), which included testing of elementary students' knowledge of mathematics. Beginning in 1985 in California, the State Education Department had revamped its curriculum for mathematics calling it a Mathematics Framework and this became a central part of the state's instructional policy. The State Department of Education encouraged teacher professional development to work with this Mathematics Framework and a new mathematics assessment. The authors studied what learning opportunities were available to the teachers and whether there was any connection between teachers' learning opportunities and practice. The authors followed teachers for four or five years. Using 1994 test data, the researchers compared teachers' use of professional development activities and its association with student performance on the CLAS and found a relationship between student achievement scores and schools where all teachers had learned about the CLAS.

**Corcoran, T., McVay, S., and Riordan, K. (2003). "Getting it right: The MISE approach to professional development." CPRE Research Report Series, RR-055. [On-line] Available: <http://www.cpre.org/Publications/PD Paper.pdf>**

This paper examines the Merck Institute for Science Education (MISE). Begun in 1993, MISE had two stated goals: raise the interest, participation, and performance of public-school students in science; and demonstrate to other businesses that direct, focused involvement would hasten improvements in science teaching and learning in public schools. MISE formed partnerships with four school districts in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The partnerships led to building cultures of instructional improvement at the district schools and to the broadening of access to professional development. The project involved intense efforts to convince teachers to participate in peer-teacher workshops. The report outlines MISE's overall approach to professional development, the impact of MISE's work, and the measurement of student performance under this program. It concludes that this systemic approach works and that sustained support for reform changes the norms of practice.

**Elmore, R.F. & Burney, D. (1997). "Investing in teacher learning: Staff development and instructional improvement in Community School District #2, New York City." [On-line] Available: <http://www.nctaf.org>**

Elmore and Burney report on one district's efforts to use staff development to change instruction across the district and to improve student achievement. Between 70 and 100 percent of students'

families in 14 (out of 48) of the district's schools were below the poverty line and 20% of the students in the district used English as a second language. The superintendent of the district emphasized that professional development would be used, in a variety of ways, to improve teaching and learning in the schools within the district. This staff development was used system-wide, not just in individual schools. As a result, the district, which in 1987 ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in the city in reading and 4<sup>th</sup> in mathematics out of 32 districts, ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in reading and 2<sup>nd</sup> in mathematics in 1996.

**Guiney, E. (2001). "Coaching isn't just for athletes: The role of teacher leaders." Phi Delta Kappan, 82, 740-743. [On-line] Available: <http://www.pdkintl.org>**

Guiney's article summarizes the changes that the Boston Public School system is implementing with their approach to professional development. The approach uses professional development coaches within schools to help teachers do everything from leading teachers through writing workshops to helping them analyze test results. The school systems' approach is based on 2 strategies: "1) focus on instruction and on professional development to improve instruction, and 2) place an...emphasis on helping teachers work together, make their work public, and end teacher isolation." The early results are that students from schools participating the longest in the coaching approach to professional development are seeing major increases in their performance on standardized tests, including the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System.

**Hathcock, K. (1998). "Good teaching matters." [On-line]. Available: <http://www.edtrust.org>**

Hathcock examines different factors that make a teacher effective in this report from the Education trust. She first looks at three states or school systems and how an effective teacher can influence students' achievement scores in those states or school systems. Hathcock poses the question, what makes for teacher effectiveness and how can districts ensure that all students have equal access to qualified teachers? To accomplish this, Hathcock argues that there are six strategies for the education community to follow, one of which is to encourage ongoing, on-site and content-focused professional development for all teachers. She then cites two examples where school districts, one in New York City and one in El Paso, Texas, made professional development for its teachers a major priority and witnessed tremendous gains in student achievement.

**Hirsch, E. & Hirsch, S. "Professional Development Policy Brief." (2004). [On-line] Available: <http://www.ncsl.org>**

Hirsch and Hirsch examine the current state of teacher professional development across the country and conclude that "only ongoing teacher learning through professional development can make current teachers aware of changing expectations and newly-validated, effective teaching methods." The authors also report that, despite the acknowledged importance of professional development, many states' education policies do not address the quality and duration of good professional development. The brief describes effective professional development as being research-driven, standards-based, internalized as part of the workday for teachers, content-rich, and school-focused. The authors also suggest that professional development needs to be the responsibility of a wide community – state departments of education, universities and colleges, local school systems, and so on. Finally, states need to have specific allocations for professional development; this would demonstrate the state's understanding of the importance of professional development as well as reduce the disparity of spending among school districts.

**“How do teachers learn to teach effectively? Quality indicators from quality schools.” (2003). *Teaching Quality in the Southeast: Best Practices and Policies*, 2. [On-line] Available: <http://www.teachingquality.org>**

An effort between the Southeast Center for Teaching Quality at UNC-Chapel Hill and Just For Kids, a non-profit based in Texas, studied 12 schools in Texas, 7 of which had closed the achievement gap for poor and minority students. These 7 were contrasted with 5 average performing schools. Case studies were then conducted on 4 schools—2 that had closed the gap and 2 that were average performing—to identify the practices that had led to the closing of the achievement gap. One of the findings of this study was the importance of professional development for teachers. For example, one high performing school gave extra professional development to new teachers, and one high-performing school trained all of its teachers in gifted and talented instruction to raise the levels of teaching in all of the classrooms.

**Togneri, W. & Anderson, S.E. (2003). “Beyond islands of excellence: What districts can do to improve instruction and achievement in all schools.” [On-line] Available: <http://www.learningfirst.org>**

This study examined five high poverty districts (with a poverty rate of at least 25%) that were showing improvement in student achievement, by improving scores in math and/or reading over three years and had closed the gap between races, grade levels, and ethnicities. All of the districts had a reputation for using effective professional development practices. Of the factors that led these school districts to demonstrate improvement in student achievement, several of them concerned the districts’ approach to professional development. Professional development was system-wide, emphasizing content and instructional support; the districts supported a vision that focused on student achievement and guided instructional improvement; and, the districts were all willing to see and use professional development in a new light by making sure it was data-based and research-based, created networks of instructional experts, supported new teachers, making sure professional development had financial backing, and providing more data and data interpretation assistance to teachers and principals.

*Additional Articles (not necessarily available online):*

**Flecknoe, M. (2000). “Can continuing professional development for teachers be shown to raise pupils’ achievement?” *Journal of In-Service Education*, 26(3), 437-457.**

This article describes the evaluation of a British continuing teacher professional development program that focused on school improvement, school effectiveness, and action research. Teachers participated in professional development, and then conducted interventions in their schools to raise student achievement. Overall, the program contributed to increased student achievement.

**Kahle, J. B., Meece, J., & Scantlebury, K. (2000). “Urban African-American middle school science students: Does standards-based teaching make a difference?” *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 37(9), 1019-1041.**

This study examines the influence of standards-based teaching practices on the achievement of urban, African-American, middle school science students. Science classes of teachers who had participated in the professional development of Ohio’s statewide systemic initiative (SSI) were matched with classes of teachers who had not participated. Teachers’ involvement in SSI was

positively related to reported use of standards-based teaching practices in the classroom, and teachers who frequently used such practices positively influenced urban, African-American students' science achievement and attitudes.

**Langer, J. (2000). "Excellence in English in middle and high school: How teachers' professional lives support student achievement." *American Educational Research Journal*, 37(2), 397-440.**

This study examined the characteristics of teachers' professional lives that accompany student achievement in writing, reading, and English. The study was conducted in the classrooms of 44 middle and high school teachers in four states, in 25 schools and districts that were attempting to improve students' literacy abilities. The sample includes a high representation of schools and districts serving poor and traditionally low-performing students and diverse student bodies. In 14 of the schools, students were "beating the odds," performing better than other students in demographically similar areas. In 11 schools, administrators and teachers wanted their students to do better, but the school scores were more typical of other schools with similar demographics. Six features were identified that marked the "beating the odds" schools. The effective schools (1) coordinated efforts to improve student achievement, (2) fostered teacher participation in a variety of professional communities, (3) created structured improvement activities in ways that offered teachers a sense of agency (control), (4) valued commitment to the profession of teaching, (5) engendered a caring attitude to colleagues and students, and (6) fostered a deep respect for lifelong learning.

**Smith, S. (2001). "Systemic staff development improves student achievement." *Education Canada*, 40(4), 27-31.**

When the Battle River Regional School Division (Alberta, Canada) realized that multiple staff development priorities were fragmenting school and district focus on increasing student achievement, it formed a committee of regional, district, and school stakeholders that developed six staff development priorities, all promoting student achievement, and coordinated stakeholder strategies so they complemented each other. Student achievement test results have improved.

# *First in America* Teacher Survey and Professional Development Responses

Prepared by the  
North Carolina Education Research Council  
October 2004

## Summary of Survey Responses Relating to Professional Development

The First in America Teacher Survey was first conducted in 1999 when no other similar efforts were conducted in the state that sought to survey teachers about their experiences in school. This data was deemed essential for the purposes of the First in America (FIA) report tracking the state's progress toward achieving the First in America goal of being first in the nation in education by the year 2010. The survey was conducted annually from 1999-2002. After 2002 the data collection schedule was changed from annually occurring to occurring every two years. The most recent FIA Teacher Survey was conducted in 2004 from May through July. The FIA Teacher Survey is a mail survey of North Carolina school teachers. The survey instrument was designed with outside assistance by the staff of the North Carolina Education Research Council. In recent years, the Governor's Working Conditions Initiative was established which includes a biannual collection of survey data from teachers in North Carolina regarding their perceptions of the working conditions in their schools. Because of the availability of a new regularly updated data source the North Carolina Education Research Council began exploring the possibility of being able to transition from utilizing the FIA Teacher Survey to the Governor's Teacher Working Conditions Survey in future years if methodological issues can be appropriately resolved. As a first step toward this transition, a few questions from the FIA survey were added to the 2004 Working Conditions survey, and several of the questions from the Teacher Working conditions survey were added to the 2004 FIA survey of teachers.

### Methods

Surveys were mailed to 2,400 randomly selected teachers across North Carolina. An equal sample size was chosen from each of three size categories (small, medium, and large) and four poverty levels (0-25 percent, 26-50 percent, 51-75 percent, and 76-100 percent) per district. Later, weights were applied to make the sample representative of the population. A cover letter signed by the State Superintendent of Public Schools, a blank teacher survey, and a self-addressed business reply envelope were mailed to teachers included in the sample. Additionally, a reminder postcard was sent two weeks later asking them to complete and return the survey. Follow-up telephone calls were made to address questions or concerns teachers had about the survey, and additional surveys were faxed or mailed to participants as necessary. A total of 983 teachers responded to the survey for a response rate of 41 percent.

*First in America Teacher Survey-*  
**Responses to Professional Development Questions**

Question	Total % agreeing or strongly agreeing N= 983
Enhancing teacher knowledge and skills receives priority as the most important strategy to improve student achievement	68%
The school leadership makes a sustained effort to provide quality professional development in my school.	75%
Professional development opportunities in my school are based on state or national standards.	83%
To a great extent, my professional development experiences over the past year were of high quality.	72%
My principal promotes professional development that focuses on improving student learning.	78%
I am satisfied with my opportunities for professional development.	54%
<b>Question: Overall, to what extent do the following describe the professional development sponsored or supported by you LEA in which you participated during the period from June 2003- May 2004</b>	<b>% reporting moderate or great extent N=983</b>
Planned according to school needs	81%
Useful for helping students to achieve high standards	81%
Ongoing, integrated professional development program	72%
Aligned with high standards	82%
Provided strategies to apply in the school	79%
Provided follow-up activities	64%
Provided networking activities	54%

Expanded, refreshed, and developed my knowledge of the content I teach.

59%

Increased my knowledge of how students learn the content I teach.

62%

**Question- Since the end of the school year have you participated in any in-service or professional development programs that focused on....**

**% answering  
"YES"  
(median # of hours)**

Use of educational technology for instruction

64% (6 hours)

Methods of teaching your subject field

68% (10 hours)

In-depth study of your subject field

30% (10 hours)

Student assessment

52% (5 hours)

## Grade Level Differences in Responses to Professional Development Questions

Question	Total % agreeing or strongly agreeing N=983	PreK-3 N=274	Grades 9-12 N=291
Enhancing teacher knowledge and skills receives priority as the most important strategy to improve student achievement	68%	81%	57%
The school leadership makes a sustained effort to provide quality professional development in my school.	75%	86%	63%
Professional development opportunities in my school are based on state or national standards.	83%	90%	72%
To a great extent, my professional development experiences over the past year were of high quality.	72%	79%	59%
My principal promotes professional development that focuses on improving student learning.	78%	85%	70%
I am satisfied with my opportunities for professional development.	54%	64%	42%
<b>Question: Overall, to what extent do the following describe the professional development sponsored or supported by you LEA in which you participated during the period from June 2003- May 2004</b>	<b>% reporting moderate of great extent N=983</b>	<b>PreK-3 N=274</b>	<b>Grades 9-12 N=291</b>
Planned according to school needs	81%	87%	75%
Useful for helping students to achieve high standards	81%	90%	68%
Ongoing, integrated professional development program	72%	84%	60%

Aligned with high standards	82%	89%	70%
Provided strategies to apply in the school	79%	86%	66%
Provided follow-up activities	64%	72%	52%
Provided networking activities	54%	61%	47%
Expanded, refreshed, and developed my knowledge of the content I teach.	59%	77%	39%
Increased my knowledge of how students learn the content I teach.	62%	76%	48%
<b>Question- Since the end of the school year have you participated in any in-service or professional development programs that focused on....</b>	<b>% answering "Yes"</b> (median # of hours)	<b>PreK-3</b> N=274	<b>Grades 9-12</b> N=291
Use of educational technology for instruction	64% (6hrs)	60% (6hrs)	65% (6hrs)
Methods of teaching your subject field	68% (10 hrs)	81% (10 hrs)	53% (8 hrs)
In-depth study of your subject field	30% (10 hrs)	34% (10 hrs)	30% (12 hrs)
Student assessment	52% (5 hrs)	36% (5 hrs)	53% (5 hrs)

## School Poverty Level Differences in Responses to Professional Development Questions

Question	Total % agreeing or strongly agreeing N=983	0-25% students in poverty N=230	76-100% students in poverty N=226
Enhancing teacher knowledge and skills receives priority as the most important strategy to improve student achievement	68%	57%	75%
The school leadership makes a sustained effort to provide quality professional development in my school.	75%	73%	75%
Professional development opportunities in my school are based on state or national standards.	83%	78%	85%
To a great extent, my professional development experiences over the past year were of high quality.	72%	66%	75%
My principal promotes professional development that focuses on improving student learning.	78%	67%	82%
I am satisfied with my opportunities for professional development.	54%	50%	59%
<b>Question: Overall, to what extent do the following describe the professional development sponsored or supported by you LEA in which you participated during the period from June 2003- May 2004</b>	<b>% reporting moderate of great extent N=983</b>	<b>0-25% students in poverty N=230</b>	<b>76-100% students in poverty N =226</b>
Planned according to school needs	81%	73%	83%
Useful for helping students to achieve high standards	81%	72%	85%
Ongoing, integrated professional development program	72%	66%	75%

Aligned with high standards	82%	74%	87%
Provided strategies to apply in the school	79%	72%	84%
Provided follow-up activities	64%	56%	65%
Provided networking activities	54%	44%	55%
Expanded, refreshed, and developed my knowledge of the content I teach.	59%	53%	68%
Increased my knowledge of how students learn the content I teach.	62%	53%	75%
<b>Question- Since the end of the school year have you participated in any in-service or professional development programs that focused on...</b>	<b>% answering "YES"</b> (median # of hours)	<b>0-25% students in poverty</b> N=230	<b>76-100% students in poverty</b> N=226
Use of educational technology for instruction	64% (6 hrs)	72% (9 hrs)	65% (7 hrs)
Methods of teaching your subject field	68% (10 hrs)	67% (10 hrs)	67% (10 hrs)
In-depth study of your subject field	30% (10 hrs)	29% (10 hrs)	33% (10 hrs)
Student assessment	52% (5 hrs)	49% (5 hrs)	56% (5 hrs)

## District Size Differences in Responses to Professional Development Questions

Question	Total % agreeing or strongly agreeing N= 983	District Size less than 4,000 N=342	District Size 4000-10,000 N=317	District Size more than 10,000 N=324
Enhancing teacher knowledge and skills receives priority as the most important strategy to improve student achievement	68%	65%	68%	69%
The school leadership makes a sustained effort to provide quality professional development in my school	75%	76%	77%	74%
Professional development opportunities in my school are based on state or national standards	83%	80%	84%	82%
To a great extent, my professional development experiences over the past year were of high quality.	72%	70%	73%	71%
My principal promotes professional development that focuses on improving student learning.	78%	81%	82%	76%
I am satisfied with my opportunities for professional development.	54%	54%	56%	52%
<b>Question: Overall, to what extent do the following describe the professional development sponsored or supported by you LEA in which you participated during the period from June 2003- May 2004</b>	<b>% reporting moderate of great extent N=983</b>	<b>District Size less than 4,000 N=342</b>	<b>District Size 4000-10,000 N=317</b>	<b>District Size more than 10,000 N=324</b>
Planned according to school needs	81%	81%	81%	81%
Useful for helping students to achieve high standards	81%	77%	81%	81%
Ongoing, integrated professional development program	72%	68%	72%	73%
Aligned with high standards	82%	78%	81%	82%
Provided strategies to apply in the school	79%	80%	78%	89%

Provided follow-up activities	64%	55%	64%	66%
Provided networking activities	54%	49%	50%	56%
Expanded, refreshed, and developed my knowledge of the content I teach.	59%	53%	57%	61%
Increased my knowledge of how students learn the content I teach.	62%	55%	60%	63%
<b>Question- Since the end of the school year have you participated in any in-service or professional development programs that focused on....</b>	<b>% answering "Yes" (median # hrs)</b>	<b>District Size less than 4,000 N=342</b>	<b>District Size 4000-10,000 N=317</b>	<b>District Size more than 10,000 N=324</b>
Use of educational technology for instruction	64% (6 hrs)	58% (7 hrs)	67% (5 hrs)	63% (6 hrs)
Methods of teaching your subject field	68% (10 hrs)	63% (10 hrs)	59% (10 hrs)	72% (10 hrs)
In-depth study of your subject field	30% (10 hrs)	28% (10 hrs)	29% (10 hrs)	30% (12 hrs)
Student assessment	52% (5 hrs)	50% (5 hrs)	48% (4hrs)	54% (5 hrs)

## Teacher Experience Differences in Responses to Professional Development Questions

Question	Total % agreeing or strongly agreeing N=983	2-5 years teaching N=186	6-10 years teaching N=176	11-20 years teaching N=289	More than 20 yrs teaching N=319
Enhancing teacher knowledge and skills receives priority as the most important strategy to improve student achievement	68%	61%	73%	66%	73%
The school leadership makes a sustained effort to provide quality professional development in my school.	75%	73%	67%	73%	82%
Professional development opportunities in my school are based on state or national standards.	83%	80%	83%	85%	83%
To a great extent, my professional development experiences over the past year were of high quality.	72%	69%	63%	73%	77%
My principal promotes professional development that focuses on improving student learning.	78%	78%	77%	76%	81%
I am satisfied with my opportunities for professional development.	54%	60%	50%	52%	54%
<b>Question: Overall, to what extent do the following describe the professional development sponsored or supported by your LEA in which you participated during the period of June 2003-May 2004</b>	<b>Total % agreeing or strongly agreeing N=983</b>	<b>2-5 years teaching N=186</b>	<b>6-10 years teaching N=176</b>	<b>11-20 years teaching N=289</b>	<b>More than 20 yrs teaching N=319</b>
Planned according to school needs	81%	79%	75%	84%	86%
Useful for helping students to achieve high standards	81%	73%	85%	82%	83%
Ongoing, integrated professional development program	72%	71%	75%	69%	74%
Aligned with high standards	82%	77%	85%	79%	86%
Provided strategies to apply in the school	79%	78%	82%	76%	81%

Provided follow-up activities	64%	56%	67%	62%	71%
Provided networking activities	54%	53%	53%	47%	62%
Expanded, refreshed, and developed my knowledge of the content I teach.	59%	57%	58%	57%	63%
Increased my knowledge of how students learn the content I teach.	62%	65%	59%	62%	62%
<b>Question: Since the end of the school year have you participated in any in-service or professional development programs that focused on...</b>	<b>% answering "Yes" (median hrs)</b>	<b>2-5 years teaching</b>	<b>6-10 years teaching</b>	<b>11-20 years teaching</b>	<b>More than 20 yrs teaching</b>
Use of educational technology for instruction	64% (6 hrs)	55% (5 hrs)	69% (6 hrs)	61% (6 hrs)	68% (6 hrs)
Methods of teaching your subject field	68% (10 hrs)	64% (10 hrs)	77% (10 hrs)	71% (10 hrs)	62% (10 hrs)
In-depth study of your subject field	30% (10 hrs)	27% (13 hrs)	30% (12 hrs)	31% (10 hrs)	30% (10 hrs)
Student assessment	52% (5 hrs)	53% (5 hrs)	55% (5 hrs)	47% (5 hrs)	54% (5 hrs)

Comparison of responses to the same questions as answered on the  
*First in America Teacher Survey* and the  
*Governor’s Teacher’s Working Conditions Survey*

Question	<i>First in America</i> Total % agreeing or strongly agreeing N=983	<i>Teacher Working Conditions</i> Total % agreeing or strongly agreeing N=
Enhancing teacher knowledge and skills receives priority as the most important strategy to improve student achievement	68%	69%
The school leadership makes a sustained effort to provide quality professional development in my school.	75%	79%
Professional development opportunities in my school are based on state or national standards.	83%	74%

# stakeholder input

**Note:** *The activities listed here reflect a portion of meetings and other specific interaction carried out by Initiative consultants Jenni Owen and Ann Skinner, not the ongoing discussions both in person and by phone and e-mail with a wide range of stakeholders. Furthermore, the activities below do not include the many examples of meaningful stakeholder involvement engaged in by the Initiative's Implementation Work Group members and the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation.*

## December 16, 2003-January 30, 2004:

- Meeting with **Barnett Barry** of Southeast Center for Teacher Quality (SECTQ). Follow-up meeting scheduled with **Eric Hirsch** of SECTQ.
- Informal contact continued with teachers and administrators regarding professional development plans/systems.

## January 29 – February 26:

- Contacted **Debbie Rollins** at DPI about whether systematic needs assessment procedures exist in NC schools, and to discuss guidance to LEAs regarding the inclusion of professional development plans into their School Improvement Plan (SIP).
- Meeting with **Beth Glennie**, Director of the North Carolina Education Data Center to discuss how the Education Data Center at Duke or research conducted with this data might be used to support the Professional Development Initiative.
- Met with **Bryan Hassel** of Public Impact to share goals of Initiative, get additional stakeholder suggestions and learn more about the Professional Development Tool Kit.
- Met with **Eric Hirsch** of Southeast Center for Teaching Quality to learn more about the National Staff Development Council's 2002 report on professional development in NC (commissioned by the General Assembly) and to discuss professional development models in other states.
- Collected more detailed information from LEAs about their professional development offerings/systems.

## March 2004:

- Gathered information about existing entities related to the professional development clearinghouse discussion at February Work Group Meeting:
  - i. LEARN NC
  - ii. Piedmont Triad Consortium
  - iii. AHEC
- Continued contacting a range of public school personnel in attempt to collect sample IGPs and SIPs.
- Spoke with **Tom Ziko** in NC Attorney General's office regarding feasibility/potential liabilities with clearinghouse rating system
- Met with **Debbie Rollins**, Staff Development Coordinator at DPI to discuss the Department's current activity around statewide standards and how the Professional Development Initiative can work hand in hand with DPI's efforts.

- Met with **Joyce Loveless** and **Karen Garr** of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.
- Continued informal process of engaging with teachers and other K-12 stakeholders.

#### April – May

- Spoke with **Gerald Ponder**, UNC-Greensboro Professor about the possibility of a professional development clearinghouse
- Met with **Dave Boliek** and **Harold Brewer** of ExplorNet.

#### June – July 2004:

- Attended the Joint Governing Boards Liaison Committee meeting on 6-1-04 and provided a brief presentation on the Work Group’s efforts to date and goals for the initiative.
- Presented to the State Board of Education on 6-2-04, sharing an overview of the Initiative and progress to date.
- Met with **Eric Hirsch** (SECTQ) 6-4-04 to receive feedback about the online resource center.
- Presented to the Professional Teaching Standards Commission on 6-4-04, delivering a similar presentation to that shared with the State Board.
- Implementation Work Group meeting on 6-18-04 included presentations by **Linda Suggs**, Legislative Director, State Board of Education on House Bill 1464 – School Calendar Changes and **Tammy King**, Southeast Center for Teaching Quality who provided an overview of NCLB and professional development
- Met with **Tom Lambeth** of Z. Smith Reynolds and **John Dornan**, **John Poteat** and **Jo Ann Norris** of the Public School Forum.
- Attended **Cumberland Superintendent Harrison’s** professional development session about “embedding” professional development in schools led by **Stephanie Hirsch** of the National Staff Development Council.
- The online resource center committee’s July meeting included a presentation from **Jim Barber** and **David Walbert** of LEARN NC.

#### August 2004:

- Presented at meeting of Center for School Leadership Development program directors
- Presented at meeting of Deans of Education of University of North Carolina Schools of Education
- Meeting with **Lloyd Thrower**, Executive Director of NC Principals Association.
- Meeting with **Janice Davis**, Deputy Superintendent of DPI on 8-13-04 to go over the status of the Professional Development Initiative.
- Attended NCAE meeting on 8-24-04 regarding development of a week of voluntary professional development beginning in August 2005.
- Met with network of National Board Certified Teachers in Williamston.
- Presented an overview of the Professional Development Initiative to NCAE’s Instructional Professional Development Commission.

#### September 2004:

- Presented an overview of the Professional Development Initiative to private colleges and universities teacher education deans at their meeting at High Point University.
- Presented a Professional Development Initiative overview and update at a “coffee klatch” organized by **Debbie Rollins** at DPI for interested DPI staff.

#### October 2004:

- Provided materials to the Community Colleges Association of Instructional Administrators.





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