

Accountability in NC CTE (*continued*)

Why we have VoCATS

Statewide postassessments aligned to the curriculum are one component of VoCATS. Results on these postassessments are used to determine which students meet the Perkins' requirements for Technical Attainment.

Establishing clear connections between instruction and accountability strengthens the system. Teachers know from the course blueprint what should be taught in their classes and even the approximate amount of time that should be used to cover each topic. They know at the beginning of the course what students will be evaluated on and even the exact number of questions that will be asked on each objective. They can use the classroom assessment banks to test students throughout the course, monitor student progress, and determine which students need remedial activities. The statewide postassessments should reinforce what teachers already know about their students' mastery of the course content.

It is up to local school systems to determine other ways the data are used.

Collection of data

Data to support these performance indicators are collected in North Carolina through the Planning and Performance Management System, aggregated to the state level, and submitted to the U.S. Department of Education. In order to receive our share of the federal funding, we must continue to demonstrate progress toward meeting the goals in our performance indicators. The U.S. Department of Education Office of Vocational and Adult Education accountability site explains the standards set for each state and shows levels of performance for each standard.

The state and each local school system must submit a plan each year that indicates what funds are being spent on Career and Technical Education and how programs can be improved. Anyone can log into the Planning and Performance Management System (<http://wdeppms.dpi.state.nc.us/wdeppms.nsf>), using a login of "guest" and password of "guest," and review the plan for their local school system or other comparable systems.

VoCATS Briefing

What is VoCATS?



VoCATS, the N.C. Instructional Management System used primarily in Career-Technical Education (CTE), helps improve student learning by providing teachers with the materials they need to plan and carry out instruction.

VoCATS provides schools with a computerized instructional management system that can be used for the following:

- Planning instruction
- Assessing students before, during, and after instruction
- Tracking student progress
- Evaluating student mastery of competencies
- Documenting student achievement
- Providing accountability data

What does VoCATS include?

A complete VoCATS curriculum package includes:

- A blueprint, developed by teachers and validated by Business and Industry, which specifies course units, competencies, and objectives, and provides an indication of the relative importance of each
- Curriculum support materials aligned to the blueprint, such as an outline, resources, lesson plans, instructional activities, and other information useful in teaching the course
- A bank of assessment items, also aligned to the blueprint, that allows teachers to easily generate preassessments, interim assessments, and postassessments for use in the classroom
- A secured accountability assessment bank, aligned to the blueprint, from which statewide multiple-choice postassessments used to produce accountability data are generated annually

Current status



The current status of the VoCATS effort is as follows:

- More than 300 business representatives, 150 local administrators, and thousands of CTE teachers have been involved in developing curriculum materials.
- All LEAs are using VoCATS-designated software components and 95 percent of all high schools and many elementary and middle schools have computer hardware to run this software.

Approximately 90% of CTE teachers have participated in VoCATS staff development.

(Continued on next page)

VoCATS Briefing (*continued*)

Components provided by SDPI

Components provided by the State CTE staff include the following:

- 128 course blueprints validated by business/industry
- 119 classroom assessment banks distributed
- 98 curriculum support documents developed or adopted for use in North Carolina
- Statewide postassessments for 109 courses

Strengths of the instructional management system



VoCATS ensures that all teachers have access to the same curriculum resources. No matter where in the state they come from, teachers can utilize course blueprints and other materials. Most of these materials are available for download free or can be purchased in hard copy at a reasonable cost. Many are distributed at no charge to people who attend scheduled NCDPI staff development activities.

VoCATS strengthens the link between the classroom and the business community. It helps teachers individualize instruction and closely monitor the progress of each student. VoCATS makes it easy to pinpoint students' areas of weakness and provide necessary remedial assistance. At program completion, it provides students with a detailed record of their mastery of course content.

Accountability

Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998 (known as Perkins III) links federal funding in vocational education to student performance. As one of the measures, local school systems must report the percentage of students who attain a standard proficiency level on statewide postassessments. School systems must demonstrate continuous progress toward a five-year goal. Data are disaggregated to analyze student performance by course, by school, by LEA, and by targeted groups such as students with disabilities.

Strengths of accountability system



Statewide postassessments are one component of VoCATS. Establishing clear connections between instruction and accountability strengthens the system. Teachers know from the course blueprint what should be taught in their classes and even the approximate amount of time that should be used to cover each topic. They know at the beginning of the course what students will be evaluated on and even the exact number of questions that will be asked on each objective. They can use the classroom assessment banks to test students throughout the course, monitor student progress, and determine which students need remedial activities. The statewide postassessments should reinforce what teachers already know about their students' mastery of the course content.

Recognition

The VoCATS process has received recognition from the following:

- The U. S. Department of Education has recognized VoCATS as a national CTE instructional model.
- The Rand Corporation has cited VoCATS as an exemplary statewide system to assess student learning in CTE courses and programs.

Career and Technical Education Testing in North Carolina

**Presented by
Marshall Stewart, State Agricultural Education Coordinator
Department of Agricultural and Extension Education
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
NC State University
January 14, 2003**

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Section I

Testimony

Section II

Reality Check

Section III

Presentation

Section IV

Executive Summary
Career and Technical Education Testing in North Carolina
Marshall Stewart, State Agricultural Education Coordinator, NC State University
On behalf of concerned career and technical educators, school administrators and students.
January 14, 2003

Whatever gets measured gets done!

What is the problem?

VoCATS is a bad testing system.

It's bad for students!

It's bad for teachers!

It's bad for North Carolina's economy!

It's bad public policy!

VoCATS is a "counterfeit accountability" system. *Dr. Jim Flowers, NC State University*

What do you want us to do?

Two actions are respectfully requested:

1. *End the current testing system in career and technical education.*
2. *Provide leadership for the development of a new accountability system in career and technical education.*

Why is it a problem?

The tests are paper and pencil and multiple choice and focus on the cognitive domain.

The tests count up to 25% of a student's final grade.

The tests do not measure student performance.

The tests do not measure work-based learning.

The tests do not assess student organization activities.

What is resulting from this problem?

It's causing less students to be involved in work-based learning experiences.

It's leading to an increase in the dropout rate.

It's frustrating highly motivated, well-qualified teachers.

It's encouraging students to take other elective courses that have no end of course test.

It's decreasing the time spent by students on hands-on learning activities.

It's hurting career and technical student organizations.

It's lowering teacher morale.

It's a waste of money that could be used by teachers.

It's being misused as a teacher accountability tool.

It's causing career and technical students to be tested more than other students.

It's removing the "vocational" from vocational education.

How has this happened?

VoCATS was developed in the 1980's as an instructional management tool.

- Course Blueprints, Instructional Materials and Assessments

VoCATS evolved into an accountability system in the 1990's in response to federal legislation.

How has this happened?

VoCATS is being used for something today that it was never intended

"VoCATS is inadequate and invalid for measuring what students know, can perform, can manipulate. Knowing how to do something and being able to do it are two different things. Teachers are not getting credit for all that students are learning."

Meg Murphy, VoCATS Creator

So, what has been the impact?

Today, there are over 115 career and technical education courses for North Carolina students.

Today, there are over 115 end of course tests.

We must change!

The current system is a disservice to teachers and students.

Our goal must be higher and more far-reaching!

We have wasted too much time, too much money and too many human resources.

A Call to Action!

Whatever gets measured gets done!

We must measure the right things!

It is the right time to do the right thing!

Resolve to...

End the current testing system in Career and Technical Education.

Create a new accountability system that results in a world-class future workforce for North Carolina.

Testimony
Career and Technical Education Testing in North Carolina
Presented by Marshall Stewart, State Agricultural Education Coordinator, NC State University
On behalf of concerned career and technical educators, school administrators and students.
January 14, 2003

Introduction

First, I would like to thank Senator Dalton, Representative Rogers and all of the members of the Joint Oversight Education Committee for the opportunity to share concerns, thoughts and ideas regarding the future of career and technical education in North Carolina. It is an honor for me to have the opportunity to share with you suggestions that could help to build a stronger future for career and technical education students in North Carolina. I am pleased to have with me today a number of professional career and technical education teachers and administrators who are concerned about the issues that I will share with you today. I personally thank them for being here with us.

I serve as State Agricultural Education Coordinator in the Department of Agricultural and Extension Education at NC State University. My role is to provide leadership and coordination for the middle and high school agricultural education program in North Carolina. I have had the opportunity to work with hundreds of teachers and thousands of students, not only in agricultural education, but also in all phases of career and technical education in the nation. Furthermore, I have had the opportunity to serve as vice president for the Association for Career and Technical Education, Chairman of the National Council for Agricultural Education, and as a member of the National FFA Organization Board of Directors and National FFA Foundation Board of Trustees. Earlier in my career I served as Executive Director of the National Association of Agricultural Educators and as Director of Teacher Services for the National FFA Organization. During this period of time, I had the opportunity to visit hundreds of schools and teachers across the United States and to be involved in the development of federal educational policy including the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act. I share these background thoughts with you as a basis for saying that I have spent my career totally immersed in career and technical education in North Carolina and around the nation. For me, it all started in 1977 when I first entered career and technical education at Midway High School in Sampson County as a vocational agriculture student. From those valuable high school experiences, I chose to become a professional educator. To say the least, I am a proud product of career and technical education in North Carolina. Today, I come before you as a state leader in career and technical education and most importantly as the parent of a nine-year-old son that I hope someday will be an enrolled in career and technical education.

The Problem

The problem that is being brought to you today is that the current career and technical education testing system (VoCATS) for measuring technical skill attainment for career and technical education in North Carolina is inappropriate and doing a disservice to students and teachers in this state. Dr. Jim Flowers, Department Head for Agricultural and Extension Education, has described this testing system as "counterfeit accountability." Why? Because this testing system does not provide a measure of

student achievement in career and technical education nor does it give teachers a “fair shake” on the great job that they are doing across this state. It is a bad testing system and it needs to be stopped.

The Proposal

We propose the following solutions to this problem:

- 1. We are asking for an end to the standardized, comprehensive, end-of-course testing in grades seven through twelve for career and technical education courses offered in North Carolina.**
- 2. We are requesting that a new accountability model be created that assesses cognitive learning and hands-on performance in the classroom, laboratory, work-based learning and student organization. We would welcome the opportunity to help create a new accountability model that would be good for students, teachers and the state’s future workforce.**

The Background

Career and Technical Education is offered to middle and high students through the Department of Public Instruction. These courses are designed to develop a highly skilled workforce through technical training and development. Approximately 427,000 (2000) students are served through over 115 state-approved courses by this program. In 1999-2000, over 427,000 students in grades 6–12 were enrolled in career and technical education courses. These courses are taught by over 6,400 career and technical education teachers. Sixty-nine percent of all students enrolled in grades 9-12 took at least one career and technical education course. Program areas included in career and technical education are: agricultural education, business education, family and consumer sciences education, health occupations education, marketing education, technology education and trade and industry education.

Current Situation

In the mid-1980’s, a new “instructional management tool” was created by career and technical education in North Carolina. This tool was originally known as the Vocational Competency Assessment Tracking System (VoCATS). The VoCATS instructional management system includes a blueprint (course outline), instructional materials (curriculum) and a test item bank for each course in career and technical education. **From its inception, many teachers and administrators were concerned that VoCATS would eventually move from being an “instructional management system” to an “accountability tool.”** Initially, this system provided some positive results, including:

- Teachers having quality instructional materials to use.*
- Statewide curriculum format consistency.*
- An assessment bank that could be used throughout the teaching of a particular course.*

In the 1990’s, it was decided by North Carolina education leaders that the state’s response to the accountability requirements of the Carl Perkins Federal Vocational and Technical Education Act would be the aggregation of the end-of-course (final exam, end-of-course test) assessment scores. **This marked a significant shift in policy as VoCATS**

moved away from its original instructional management goals and focused on high stakes assessment. During this period of time, teachers began to express great concern regarding how the student's performance on the final exam (end-of-course test) was being used as a teacher evaluation tool. While historically, career and technical education teachers had been evaluated on multiple factors with a total career and technical education program performance (instruction, work-based learning, student organization participation, community/industry connectivity, student placement in careers, etc.), now they were being evaluated on how their students performed **on a paper and pencil, multiple choice, end-of-course test.** Increasingly, teachers reported that administrators were being directed to look less at total education program performance and focus totally on end-of-course test performance. This has become a greater problem as some administrators have begun to compare test scores between career and technical education program areas. An example would be a family and consumer science teacher being asked why his or her scores are not as high as the agriculture teacher's scores. Clearly, this is a misuse of the system because one would not compare math scores to science scores. To compare two different disciplines (i.e. family and consumer science vs. agriculture) is inappropriate.

These trends have been further compounded over the past several years with the increased public policy debate regarding accountability and by a move on the part of some educational leaders to push career and technical education into the ABC's accountability model through the use of end-of-course tests. The State Board of Education (SBE) has demonstrated great leadership and expressed their concerns regarding the VoCATS testing system through their board meetings over the past three years. In fact the SBE took action in their *November 2001* meeting to separate VoCATS end-of-course tests from ABC's. Based on the action of the Board, one would think that this would bring an end to the development of end-of-course-tests in career and technical education. In contradiction to this line of thought, DPI education leaders have continued to maintain existing and create new "secured" test item banks.

It is important to reiterate that career and technical education courses have an end-of-course comprehensive test that is given to all students enrolled in the particular course. This amounts to over 115 end-of-course tests in career and technical education. Each course also has an unsecured test item bank that is being regularly updated and managed at the state and local level. These are paper and pencil tests and they carry significant weight (25 % in most cases) of the student's course grade. Even though career and technical education courses are driven by experiential learning (applied and hands-on), the final test is exclusively paper and pencil. Again, the rationale and argument given for the evolution of VoCATS from an instructional management system to an accountability system has been that it was needed to meet the requirements for measuring technical attainment that is a part of the Federal Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act (1996). However, other states have found more authentic methods and less costly approaches for quantifying technical attainment. These methods include use of portfolios, rubrics, performance checklists, program accountability models, etc.

Historically, one of the strengths of career and technical education has been the leadership development and personal growth opportunities provided by student organizations. These secured end-of-course tests for courses in career and technical education courses do not include information regarding the student organizations (an integral component according to State Board of Education policy, United States Department of Education policy and Federal Law). The student organization is not included in this accountability model because the state career and technical staff have been directed to remove student organization references from career and technical education curriculum. This is interesting in light of the current interest in greater "character education" by both state and federal lawmakers. Is it not interesting that student organizations, a "tried and true" approach to character education is being de-emphasized by the state's career and technical education program. Additionally, these secured tests do not measure the work-based learning component of the program, which has always been core to career and technical education. Students having real-life work experiences as a part of their educational experience has been and continues to be one of the most successful strategies ever used to prepare students for future careers.

However, the most troubling component of these secured tests revolves around the fact that these end-of-course tests include no performance measures. As paper and pencil, multiple-choice tests, they measure the cognitive ability ("a fraction of intelligence"), but they do not measure the psychomotor skills (ie. hands-on learning). In essence, what has been created is an accountability system that counts up to 25% of a student's final grade, but that does not measure student skill performance, student organization involvement or work-based learning --- all of which are fundamental to a quality career and technical education experience! *Meg Murphy, one of the originators of VoCATS, stated that multiple choice tests are "...inadequate and invalid for measuring what students can do, can perform, can manipulate, ie., the psychomotor behaviors. Knowing how to do something and being able to do it are two different things. The course blueprints for programs under the umbrella of career and technical education include both cognitive and psychomotor objectives. Yet, our entire accountability system is based on a series of multiple-choice tests of cognitive-only objectives. We are getting only part of the picture. Teachers are not getting credit for all that students are learning."* (North Carolina Association for Career and Technical Education News, January. 2001). We are placing students (the state's future workforce), and teachers at a disadvantage when we rely on high stakes tests to determine if a student has **mastered** the skills taught in career and technical education. **The use of paper and pencil tests to measure what a student has learned in career and technical education is like using a screwdriver to hammer a nail.** Murphy's comments further emphasize the concerns of the current system that have often resulted in career and technical education teachers teaching students to take paper and pencil test rather than teaching the curriculum. **Should teachers be driving the classroom or should a paper and pencil test be driving the classroom?** This diminishes the hands-on, experiential learning component of the program and reduces the utilization of lab and shop facilities, which are basic to a quality career and technical education experience.

Results

The results of these actions are:

- Declining number of students involved in work-based learning experiences.
- Students that have been traditionally served by career and technical education are now are more likely to dropout of school.
- Frustration on the part of teachers and administrators who are attempting to provide a quality, well-rounded, total education program.
- Students selecting other public school elective courses that have no end-of-course tests in order to protect their grade point average and class rank.
- Less time spent in the "hands-on" component of the program with many laboratories and shop facilities not being used.
- Declining or stagnating student organization membership and participation in seven of the eight career and technical student organizations.
- Low teacher morale.
- The current testing system is a drain on existing, valuable resources. This system is federally funded. The local personnel costs to maintain the system are *estimated* to be four million dollars (\$4,000,000). This does not include costs such as: state administration, duplication of tests, computer equipment/programming, etc. In total the costs are well beyond the four million dollar mark. Currently, over thirty million federal dollars are issued to the state for career and technical education. **Elimination of this testing system means more of these federal funds could be used in high school classrooms and laboratories of the state to improve student learning.**
- Career and Technical Education students are being tested more than any other students in the public schools. Although not a part of the *ABC's Accountability Model*, many schools are treating these tests as if they were. Elimination of non-essential, end-of-course tests has the potential to improve student performance on those course tests that are required by the *ABC's and No Child Left Behind* federal legislation.
- Career and Technical Education teachers are, in many cases, being evaluated exclusively on the basis of the end-of-course test given in these courses, although they are not a part of the *ABC's Accountability Model*.
- Suggestions have been made that in the near future the amount of career and technical education funding a Local Education Agency receives could be tied to the student's scores on VoCATS tests. If you have higher scores, your school would get more money. Is this really where we want our program headed?

However, probably the greatest concern is, **where will this lead career and technical education in the future? Many teachers and administrators believe that career and technical education will, within a matter of a few years, become another academic course and lose its vocational/hands-on differentiation.** With the great impact that career and technical education has in North Carolina, this would be a devastating loss for thousands of students and to the future workforce.

You might ask, **"How can you prove that all of this is occurring?"** The answer is simple. We spend the majority of our time assisting teachers. What we share with

you is real because we have been eyewitnesses to these concerns. Visiting classrooms, working with students, interacting daily with administrators and listening to the concerns of industry leaders, parents and other stakeholders has led us to the point of bringing this issue to you today.

Solution

We must end the standardized, comprehensive, end-of-course testing in grades seven through twelve for career and technical education courses offered in North Carolina and create a new accountability model that assesses cognitive learning and hands-on performance in the classroom, laboratory, work-based learning and student organization. We ask you to help us fix this problem. We would welcome the opportunity to be a part of the development of the solution.

Recommendations

"There was Mr. Sheffield, my vocational agriculture teacher. He was a strong, tough guy. He'd grown up poor as he could be. But he'd gone to State and graduated in his mid-thirties. He got me interested in the Future Farmers of America, a farm youth organization with training and contests in parliamentary procedure and public speaking. I loved it. I was beginning to get a glimpse into a future that might be right for me. Mr. Sheffield had high goals for us. He really expected us to do well. He demanded it."

"Teachers should go the extra mile to get to know parents and their students' family situations. When I practice-taught vocational agriculture at Cary High School, one of the requirements to get my ten hours of credits was to visit the home of every one of my students. I wish every teacher was required to do that today in North Carolina. Teachers would be amazed at how much they'd learn and how much more they could help their students if they had actually been in their home and met the parents, if they constantly had that home situation in their mind's eye."

These two, real-life illustrations were taken from *First in America*, by Governor Jim Hunt, as he shared his personal experiences as a career and technical education student and teacher. What our former Governor so eloquently describes is a total career and technical education program. A total career and technical education program focuses on meeting students needs, preparing them for future career opportunities and being involved in the community and developing leaders. All of these components make a strong career and technical education program. **Is cognitive learning important? Absolutely, and there are situations where a pencil and paper test is an appropriate assessment, but our goal must be higher and more far-reaching. In fact, I would submit to you today that our standard is too low and in fact doing a disservice to our students and teachers.**

Today, we propose to you the development of a new model that enables our state to recapture the greatness of career and technical education. This new model must encompass the total education experience that should be offered through a quality career and technical education program. Since the mid- 1980's with the creation of VoCATS we have **wasted too much time, too much money and too many human resources**

focused on a paper and pencil testing system. This waste has gone on long enough. It's time to do the right thing for our students and teachers.

Conclusion

Teachers of career and technical education are not against accountability. For decades they have been accountable to the local community. The graduates they have produced have gone out in the local community and worked as secretaries, health care providers, auto mechanics, store managers, etc. The teachers and schools were accountable for preparing students for the world-of-work. This approach to accountability has served us well. In no way can a paper and pencil test replace this "real-world" approach to accountability.

Whatever gets measured gets done! If we want a well-trained future workforce we must measure the right things. Additionally we must make the decision as to whether we will test more or teach more --- we cannot do both!

The challenge for us today is, **"Will we be strong and courageous enough to make the necessary changes in career and technical education before it is too late?"** The educational experience of our youth and career opportunities of tomorrow require that we encourage our teachers to have total career and technical education programs. It is the right thing for all students to have the highest quality career and technical education experience possible. **It is always the right time to do the right thing!** With your leadership and direction, together, we can do the right thing!

Reality Check

What You Might Hear Proponents of the current VoCATS System Say

They'll say: VoCATS has been endorsed by leading researchers.

Response: Several groups have highlighted the VoCATS system. When they do, they are focusing on the total system (curriculum blueprint, instructional materials, and assessment banks). They typically endorse it as an instructional management system. However, the detail analysis of the tests that measure knowledge only, might result in a different story.

They'll say: We have invested too much time and money to turn back now.

Response: Our students deserve better. If the VoCATS testing system is broken it must be fixed. The future of our students and our state depends upon it.

They'll say: The VoCATS accountability system is needed to get federal funds.

Response: This is simply not true. All states receive Perkins funding. Each state submits a plan to determine how it will implement the Perkins legislation. VoCATS is North Carolina's plan. It is not a federal mandate.

They'll say: Should these issues be discussed with the State Board of Education and/or Department of Public Instruction staff?

Response: These issues have been surfaced to SBE members and DPI staff. The DPI staff has not responded and the SBE has moved aggressively to keep VoCATS out of the ABC's Accountability Model. At this point, all other avenues have been exhausted.

They'll say: The VoCATS system has been endorsed by the Superintendents and Career and Technical Education Directors.

Response: Both of these groups have reason for their support. Superintendents are looking for an easy number to determine success or failure. VoCATS will provide such a number although it does not truly measure success or failure. Career and Technical Education Directors are seeking Perkins funds for their schools. Their local plans must fit the state plan in order to receive funds. There is a financial incentive for both of these groups to endorse this testing system.

They'll say: If teachers have a problem with this system, why don't they voice their concerns more?

Response: Teachers, throughout the existence of VoCATS have been concerned about where this system might be headed. On many occasions they have voiced their concerns, but have been described as non-cooperative and unprofessional. Dissent and disagreement have not been allowed on this issue.

They'll say: Every student does not join a career and technical student organization or have a work-based learning experience. How can we have those factors in an accountability system?

Response: Federal law and state policy describe student organizations as integral. In order for it to be integral, it must be measured. Work-based learning has been given a

great amount of lip service in career and technical education, but has continued to slide as a result of the current VoCATS system. Some states require a certain level of participation in these factors in order for local schools to receive funds. These factors are as important educationally as the classroom instruction component. Student organizations and work-based learning are integral at the local level and should be a component of any accountability system.

They'll say: It is too expensive to measure performance on an end-of-course test.

Response: This is not true. Other states have used checklists, rubrics, etc. to accomplish this task. It can be done if we want it to be done.

They'll say: We cannot rely on teachers to do end-of-course testing. We need to use proctors to assure the integrity of the test.

Response: There is confusion between accountability and personnel issues. If we cannot trust a teacher to administer a performance test and evaluate it correctly, then we have a significant trust problem. Don't we trust teachers to do their job?

They'll say: Career and Technical Education enrollment continues to grow. VoCATS must not be hurting the program.

Response: Two factors mask the enrollment issue. First, North Carolina has a rapidly growing student enrollment. Second, a high percentage of schools are on block schedules, which enable students to have more career and technical education electives during their high school years.

They'll say: Teachers and industry representatives have been involved in the development of the test questions.

Response: Teachers and industry have been involved, this is true; however, two issues come up here. First, teachers and industry representatives are not testing experts. Second, the tests that are being created measure only cognitive learning. The system is bad regardless of who developed the tests.

They'll say: We are in the process of adding performance items to the VoCATS tests.

Response: First, it is very late in the game to be making this shift. The fact is that performance items need to be included and must be facilitated by the instructor. In order for this to occur, teachers must be trusted. It is doubtful that this last minute push will ever provide the desired results.

They'll say: These folks just don't like accountability.

Response: That is not true. In fact, accountability is welcomed. However, accountability must be based on a total program experience, not information learned for a paper and pencil end-of-course test. Accountability is good and necessary; but it must be administered correctly!

Career and Technical Education Testing in North Carolina

Whatever gets measured gets done!

What is the problem?

- VoCATS is a bad testing system.
 - It is bad for students!
 - It is bad for teachers!
 - It is bad for North Carolina's economy!
 - It is bad public policy!
- VoCATS is a "counterfeit accountability" system.

Dr. Jim Flowers, NC State University

What do we want you to do?

- Two actions are respectfully requested:
 1. End the current testing system in career and technical education.
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Why is it a problem?

- The tests are paper and pencil and multiple choice and focus on the cognitive domain.
- The tests count up to 25% of a student's final grade.
- The tests do not measure student performance.
- The tests do not measure work-based learning.
- The tests do not assess student organization activities.

What is resulting from this problem?

- It's causing less students to be involved in work-based learning experiences.
- It's leading to an potential increase in the dropout rate.
- It's frustrating highly motivated, well-qualified teachers.
- It's encouraging students to take other elective courses that have no end of course test.
- It's decreasing the time spent by students on hands-on learning activities.
- It's hurting career and technical student organizations.
- It's lowering teacher morale.
- It's a waste of money that could be used by teachers.
- It's being misused as a teacher accountability tool.
- It's causing career and technical students to be tested more than other students.
- It's removing the "vocational" for vocational education.

How has this happened?

- VoCATS was developed in the 1980's as an instructional management tool.
 - Course Blueprints, Instructional Materials and Assessments
- VoCATS evolved into an accountability system in the 1990's in response to federal legislation.

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 - *"VoCATS is inadequate and invalid for measuring what students know, can perform, can manipulate. Knowing how to do something and being able to do it are two different things. Teachers are not getting credit for all that students are learning."*

Meg Murphy, VoCATS Creator

So, what has been the impact?

- Today, there are over 115 career and technical education courses for North Carolina students.
- Today, there are over 115 end-of-course tests.

We must change!

- The current system is a disservice to teachers and students.
- Our goal must be higher and more far-reaching!
- We have wasted too much time, too much money and too many human resources.

A Call to Action!

- Whatever gets measured gets done!
- We must measure the right things!
- It is the right time to do the right thing!
- Resolve to...
 - End the current testing system in Career and Technical Education.
 - Create a new accountability system that results in a world-class future workforce for North Carolina.

The Study of Professional Development for Public School Professionals in North Carolina



**Public Testimony
to the
North Carolina General Assembly's
Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee**

**by
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Deputy Executive Director
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Stephanie Hirsh has been recognized by the Texas Staff Development Council with a Lifetime Achievement Award; by the University of North Texas as a Distinguished Alumnae; and by the Texas Association of School Boards as Master Trustee and a member of an Honor Board. She serves on advisory boards for The Galef Institute, National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform, The Quest Center, and The University of Texas Education Foundation, and The University of North Texas Jewish Studies Program. She is a third-term school board trustee in the Richardson Independent School District which serves 35,000 students in north Texas. Stephanie is married to Mike and they have two children, Brian 20 and Leslie 17.

Dr. Hirsh has co-authored three manuals published by NSDC: *School Improvement Planning Manual*, *Keys to Successful Meetings*, and *NSDC's Standards for Staff Development: Trainer's Guide*. She has written articles that have appeared in *Educational Leadership*, *Phi Delta Kappan*, *The Record*, *The School Administrator*, *American School Board Journal*, *The High School Magazine*, *Education Week*, and the *Journal of Staff Development*. She facilitated the process that led to the national dissemination of *NSDC's Standards for Staff Development*.

Prior to her position with the Council, Dr. Hirsh completed 15 years of district and school-based leadership positions including: teacher, community college teaching, consulting teacher for free enterprise, and program and staff development director.

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NSDC Goal:

All the teachers
in all the schools
experience
high-quality professional
learning by 2007.



***Education Week -* Quality Counts - North Carolina Teacher Quality = B**

- Written tests for beginning teacher licensure
- Incentives for National Board certification
- Number of Nationally Board Certified Teachers
- Support for new teacher induction
- Time and funding for professional development



It is no failure to fall short of realizing all
that we might dream.
The failure is to fall short of dreaming all
that we might realize.



-Dee Hock
Founder, VISA



Learning Teams

- Meet every day
- Assume collective responsibility for their students
- Study content embedded in standards
- Develop powerful lessons and assessments
- Critique student work
- Observe and coach in classrooms
- Determine needs for additional learning



Characteristics of Powerful Professional Learning



- › Results-driven
- › Standards-based
- › Job-embedded



Results-Driven

- › What do students need to know and be able to do?
- › What do educators need to know and be able to do to ensure student success?
- › What professional development will ensure educators acquire the necessary knowledge and skills?



Standards-Based



- › Student
- › Teaching
- › Leadership
- › Staff Development



Job-Embedded



At school everyone's job is to learn.



The Focus:

- ›National research
- ›UNC Center programs
- ›Professional development recommendations
- ›Department of Public Instruction
- ›Funding
- ›Program consolidation
- ›Regional strategies



The Process:

Phase 1: Program Study

Phase 2: Protocol Development

Phase 3: Data Collection

Phase 4: Field Research

Phase 5: Final Analysis



Limitations



1. Resources and time
2. Materials
3. Comparative data
4. Gaps in the data
5. Case study methodology



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Assumptions

1. The purpose of North Carolina professional development is to improve classroom instruction and school leadership to increase levels of student performance.
2. The state has a responsibility to assess whether the resources and programs at its disposal are fulfilling its desired purposes.





Request #1: Clarify your expectations.

Expectations influence accomplishments.





Request #2: Develop a cohesive statewide professional development system.

When we work together
we accomplish things
we could not do individually.





Request #3:
Institute a program review
cycle with incentives and
consequences.

What get measured gets done.





Request #4:
Shift thinking from serving
individuals to serving
campuses and systems.

The system must ensure all the teachers are
served, not just some of the the teachers.





Quality professional development
leads to improved
teaching and student achievement.



Professional Development Planning and Evaluation

- › Require individual or preferably teams of teachers to align annual professional learning plans with school goals.
- › Incorporate professional development standards into the state school accreditation or ranking process.
- › Provide technical assistance for professional development planning to low-performing schools.



Policy Option: Provide Professional Development Resources



Time and money are necessary to the achievement of improvement goals.



Professional Development Resources

- › Find time within the school day for collaborative professional learning.
- › Offer planning grants and technical assistance.
- › Set percentages of state or district funds to be used for professional development.
- › Prioritize funding for professional development programs that address high-priority areas.



Policymaking Arenas

- Professional development standards
- Professional development planning and evaluation
- Professional development resources
- Career development
- External assistance providers



Professional Development Standards



Standards establish benchmarks for ensuring quality professional learning.



Professional Development Planning and Evaluation



Plans make visible steps for achieving goals and evaluations provide evidence of the progress and impact.



Policy Option: Support Career Development



Expectations and support expedite, ensure, and reward teacher competency in the classroom.



Policy Option: Career Development

- Provide induction and mentoring services
- Focus on teachers in high-poverty and/or low-performing schools
- Establish a new recertification system
- Continue support and recognition for teachers to earn National Board certification
- Support school-based staff developer positions



Policy Option: Use External Assistance Providers

External assistance providers have potential to accelerate improvement efforts.



External Assistance Providers



- Regulate providers
- Provide training and resources
- Channel funds to high-priority areas or programs that demonstrate results.





No matter how far you have gone on a wrong road, turn back.

Turkish proverb

If we don't change the direction we're going, we're likely to end up where we are headed.

Chinese proverb





What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must be what the community wants for all its children.

-John Dewey



Additional Thoughts

Rationale for investing in professional development ...

Over the last decade, policymakers have focused their energies on putting the architecture of reform in place: the academic content and performance standards, the tests, the incentives, and the accountability systems. But, more recently, they have paid greater attention to building the capacity needed to achieve the higher standards

Massell, Diane. (1998). Six strategies for building capacity in education: Progress and continuing challenges. CPRE research report series RR-41. PA: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, PENN Graduate School of Education, p. 1.

...some urban schools and districts with high minority enrollments and high poverty have succeeded in substantially raising achievement. These top-performing schools tend to design instruction and assessments around state standards, devote increased time to reading and math instruction, **invest in teacher professional development**, and involve parents in their efforts to meet standards, among other strategies.

Kober, N. (2001). *It takes more than testing: Closing the achievement gap*. Washington, DC: Center on Education Policy, p. 19.

Support for teacher leadership and school-based staff developers...

Teachers who become leaders experience personal and professional satisfaction, a reduction in isolation, a sense of instrumentality, and new learnings--all of which spill over into their teaching. As school-based reformers, these teachers become owners and investors in the school, rather than mere tenants. They become professionals.

Barth, Roland S. (2001, February). Teacher leader. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 82(6) 443.

Good professional development needs to move into the classroom. School-based teacher coaches and outside experts should work with teachers on designing and using challenging instruction in their classrooms. Performance assessments should be built into daily instruction.

Lewis, Anne C. (2001, April). A performance test for districts and states. *Phi Delta Kappan*, p. 567.

Focusing initially on reading, and then moving to mathematics, Alvarado made sure his teachers, in particular, got lots of on-site coaching from experts. As a result, student achievement has climbed steadily over the past 10 years.

Haycock, Kati. (1998, Summer). Good teaching matters a lot. Education Trust. *Thinking K-16*, p. 36.

Crafting policy agenda to produce results...

Five dimensions to organizational capacity:

1. Leadership that helps articulate and sustain a collective vision of excellence
2. Collective commitment to student learning and cultural norms that demand continual improvement.
3. Access to knowledge (ensuring that staff members have access to ideas, strategies, and models that will improve their practice)
4. Organizational structures that promote improvement (for example, a schedule that provides common planning time for collaborative efforts)
5. Resources (time, money, and people) that support improvement

O'Day, J.; M. E. Goertz; and R. E. Floden. (1995, December). Building capacity for educational reform. *CPRE Policy Briefs*.

Policymakers can start to narrow the gap by acting on what can be done today, based on what we already know. Research has identified several strategies that are effective in raising achievement. Several states and school districts have made progress in narrowing the gap. Policymakers can learn from these sources. Some of the most promising research-based strategies include the following:

- investing in teacher professional development;
- lowering class size in high-minority schools;
- increasing the participation of minority students in challenging academic courses and rigorous instruction

Kober, N. (2001). *It takes more than testing: Closing the achievement gap*. Washington, DC: Center on Education Policy, p. 4

From her research, Darling-Hammond concludes that states experiencing progress in raising student achievement are likely to be taking two key policy steps:

Identifying teaching standards that articulate what teachers should know and be able to do at different points in their careers; and

Using these standards to develop more thoughtful certification and licensing systems; more productive teacher education and induction programs; and more effective professional development.

McRobbie, Joan. Career-long teacher development: Policies that make sense. WestEd knowledge brief, p. 1.

Based on a presentation by Linda Darling-Hammond to the WestEd Board of Directors in March 2000.

Reviewing characteristics of powerful professional development...

Research on teacher learning shows that fruitful opportunities to learn new teaching methods share several core features: (a) ongoing (measured in years) collaboration of teachers for purposes of planning with (b) the explicit goal of improving students' achievement of clear learning goals, (c) anchored by attention to students' thinking, the curriculum, and pedagogy, with (d) access to alternative ideas and methods and opportunities to observe these in action and to reflect on the reasons for their effectiveness...

Garet, M., Porter, A., Desimone, L., Birman, B., Yoon, K. (2001). What makes professional development effective? Results from a national sample of teachers. *American Educational Research*, 38(4), 917.

Professional development must be held accountable...

Finally, successful professional development - because it is specifically designed to improve student learning - should be evaluated continuously and primarily on the basis of the effect it has on student achievement.

Elmore, R. (2002). *Bridging the gap between standards and achievement: The imperative for professional development in education* Washington, DC: The Albert Shanker Institute, p.8.

Professional development is at the center of the practice of improvement. It is the process by which we organize the development and use of new knowledge in the service of improvement. I have taken a deliberately instrumental view of professional development, that it should be harnessed to the goals of the system for the improvement of student achievement, rather than driven by the preference of individuals who work in schools.

Elmore, R. (2002). *Bridging the gap between standards and achievement: The imperative for professional development in education* Washington, DC: The Albert Shanker Institute, p.32.

Data must drive planning and evaluation...

Effective principals must work with their staff members to articulate clear and measurable goals; to identify indicators that offer evidence of progress; and to develop systems from monitoring those indicators on a continuous basis. Principals must be constantly in search of meaningful data. They must analyze results critically. If the principal of a school disregards, dismisses, or denies data that suggest a problem, there is little hope the school will ever improve.

DuFour, Rick. (1999, February). Help wanted: Principals who can lead professional learning communities NAASP Bulletin.

The importance of external assistance providers...

Teacher learning is most likely when teachers collaborate with professional peers, both within and outside of their schools, and when they gain further expertise through access to external researchers and program developers. Yet traditional professional development relies almost exclusively on outside experts and materials without integrating these resources into existing systems of peer collaboration.

King, M. Bruce & Newmann, Fred M. (2000, April). Will teacher learning advance school goals? *Phi Delta Kappan*.

Reasons for investing in whole-school learning rather than individual learning...

Professional development for teachers should be school-based, preferably embedded in instructional efforts through collaborative analysis of student work. This is contrary to most traditional professional development, such as courses leading to certificates or degrees but unrelated to the specific needs of the school, quick-fix workshops that do not offer consistent feedback, or professional development offered by external trainers to help teachers adopt specific programs

Lewis, A. (2001). *Add it up: using research to improve education for low-income and minority students*. Washington, DC: Poverty & Race Research, p.22.

There is reason to worry that individual incentives might reinforce the existing atomization of schools. As previously stated, individual teachers accumulate points toward salary and step increases by accumulating academic credits from courses that may have no relationship to their school's performance. Many districts also offer professional development activities on a space-available basis for which teachers sign up as individuals, usually disconnected from any school-improvement plan or schoolwide priority. The large-group workshops and school-level meetings that are typical of professional development days also tend to be only loosely related to actual classroom needs. Thus, the structure of professional development reflects and reinforces the atomized, individual incentive structure of schools and school systems. This, in turn, undermines the possibility of using collective resources—the time of teachers and administrators and the money that is used to purchase outside expertise—to support a coherent and collective improvement of practice. In this instance, individual rewards and incentives work against the objective of overall improvement.

Elmore, R. (2002). *Bridging the gap between standards and achievement : The imperative for professional development in education*. Washington, DC: The Albert Shanker Institute, p.22.

The findings suggest “that teachers working together as a community of adults with individual and joint commitments to a set of common goals within the broader context of the school can have a powerful effect beyond their individual contributions.

Lewis, A. (2001). *Add it up: using research to improve education for low-income and minority students*. Washington, DC: Poverty & Race Research, p.8.

School-based staff development and on-site technical assistance produces results...

In Community School District #2 in New York City, Superintendent Tony Alvarado has invested generously in the professional development of its principals and teachers. Focusing initially on reading, and then moving to mathematics, Alvarado made sure his teachers, in particular, got lots of on-site coaching from experts. As a result of student achievement has climbed steadily over the past 10 years.

Strauss, Robert P. & Sawyer, Elizabeth A. (1986). Some new evidence on teacher and student competencies. *Economics of Education Review*, p. 41.

School-based designs apply to principals as well...

As rich as the professional development system is in District 2, it would not produce a skillful corps of principals as instructional leaders were it not for the intensive individualized coaching that every principal receives as an integral part of her or his service.

Fink, Elaine & Resnick, Lauren B. (2001, April). Developing principals as instructional leaders. *Phi Delta Kappan*, p. 603.

Team learning and collaboration are keys to results...

The most promising forms of professional development are those that engage teachers in the pursuit of genuine questions, problems, and curiosities, over time, in ways that leave a lasting mark on their thinking and practice. Such alternatives communicate a view of teachers as productive, knowledgeable, and responsible members of a broader professional community.

Little, Judith Warren. (1997, March). *Excellence in professional development and professional community*. Office of Educational Research and Improvement. Working Paper Benchmarks for Schools.

Schools where teachers focus on student work, interact with colleagues to plan how to improve their teaching, and continuously bring new skills and knowledge to bear on their practice are also schools that produce the best results for children.

The NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE). (2000, Fall). *Engaging Public Support for Teachers' Professional Development*, No. 3, p. 1.

Our school has a unique master schedule that builds staff collaboration time into the contractual day. The Mid-Day Block is from 11:30am to 1:00 pm Monday-Friday. The faculty is released for lunch and staff development while students go through a daily cycle of Running Club (a lap program), Study Hall, and lunch recess all supervised by paraprofessionals. When we developed our instructional program, we knew that teachers needed time to talk and work together on a daily basis, not once a week at a staff meeting usually held after school. Our typical weekly Mid-Day Block schedule covers content training, grade level meetings, guest speakers, staff meetings, etc.

Lambert, L. (2002). *The constructivist leader, 2nd edition.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press and NSDC.
(Chapter 6, page 191)

When teachers present individual professional development plans, for example, it is often unclear which activities are designed to enhance their individual growth and which are designed to improve their practice as teachers in a particular organization with clear goals. Likewise, courses and workshops that are offered for academic credit are often focused on the individual interests of teachers and administrators more than on the development of a shared body of skills and knowledge, necessary for schools and districts to implement a common set of successful practice.

Elmore, R. (2002). *Bridging the gap between standards and achievement : The imperative for professional development in education* Washington, DC: The Albert Shanker Institute, p.14.

This disconnect between the requirements of learning to teach well and the structure of teachers' work life is fatal to any sustained process of instructional improvement.

Elmore, R. (2002). *Bridging the gap between standards and achievement : The imperative for professional development in education* Washington, DC: The Albert Shanker Institute, p.29.

SECTION 31.4.(c) The Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee shall hire an independent consultant to study and make recommendations regarding professional development for public school professionals in North Carolina. The consultant shall study:

- (1) The professional development programs administered under the UNC Center for School Leadership Development with regard to their mission, governance structure, efficiency, and objectively measurable effectiveness in increasing student achievement.
- (2) The feasibility and merits of consolidating and reducing the number of professional development programs.
- (3) The possibility of regionalizing professional development programs and using a cooperative arrangement between higher educational institutions and community colleges in a region to achieve the goal.
- (4) The professional development support offered by the Department of Public Instruction.
- (5) The use of professional development funds allocated to local school administrative units and individual schools.
- (6) National research regarding effective methods for delivering professional development that is shown to improve student achievement.

The consultant shall report these findings to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and also shall make recommendations regarding how existing State funds should be utilized to provide effective and efficient professional development for public school professionals.

SECTION 31.4.(d) The Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee shall review the consultant's findings and recommendations and shall submit to the 2002 Regular Session of the 2001 General Assembly recommendations to streamline, reorganize, and improve the delivery of professional development for public school professionals. The recommendations may address revisions to program governance and mission, reallocation of funds, methods of program delivery, and methods to institute ongoing program evaluation.

**A Study of Professional Development for
Public School Professionals in North Carolina**



FINAL REPORT

to the

**North Carolina General Assembly's
Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee**

National Staff Development Council

December 2002

The NSDC researchers, NSDC staff, and other national leaders, in the field of professional development research and practice, contributed a wide array of educational experience and insight to this study.

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**A Study of Professional Development for
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	II
SECTION ONE: STUDY PURPOSE & LIMITATIONS	1
SECTION TWO: SCHOOL VISITATION SITES	5
SECTION THREE: PERCEPTIONS ABOUT PROGRAMS	15
SECTION FOUR: FUNDING	25
SECTION FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS	33
CITED REFERENCES	48
APPENDIX A: NATIONAL RESEARCH ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ..	50
APPENDIX B: STUDY METHODOLOGY, INSTRUMENTS, LISTS.....	55

LIST OF CHARTS, TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY OF SITES CHOSEN FOR VISITATION	6
TABLE 2: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MARKET PENETRATION.....	9
TABLE 3: PERFORMANCE OF STATE MANDATED ASSISTANCE TEAMS	17
TABLE 4: CSLD PROGRAMS AND THEIR ORIGINAL MISSIONS	18
TABLE 5: EXPENDITURES FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT (2000-2001)	29
FIGURE 1: MAP OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTIES	7
FIGURE 2: A SIMPLE THEORY OF CHANGE	36
CHART 1: AMERICA'S PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVING EDUCATION 2002.....	53
CHART 2: AMERICA'S PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVING EDUCATION 2001.....	53

**A Study of Professional Development for
Public School Professionals in North Carolina**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

National Staff Development Council
December 2002

The Study of Professional Development Programs For Public School Professionals

Executive Summary

The North Carolina Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, in July 2002, authorized a study of professional development for public school professionals. Third-party objectivity was sought in assessing if the “state funds for professional development are being used in an effective and efficient manner to train and re-train North Carolina public school teachers to effectively teach all students and principals to effectively manage schools that have high student achievement as their priority.”¹

The final recommendations are based on the following premises:

- **The purpose of North Carolina professional development is to improve classroom instruction and school leadership to increase levels of student performance.**
- The state has a responsibility to assess how all professional development resources at its disposal do or do not effectively fulfill the purpose stated above.
- The state has to determine the extent to which the programs reviewed in this study fulfill the purpose.
- This study indicates that at a minimum **the mission of each program, and its success in meeting the goals of the state, has to be critically reviewed by each program’s authorizing/founding agency.**

If the state concludes a program is essential to the state’s interest in improving student achievement, **this study finds that it is necessary to strengthen each program.**

Highlights from the recommendations follow:

- **Align all state-level professional development** with North Carolina’s goals for student learning and system of accountability.
- **Establish a vision** and adopt a comprehensive state plan for professional development.
- **Establish a single governance authority** for the UNC Center for School Leadership Development programs.

¹ State of North Carolina. May 2002. *General Assembly request for proposal (RFP 01-20020603)*, Raleigh, NC: Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee. p. 4.

- **Reexamine and rewrite the mission statements** for the UNC Center for School Leadership Development and its constituent programs.
- **Hold all state-level programs to high standards** of professional development and ground them in research with a focus on improving educator practice and student achievement.
- **Focus resources** of the UNC-CSLD programs on staff development that will help principals, teachers, and other support staff reduce the gap in student achievement.
- **Institute a program review cycle** that focuses on the issues of mission, governance, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- **Align the allocation** of state dollars to state priorities.
- **Require collaboration** among the DPI, Center for School Leadership Development, local colleges and universities, and other recipients of large federal and state grants.

Require that a percentage of the time and resources of each state-funded program be prioritized to **support school-based, job-embedded learning**.

The National Staff Development Council organized the Study into five phases:

Phase One—Beginning Program Analysis: This phase focused on targeted programs administered under the UNC Center for School Leadership Development and the Department of Public Instruction in relation to their connection to the state and local accountability systems.

Phase Two—Gathering Information: The backmapping model was applied with its emphasis on results to create tools for collecting data from the field.

Phase Three—Written Feedback and Personal Interviews: These provided additional data and contributed to findings.

Phase Four—Practitioners in the Field: Practitioners contributed valuable insights in assessing the impact of programs and completing the intent of the backmapping process.

Phase Five—Final Analysis for Recommendations: Expert analysis and comments were used to complete the final report.

These recommendations, expressed within the detailed limitations of the study are offered as important areas of consideration in recognition of the commitment of North Carolina to ensure high levels of learning for all students and educators and to be first in the nation in student achievement by 2010.

The Study of Professional Development Programs For Public School Professionals

SECTION ONE: DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

The North Carolina Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, in July 2002, authorized a study of professional development for public school professionals, **seeking third-party objectivity in assessing if the “state funds for professional development are being used in an effective and efficient manner to train and retrain North Carolina public school teachers to effectively teach all students, and principals, to effectively manage schools that have high student achievement as their priority.”¹** The Request for Proposal for this Study clearly specified the components that would address its purpose.

Components to Address the Purpose of the Study

- National research that links professional development to improved student achievement.
- An analysis of UNC Center programs with regard to mission, governance, structure, efficiency, and effectiveness with subsequent recommendations for improvement.
- Recommendations for professional development for teachers, substitute teachers, and lateral entry teachers to effectively teach at-risk students.
- Recommendations for professional development for principals to acquire leadership skills to manage schools with diverse populations and to increase student achievement.
- An analysis of the professional development support offered by the Department of Public Instruction.
- Recommendations to better use state appropriations at districts and schools, and to use federal funds in the context of state and local funds.
- An analysis of the feasibility and merits of consolidating and reducing the number of professional development programs.
- Recommendations regarding the possibility of regionalizing professional development programs and using a cooperative arrangement between higher educational institutions and community colleges in a region to achieve the goals of the program.²

Design and Methodology of the Study

The National Staff Development Council designed this study around five distinct phases, phases that clearly delineate the organizational structure and the timeline for this five-month study. The methodology for each phase is described here but is more richly detailed in Appendix B with accompanying instruments and lists.

Phase One—Beginning Program Analysis

This study began with an analysis of the state and local accountability system, as professional development is most powerful when linked to the accountability components. The UNC Center for School Leadership Development programs identified for analysis by this study were soon classified as preservice programs or inservice programs. **The preservice programs address teacher and principal shortages and retention. Inservice programs serve practicing professionals and may have an underlying goal of retention.** The list that follows includes the professional development programs targeted for this study and administered under the UNC Center for School Leadership Development and the Department of Public Instruction:

- The UNC Center for School Leadership Development preservice programs
 1. North Carolina Principal Fellows Program (PFP)
 2. North Carolina Model Teacher Education Consortium (NCMTEC)
 3. NC TEACH (Teaching Excellence for All Children)
- The UNC Center for School Leadership Development inservice programs
 1. North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT)
 2. North Carolina Teacher Academy (NCTA)
 3. Mathematics and Science Education Network (MSEN)
 4. Principals Executive Program (PEP)
- The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) staff development programs, primarily intended for low-performing schools

While program analysis was underway, the compilation of national research on high-performing schools began. The purpose was to identify effective methods for delivering professional development that links to improved student achievement.

The Department of Public Instruction shared information on the North Carolina accountability system. This vital information forms the basis for analyzing program alignment with these components.

Phase Two—Gathering Information

Phase Two began the use of the backmapping model ³ espoused in the Study Proposal, a model that yields rich information about program efforts to assist schools' teachers and principals in areas such as:

- Planning that links to state, district, and school accountability system,
- Use of data,
- Identification of results-based staff development,
- Intervention tools for teaching, and

- On-going assessment of student results.

This model formed the basis for the development of the Inventory Framework to gather information for the analysis of the UNC Center for School Leadership Development and for Department of Public Instruction programs. The backmapping model also served as the core element in design of protocols for planned on-site visits with individuals and focus groups. The information being gathered on high-performing schools brought robustness to the development of the program survey and to the various protocols.

Program analysis began with data gathered from relevant North Carolina websites and from phone and face-to-face interviews with program leaders pertinent to the study.

Phase Three—Written Feedback and Personal Interviews

Program personnel from each of the UNC Center for School Leadership Development programs completed the Inventory Framework the latter part of August. NSDC project staff visited the Center in early September. The NSDC Deputy Executive Director and the Study Project Director conducted an orientation meeting with the UNC Center for School Leadership Development program directors and the UNC Vice President for University-School Programs. Over the next three days individual interviews were held with the UNC Vice President for University-School Programs and each director of the study's targeted Center programs.

Site visit protocols were developed from the backmapping model. Simultaneously, the Inventory Frameworks completed by the UNC Center program personnel were analyzed according to mission, governance, design, efficiency, and effectiveness.

The *Interim Progress Report* is completed by October 15, describing the phases of work completed, those to follow, and describing areas of further study for the recommendations of the *Final Report* due December 16, 2002. This report contributes information on the body of research on the characteristics of high-performing schools, information highly relevant to professional development that links to increased student achievement.

Phase Four—Practitioners in the Field

This phase probed the views of the practitioners in the field regarding the impact of professional development, both of the targeted programs and from other sources. The process used for selection of sites for visitation, the charting of market penetration, and some findings are clearly described in Section Two of this Report.

The backmapping model formed the basis for the protocols used in interviewing the practitioners in the field. Focus groups were held with principals of high-performing/high-poverty schools and with those who were graduates of the Principals Fellows Program. Focus groups were also held with groups of teachers. Researchers worked primarily around availability of teachers, interviewing both groups and individuals.

Phase Five—Final Analysis for Recommendations

School site visits were completed in October. November found NSDC project staff analyzing the site visit information and correlating it with previously gathered information on North Carolina professional development. Follow-up phone calls were conducted to verify findings and to gather additional data. NSDC held a focus group of North Carolina staff developers to react to preliminary findings of the study. Their input clarified some issues and called attention to supporting documentation and related state information. The information was analyzed for the *Final Report*. This substantive data undergirds the recommendations proffered in this study.

Limitations of the Study

The North Carolina legislature has a legitimate interest in determining the impact of its resources on the practice of educators and achievement of students. On the other hand, the scope and depth of this study is limited by the amount of resources and time the state had available to invest.

The sheer volume of programs and their materials further limited the researcher time available to pursue in-depth clarifications of the multiple areas being studied. For example, variance in program length affects analysis of "cost per participant;" for that reason, "cost per participant" needed refinement. There was a lack of comparative "cost" data with similar state or national programs. These omissions, coupled with the failure to compare data such as retention statistics with state and national statistics, makes the accomplishments touted by some programs difficult to verify or confirm. This was, and is, unfortunate, because the listed program accomplishments may be valid.

There were limitations to the case study methodology. Site studies of this nature have well-documented limitations. While allowing a fuller, richer picture of the subject in study, generalization to the entire state is less applicable. Market penetration charts showed districts to have utilized the state services offered by professional development programs, yet time since access varied and impacted quality of input shared by practitioners.

In this particular study the team of two educational consultants were able to conduct a one-day visit with each of the three districts selected. The sheer number of variables to be assessed limited the depth of findings. Newly slashed budgets arrived in districts very shortly before the site visits. This clouded the picture of how one would obtain services in the future. Certainly, more time and more consultants could have enriched the data gathered and, could have allowed a broader-based understanding of the professional development and its impact at these schools.

In spite of limitations, these "snapshots" of professional development in North Carolina schools offers vital information on the programs targeted by this study. These findings from the field can promulgate much needed broader-based studies of impact.

SECTION TWO: SCHOOL VISITATION—PRACTITIONERS IN THE FIELD

Backmapping: Beginning with the End in Mind

For a teacher to succeed, he or she must know about children's development, different learning styles, pedagogy and the plethora of different ways for reaching children, curriculum, assessment, classroom management, ways to teach students who don't speak English and children who have disabilities—and, of course, the teacher must know the subject matter well. Apart from that, the job is pretty easy.

... Arthur Levine⁴
President of Teachers College
Columbia University, said in jest

Backmapping* is a process that begins with the end in mind, and the design for the school site visits evolved from this model. School site visitations are a means to assess the impact of North Carolina's professional development programs. These visits contributed to the assessment of programs' impact through determining the schools' identified needs for improving achievement, the amount of market penetration by the programs, and the perceived value of the programs by the practitioners in the field. Visits also yield information about local funding and efforts for professional development.

The major focus of these visits was on the impact of the programs targeted by this study. Researchers also wanted a sampling of high-poverty/low-performing schools to correlate with the state's focus on "closing the gap." High-poverty/high-performing schools were also desirable for demonstrating "what works."

School Visitations

Site Selection Criteria

Participation in CSLD Programs. The NSDC project director requested that the Center for School Leadership Development program directors identify eight to ten schools and/or districts that had participated in their professional development offerings. It was assumed that the schools identified were chosen because of program impact. The initial selections included ten school districts, 31 elementary schools, 14 middle schools, and 18 high schools.

Participation in DPI's Technical Assistance for Low-Performing High Schools. The low-performing high schools that are receiving, or have received, Department of Public

* Backmapping or backward mapping is a planning and evaluation tool that has been used by policy analysts to gather meaningful information from the field from an implementation analysis perspective in order to achieve a desired set of outcomes (See Mendiata citing Elmore in Endnotes). Backmapping Phases: Analyzing student achievement data, determining learning needs, studying possible interventions, planning program design and implementation and correlating evaluation plans, and providing ongoing support and monitoring of progress.

Instruction technical assistance were considered for site visitation. A visit to one of these sites was deemed vital to augment and clarify materials gathered concerning the Department of Public Instruction's professional development offerings.

Academic Performance: High-Poverty/High-Performing. The Department of Public Instruction supplied a list of 50 high-poverty/high-performing schools. This list failed to identify high schools and identified only a few middle schools. Another search yielded a few secondary sites for consideration. These were added to the database of possibilities for site visitation supplied from the Center for School Leadership Development.

The NSDC project team studied The Education Trust's "Dispelling the Myth" research. This database yielded another list of 26 North Carolina schools as potential sites for visitation. This work "identifies and explores schools that, in various ways, dispel the destructive myth that race and poverty are insurmountable barriers to high achievement."⁵ This initial school data came from American Institute of Research (AIR) specialists under contract to Education Trust.

Demographic Diversity. The researchers in this study wanted to select school districts with diverse populations. Another major focus was high-poverty percentage as defined by free and reduced lunch data. Table 1 illustrates the demographic diversity of sites.

Geographic Diversity. Next the selected sites were plotted on a map of North Carolina (Figure 1) to look at geographical proximity for the visiting team. This information was organized and plotted by the Assistant to the University of North Carolina (UNC) Vice President for University-School Programs with input from the study project director.

Final Selection. Visitation possibilities were reviewed and three school systems were selected. After sites were selected, the UNC Vice President for University-School Programs contacted the districts' superintendents to secure permission for the visits. Subsequently, the Assistant to the UNC Vice President worked with project staff to make arrangements with the districts and with the individual schools selected for site visits. Table 2 illustrates the professional development market penetration in the three systems ultimately chosen.

Table 1. Demographic Diversity of Sites Chosen for Visitation

	Indian %	Asian %	Hispanic %	Black %	White %	Poverty %	Total Number
State	1.5	1.9	5.3	31.1	60.2	55.4	1,286,931
Lexington City	.3	5.9	16.6	47.8	29.5	77.6	3,202
Duplin County	.2	.2	17.2	35.3	47.1	68.8	8657
Vance County	.1	.5	4.7	65.3	29.3	80.4	8308

Professional Development Program Market Penetration

The Market Penetration table began as a visual aid to site selection, with CSLD identifying districts where they had program participants. The table continued to evolve and grow with Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) input and with the addition of North Carolina schools from the Education Trust research on high-performing/high-poverty schools. In most columns CSLD programs representation was signified with a single "x." Some cells in the table now contain multiple "x's." This demonstrates large numbers of teachers and/or principals who have been participants in professional development offerings from the program cited in the respective column.

The Model Teacher Education Consortium (MTEC) provided large numbers of participants in its lateral entry program for teachers in two of the districts. Yet, in the three districts visited researchers found very few actual teachers or teacher assistants who had completed the program and were employed. A very small number were found that were enrolled in course work. Some had quit the program..

The Principals Fellows Program (PFP) identified employed principals (P) and assistant principals (AP) who had completed the scholarship program. In Duplin County where there are four PFP graduates, the superintendent arranged for a focus group meeting of these administrators. In the other districts, researchers held individual interviews with the PFP graduates in school leadership positions.

The sites identified through the Education Trust's research on high-performing/high-poverty schools are highlighted in blue. Because Duplin County has five of these recognized schools, a focus group yielded information about "what works."

Beginning as a tool for site selection, the table progressed into an instrument that addressed, in a limited way, program impact. It also exemplifies the limitations of visiting three of 117 districts, because some programs may have more impact in other districts than is demonstrated here. Nonetheless, the "snapshots" taken in these three districts do yield some findings of impact and illustrate the opinions of field practitioners visited.

General Findings from the Field

To gather information from the field, site visitation was selected as a complement to the existing body of information already acquired from the UNC Center for School Leadership Development programs and from the Department of Public Instruction. The ability to interact with teachers and administrators offered possibilities that made visitation a better choice than a survey. Face-to-face discussions would more fully illuminate the types of professional development practices that contribute to schools' student achievement goals. Visiting with those "on the front line" presented the chance to probe more deeply into issues as they arose.

Table 2: Professional Development Market Penetration & Education Trust's High-Performing/High-Poverty Sites

Key: P = Principal
AP = Asst. Principal

SCHOOL DISTRICT	MSEN	MTEC	NCCAT	TEACH	PEP	PFP	NCTA	DPI	Ed. Trust
Duplin County									
<u>Elementary Schools</u>									4
Beaulaville Elementary	x	X					x		
BF Grady Elementary	x	X	xxxx				xxxx		
Chinquapin Elementary	x	xx	xxxxx		x	AP	x		
Kenansville Elementary	x	x	xxxx		xxxx		xxxx		
North Duplin Elementary	x	x	xxxx		xxxx		x		
Rose Hill Magnolia Elem.	x								
Wallace Elementary	x	x	xxxx		x		x		
Warsaw Elementary	x	x					x		
<u>Middle Schools</u>									1
Charity Middle	x	x							
EE Smith Middle	x	x	xxxx				x		
Warsaw Middle	x	xx	xxxx		x	AP	xxxx		
<u>High Schools</u>									
East Duplin High		X			x	AP			
James Keenan High	x	X							
North Duplin High		X							
Wallace Rose Hill High	xx	x	xxxx		xxxx	AP	xxxx		
Lexington City									
<u>Elementary Schools</u>									1
Picket Primary			xxxx			P	x		
Southwest Elementary			xxxx	x	xxxx	AP	xxxx		
<u>Middle Schools</u>			x						
Lexington Middle			xxxx	x					
<u>High Schools</u>			x						
Charles England			xxxx				x		
Lexington High	xx		xxxx	x			xxxx		
Vance County									
<u>Elementary Schools</u>									1
Aycock Elementary		X							
Carver Elementary		X							
Clark Street Elementary		X							
Dabney Elementary	xx	X	xxxx		x		xxxx		
EM Rollins Elementary		X					x		
EO Young Jr. Elementary		X	x						
LB Yancey Elementary									
New Hope Elementary		X					x		
Zeb Vance Elementary	xx	X	xxxx		x		xxxx		
<u>Middle Schools</u>									
Henderson Middle	xx	Xx	xxxx		x		xxxx		
Eaton Johnson Middle		X				AP			
<u>High Schools</u>									
Northern Vance High		X						x	
South Vance High		X	xxxx					x	
Western Vance Secondary		x							

This segment of the study analyzes data from the school visits. Field practitioners' comments relate the perceived value and impact of the targeted professional development programs, examine the characteristics of the high-performing/high-poverty schools within these three counties, and unearth professional development needs.

Looking Through the Microscope at CSLD

CSLD Preservice Programs. This quote from an assistant principal conveyed the feelings of the Principal Fellows program participants encountered during the school visits: *I cannot say enough about the PFP experience—the education that I got could not have been any better as far as what principals need today. From Karen (program director) all the way down to the courses. We had great opportunities such as PEP seminars and law seminars. I could never have done this without the opportunity.*

The reviews on NC TEACH were mixed. The extremely limited number of reviews prohibited making conclusive findings. These three districts are not as familiar with this lateral entry program as with others such as Teach for America. NC TEACH will be better described in the next section of this study when all programs are discussed from the broader perspective of researcher analysis as well as additional data gathered from the field.

The Model Teacher Education Consortium (MTEC) was characterized as a way to get a teaching license through a reduced tuition program that was once really cost beneficial, but is not as beneficial now. One hears about the program through friends or relatives, fills out an application, and then is "on her own" to enroll, get advice on a degree plan, and to work out any problems with the colleges or universities. Many problems were cited.

CSLD Inservice Programs for Teachers. Nearly everyone interviewed during school site visitations attended NCCAT and/or the Teacher Academy one or more times. Opinions of the programs ranged from "good" to "excellent" with the range clustering toward "excellent." Some recommendations for improvement were made with the most coming from administrators. Follow-up sessions examined impact in a limited way. The response to the Math and Science Network was also quite positive from the teachers who had personal experience with the program. This was a smaller number, reflecting the smaller sample size of math and science teachers in the general population interviewed.

CSLD Support for National Board Certification. Remarkable expressions of appreciation infused the conversations of teachers as they described the professional development support provided for National Board certification. One teacher, now National Board certified said: *I went through National Board training with National Board teachers working in different areas and helping candidates. We worked the entire time. The key was, no distractions, and getting everything together at once. NCCAT was the only time I felt appreciated as a professional.* NCCAT, MSEN, and Teacher Academy all provide professional development for National Board certification, enabling North Carolina to have more Board Certified teachers than any other state.

CSLD Inservice Program for Principals. **The Principals Executive Program (PEP)** is valued quite highly by principals and assistant principals, as well as superintendents who were previously principals. Several principals and superintendents mentioned hearing frequently from PEP and consequently knowing a lot about their programs. One principal said: *PEP is good networking and professional development. I tell everybody to go to anything (offered) through PEP. It's a great bang for your buck and is always relevant.* Several superintendents and assistant superintendents said they were having more contact with PEP, expressing their viewpoint that the program was reaching out to them with more presence at schools. They also felt that PEP worked with them on measuring impact of their professional development.

Other Opinions about CSLD Programs

Stipends for Summer Professional Development. Teachers stated that the stipends paid are compensation for additional work outside their contract. They expressed feelings of pride that they were being treated as professionals through the stipend. Since several teachers discussed the necessity to work during the summer, they emphasized that they would be unable to go to professional development offerings without the stipend to offset the loss of summer work.

Aligning Professional Development with "Real Needs." There are feelings among the administrators participating in interviews and focus groups that the CSLD programs (and all other state professional development programs) need to re-examine their offerings—realigning them to meet the areas of greatest need, as identified through demographics and achievement data. Two of the districts visited have rising Hispanic populations and want help in working with this culture. The black population is heavy in all three school systems. The perception is that more offerings should be school-based and pertinent to school needs.

Focusing on the Department of Public Instruction

General Comments from Practitioners: *DPI has pulled back totally. DPI has been gutted to the point that it is functionless in terms of providing staff development. You can't get anyone to answer your question at DPI; there's nobody to answer the phones. It's a nightmare to get through. Recently, it took most of my day to get a live person.*

We don't have our pretest information back yet and here it is the end of October.

The certification office is a mess and they cannot get us data in a timely manner. They are understaffed and overworked.

Technical Assistance. Teachers from a school who had technical assistance the previous year said that the experience was "intense." The Assistance Team observed teachers and classified them as I or II. The teachers classified as IIs then underwent more observations and a lot of intense work. **Veteran teachers voiced concern about the 22 new teachers who have not had the assistance training.** This elicited a similar concern about

lateral entry teachers who are generally hired late and consequently miss the beginning of the year training on the standard course of study.

An Important Factor

Stability of Staff. One factor clearly emerged from these site visitations, one that is rated highly—stability of staff. A middle school principal said: *Our success can be attributed to the stability of staff. The key is the quality of teachers we have.* Another principal agreed: *I attribute a lot of our success to the fact that there is not a lot of turnover.* A worried principal laments: *It is getting more and more difficult to maintain the teachers that we have and it is getting more and more difficult to find good teachers.*

High-Performing/High-Poverty Schools: “What Works”

The researchers were pleased to find that out of the 34 schools in the three districts, seven are identified by the Education Trust research as high-performing/high-poverty schools.⁶ Emulating the national trends, the prevailing number are elementary schools with one middle school recognized in this group. An interesting note is that of the 26 North Carolina elementary schools named in the Education Trust research, four of them are in Duplin County.

In the individual interviews and in the focus groups the questions were asked, “What makes it work at your school? How are you ‘dispelling the myth’ that race and poverty are insurmountable barriers to high achievement?” The answers given by the principals and teachers fell into the list of characteristics defined from the body of research on high-performing schools. Those characteristics, detailed in the research paper in an appendix of the *Interim Progress Report*, are listed here with comments gleaned from the school administrators and teachers.

Educator Comments on the Characteristics of High-Performing Schools

Goals are clear. *The key thing about curriculum or professional development is how you can talk to me about how it is going to be relevant to my school improvement goal or to my individual growth goals.*

Expectations are high. *The bottom line at our school is that every child will learn to the best of his or her ability. We do not accept excuses. We tell the kids that they can do it, that they are smart.*

Data guides instruction. *Our strongest component is the way we look at data. Every teacher has a data notebook and has comparisons to the field test data. We are constantly looking for benchmarks, but we need to know what services are provided for those children who need to grow academically.*

The focus is on instruction and individual learning. *We look at the goals of the school and then we find research-based curriculum that target skills.*

Teachers (and staff) are supported. *I try to keep a good working environment as many of my teachers live in other counties with higher supplements.*

Our superintendent supports us, encourages us to try. Our hands are not tied; we are encouraged to create our site-based plans.

Professional development is part of the culture. *Whenever we let someone go to a professional development opportunity, we talk with the leadership team to see if it fits with goals and the direction we're going. If someone goes, they are expected to share with the staff.*

Collaboration builds a learning community. *We have 43 percent Hispanic with most on free and reduced lunch. Teachers work hard to collaborate with parents to meet kids needs. We've developed programs to help teachers learn Spanish.*

Some General Observations

Each of the three districts used the Regional Education Service Alliances (RESA) for some of their professional development. Each RESA functions somewhat autonomously, and varies in responsiveness to school needs. One principal explained her choice: *We use Consortium (regional center) because of proximity, relationships and because they have been flexible about being right there to provide what we need. It is quality training and fairly inexpensive.*

Focusing on the backmapping model spotlighted a startling gap between planning and implementation components. Districts seem fairly proficient in analyzing student achievement data, while some CSLD programs are less involved with data. Learning needs are derived from data, and teachers and principals talked freely about various interventions to address learning needs. The gap occurs between planning strategies for improvement and correlating evaluation plans to the plans. This omission leads to a weak system of support and monitoring of progress. North Carolina professional development programs have a challenge in assisting school leadership to provide support and meaningful monitoring of strategies implementation that will produce improved student achievement.

SECTION THREE: ANALYZING THE GATHERED DATA

This section combines all the information gained by the researchers, coalescing this knowledge into program-by-program descriptive perceptions. Beginning with a detailed look at the Department of Public Instruction, the analysis looks at the leadership of the UNC Center and each of the Center programs. This program analysis influences the recommendations (Section Five) of this study.

Description of the Department of Public Instruction (DPI)

According to the reorganization study of the Department of Public Instruction, "The New ABC's of Public Education," published by the State Board of Education in May 1995, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) was deliberately stripped of its mandate as a prime source of teacher professional development across the state. A year later, professional development funds were distributed to local education agencies (LEAs) and could be used to create regional service alliances if they desired or for other investments in staff development. DPI still works in coordination with other entities and provides assistance, predominantly to low-performing schools, through its School Improvement Division.

The DPI has no central coordinating entity for professional development, which was noted as problematic during the site visits. Currently there are three units within the Division of School Improvement that work on staff development. Originally each office had a specific mission within the area of professional development:

- School Technical Services supports low-performing schools in achieving their performance goals in the focus areas of reading, writing, and math by providing assistance in providing observation, data analysis, feedback, demonstrating lessons, and providing other on-site assistance.
- Effective Practices provides voluntary support and assistance to schools that are at risk of becoming low-performing through building the capacity of a school and its staff.
- Staff Development Coordination Section enhances the knowledge and skills of staff members in order to improve student achievement, builds capacity for continuous growth through providing consultative services, assists in the training of State Assistance Teams, and contributes to the development of training modules.

DPI planning is a challenge. Services vary each year according to the number of low-performing schools and requests for other forms of technical assistance. DPI organizes services by geographic region. Each unit has seven full-time consultants, one chief and one assistant. There are currently four vacancies, two in Effective Practices and two in Staff Development Coordination. The School Improvement Division has a director, assistant director, program assistant, and administrative secretary who work with these three units and

others such as Closing the Achievement Gap, Compensatory Education, and Alternative and Safe Schools programs.

Members of the units also serve on site. The four high school consultants are working at the two high schools designated for school improvement under Title I, and other staff are filling in subject area gaps on the mandated State Assistance Teams.

DPI provides significant professional development assistance to schools through its Exceptional Children Division and Instructional Services Divisions. While most of these opportunities are the result of federal Title I funds, they provide opportunities across the state on topics such as educating all students, closing the achievement gap, managing behaviors, brain-based approaches to managing behaviors, and improving academic performance. Instructional Services provide professional development in specific subject areas such as early childhood, English Language Arts, social studies, math and science, and English as a Second Language.

Design

Much of DPI's professional development work is developing and supporting State Assistance Teams and responding to other systems requests for voluntary assistance. This year there are five mandated teams working in high schools—Southeast High (Halifax County), Hertford County High School (Hertford County), Northampton High-West School (Northampton County), Northern Vance High School (Vance County) and Weldon High School (Weldon City). Those on the team average 22 years of educational experience and 75 percent have advanced degrees, with many who return to their local district placed in leadership roles. Of those members, 31 provide voluntary assistance to high-priority elementary school. All 27 high-priority schools were offered assistance. In 1999-2000 mandatory assistance was provided to seven elementary schools and voluntary assistance to 42 schools. In 2000-2001 mandatory assistance was provided to six high schools, one middle school, and three high schools plus voluntary assistance to four schools.

Team members receive training in 11 main topics: The ABCs Plan, Building a High-Performance Team, Effective Schools, School Improvement Plans, Effective Curriculum and Instructional Programming, Team-School Relations and Home-School Relations, Personnel Evaluations, Needs Assessment, Student Supports and Staff Development, Building Teams and Communicating with the School Community.

Assistance teams conduct the following activities in all low performing schools:

- conduct needs assessment to identify school strengths and areas needing improvement
- evaluate certificated personnel, including principals
- formulate recommendations and revise school improvement plans
- establish strategies, time lines and responsibility for plan implementation
- monitor and assess progress and prepare monthly reports

Efficiency

The cost of the assistance to low-performing schools ranges between five and seven million dollars, depending on the number of schools designated and seeking voluntary assistance. These funds go primarily to cover the salary cost of the personnel involved on site. Total funding dedicated to the teams and professional development within those schools is difficult to assess as funding and assistance comes from several revenue streams and is provided by several divisions within DPI.

The Exceptional Children Division has conducted numerous workshops and conferences involving local district personnel. Trainings range in the number of hours and participants covered. The division assesses the estimated cost and for different programs can provide a per participant cost. Information on the effectiveness of these programs in raising student achievement was not included in the materials provided. However, the programs range so substantially in their offerings and intensity, it would be difficult to assess. Programs ranged from two-hour workshops serving 50 educators and costing as little as \$120 to more intensive summer institutes with upward of 30 hours that cost \$25,000 - \$50,000. Most of these opportunities are provided at no or low cost to participants by using federal funds..

Effectiveness

As can be seen below, those schools receiving mandated State Assistance Teams have made considerable growth. During the past five years, 11 schools have required more than one year of assistance to overcome low-performing status. Continued tracking of these schools should occur to better understand why the changes occurred as a result of the assistance and, to ensure that those who get off the list do not return.

Table 3. Performance Record of State Mandated Assistance Teams

School Year	Exemplary Growth	Expected Growth	No Recognition	Low Performing	Total Schools Served
1997-98	13	1	1	0	15
1998-99	7	2	0	2	11
1999-00	5	0	0	2	7
2000-01	5	4	3	2	14
2001-02	2	7	0	4	13

DPI and the State Board of Education, in July 2002, convened a statewide committee to examine issues related to professional development in North Carolina. The committee was charged with creating a clear vision, standards, rubrics for evaluating quality, topics and a plan that incorporates policy changes to reforming professional development across the state. The committee concluded that "the state lacks a process through which school staff and leaders can be confident that professional development secured through providers, including for-profits groups, is aligned with and enhances the goals, philosophies and instructional strategies defined in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study."⁷ This

committee also noted a lack of connectivity between programs and a need for stakeholders to work more closely.

CSLD Leadership

CSLD underwent a change in leadership the summer of 2002. The newly employed UNC Vice President of School-University Programs is seen as a leader who has immediately become very involved in making things happen. For example, representatives from all the CSLD programs met with the superintendents of the four high-poverty/low- performing districts invited to become a part of All Students Succeed through Excellent Teaching (ASSET). The CSLD program directors explained ASSET as an initiative that focuses the intensity of CSLD programs' work with student achievement outcomes. One administrator commented: *I see a huge difference with a different leader. They (Center program directors) seem much more accessible and oriented toward the schools. Before, you accessed programs on their turf; now, they are amenable to coming to us.*

Center for School Leadership Development Programs: A Broad-Based Perspective

Before beginning the summaries of information concerning the CSLD professional development programs, each program's original mission is briefly specified in the following table. This enables one, while reading the summaries, to better determine if a program is meeting its original mission, if the mission is still relevant, and if the mission has expanded since program inception.

Table 4. CSLD Programs and their Original Missions

Program		Recruitment to Address Shortages	Retention & Renewal	Professional Development	National Board Certification	Other
Principals Fellowship Program - PFP	M	Principals				
Teachers of Excellence for All Children - NC TEACH	I	Teacher - Areas of Need				
NC Model Teacher Education Consortium - MTEC	S	Teachers & Paraeducators				
Principals Executive Program - PEP	S			Principals		
Consortium for Advancement of Teaching NCCAT	I		New & Veteran Teachers	Teachers	Teachers	
Mathematics & Science Education Network - MSEN	O			Teachers	Teachers	Minority Student Graduates
NC Teacher Academy - NCTA	N			Teachers	Teachers	

Perceptions about CSLD Preservice Programs

Principals Fellows Program (PFP)

The Principal Fellows mission to recruit principals through a scholarship program is largely being fulfilled. Several principals noted that they would have been unable to pursue a school leadership position without the assistance the program provides. The program director is seen as helpful whenever problems arise in the university settings. The director's awareness of participants' jobs and personal situations is viewed as very supportive. Networking evolves from the program and opens doors for many. A PFP graduate says: *The Fellows experience has made me less apprehensive about calling people to check out what's going on.*

There is a need for coherence across the divergent higher education programs; this will ensure that all principals receive the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful. Some of the programs did not offer courses that fellows wanted – some deemed their law class as excellent, yet law was not part of the program at UNC-Wilmington. According to one assistant principal: *They (PFP) need to look at all of the different sites to make sure that experiences and courses are as consistent as possible. Choose any of the sites and you could get a completely different experience.*♦

Principal Fellows Program can do more to assess the quality of the program from its graduates over time. The program connects the graduates through newsletters and through surveys to establish where fellows are located. This is essential given the repayment if a fellow is not in a NC school. PFP should communicate with graduates over time when they will have a better idea of the required skill set necessary to be a successful school leader. This information could be a catalyst to improve class offerings at participating universities.

PFP can demonstrate better efficiency and effectiveness by securing and including benchmark data from other recruitment programs for principals across the nation, such as New Leaders for New Schools♦ or The Fisher Fellowship.♥ Even when programs are somewhat different in focus, this may open the window to leveraging program funding by pursuing some of the foundations interested in school leadership development and could generate ideas for continuous improvement.

Model Teacher Education Consortium (MTEC)

NCMTEC needs to establish a mission that encourages a more cohesive program and addresses a unique need. NCMTEC was established to increase the quantity of highly-qualified educators in the Northeastern region of the state. With the creation of NCTEACH and DPI's employing a regional lateral entry transcript review service, NCMTEC is largely providing duplicative services in one part of the state. If a regional focus is to continue,

♦ PFP does work toward influencing course offerings at the various higher education institutions with which it works—perhaps more is needed.

♣ Contact information: National and New York Program Office; 18 West 27th Street, Suite 7C

♥ Contact information: National and New York Program Office; 18 West 27th Street, Suite 7C

NCMTEC must define a mission that caters to the particular needs of its member counties in specific ways such as greater induction and mentoring support for lateral entry teachers.

One teacher noted the lack of rigor in NCMTEC courses. It also appears there has been little follow up or evaluation to assess the utility of the classes of NCMTEC participants. People in the field commented on the difficulty to access some of the courses necessary to attain licensure. While many courses were offered at nearby community colleges, other required courses could only be accessed through travel to other locations, many over an hour away.

NCMTEC needs to offer a set of quality services and provide greater assistance to lateral entry candidates. NCMTEC provides little more than reduced tuition. Several program participants noted a lack of academic advising. Many focus group participants noted little contact once classes started, and a few who had stopped taking classes had no contact from NCMTEC to follow up as to "why" nor to assess the kinds of support necessary to keep these teachers moving toward licensure.

- **NCMTEC needs to do more than just look at retention of teachers who have taken classes as a measure of success.** It needs to examine its information on paraprofessionals. Retention rates provided overly inflated success because many paraeducators may not have completed classes, but still are retained in an education position. While getting about 150 paraeducators into classrooms is laudable, there is a question about what has been the retention rate of those entering the "program." This is difficult to assess as there is no program, just classes and advising from the participating institutions.
- **NCMTEC needs to focus more on induction and support of teachers in their lateral entry classes.** NCMTEC could provide induction support targeted to lateral entry candidates who likely have different needs than those coming through other routes. For example, while the Connections program in Vance County between NCCAT and the district appears to be working well, only 12 new teachers are participating. NCMTEC could provide similar opportunities—providing mentoring, support, and networks. Given that the legislature just cut over \$3 million in funds for teacher induction, these services will be crucial to the success of these teachers and their ability to effectively educate all children.

NC TEACH (Teachers of Excellence for All CHildren)

North Carolina TEACH is viewed as a very good program that could be offered through college and university settings. Some question if it might be offered through regional institutions similar to the Two by Two state initiative where community colleges and four year colleges and universities work together to offer teacher education courses "closer to home." This would allow a student to complete the entire four-year undergraduate work at a community college.

If NC TEACH were offered regionally, it would be beneficial to maintain a central office at the CSLD to ensure centralized advertising of the program that has led to phenomenal growth

rates. CSLD leadership could also ensure curriculum coordination, continuing the online curriculum work underway.

NC TEACH maintains an impressive database with numbers of participants in each of its step-by-step program to certification. Demographics information highlights the program goal to target diverse individuals with specializations that are in demand.

The districts visited did not feel that many of the NC TEACH teachers were interested in coming to their areas, while Teach for America graduates were always mentioned among the new hires. More aggressive recruiting in certain areas of the state may need to be a part of the marketing tactic and certainly a part of consideration given to program impact geographically. Regional differences and economic conditions produce significant variation in teacher shortages problems.

The success of NC TEACH brings the accompanying problems associated with lateral entry programs—the need for new teacher support once an NC TEACH graduate is employed. One administrator describes the problem: *We've had a few really good lateral entries who come in and are very successful, but we've had more folks who have not been successful and we have had to provide tremendous support. It's hard.* Apportioning some funds for induction support is an idea worthy of major contemplation, as districts struggle to hold onto good teachers. The San Jose Teaching Fellows program, begun in 2001, includes ongoing classroom support in its list of benefits, offering a number of development and support activities over the course of the next two years. This keeps the group together and provides multiple points of access for the new teachers to get help.⁸ It is imperative that retention rates over time be maintained and benchmarked with other state and national programs as the program seeks other ways of evaluating teacher impact in the classroom.

Perceptions about CSLD Inservice Programs

North Carolina Consortium for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT)

NCCAT is valued highly by the practitioners in the field. One principal provides a summation of the general feelings when he says this about teachers: *NCCAT recharges their battery, and they return feeling so good about being a teacher.* Going to the Cullowhee site appeals to many as it removes them from everyday life. They state that this allows them to focus more completely on the professional development in which they are participating. Several administrators did voice opinions that *No Child Left Behind* demands more stress on accountability. They feel that: *If it doesn't impact student achievement, it just can't happen.* They appreciate, however, that a lot of program follow-up happens in the field, thereby combining the “best of both worlds.”

NCCAT has expanded its original mission as it reaches out to meet the needs of individual schools and districts. Davidson County is working with NCCAT from a county perspective, where elected officials, business and industry leaders, and K–16 educators are embracing and planning for the future of the county. This ongoing professional development is highly esteemed by Lexington educators.

Connections often Cited. The “Connections” program, addressing beginning teachers, is considered a blessing; this is another example of NCCAT’s reaching out to the field. Teachers from all three districts visited touted this program as being highly valuable, especially where districts have large numbers of lateral entry teachers. One young man teaching middle school said: *I was successful in the business world, but I really wanted to teach. Boy! Was I shocked with the reality of classroom management, trying to learn the curriculum, meeting the academic and emotional needs of the kids—I never would have stayed without Connections. Please let people know how vital this support is. I feel so sorry for those new teachers who cannot go to Connections.*

North Carolina Teaching Academy (NCTA)

Teachers encountered during the site visitations consider the Teaching Academy to be very valuable. Many like attending in the summer. They said that makes it “intense over time.” Others stated that only single teachers go because others cannot leave their children. One principal sends groups of teachers every summer. Educators in Duplin County were delighted that a program was held close to them this past summer.

The Teaching Academy has begun to work with individual schools or districts. Some practitioners say they know little about their doing this. Others say that the procedure is too rigid. A principal expressed his frustration: *I don’t have time for a lot of hurdles like applying through a rigorous application. They are not too interested in working with you.*

There is strong feeling that offerings need to be reexamined to see if they are meeting the real issues in the state: *We’re past the need for balanced literacy and technology to an extent... we need to move beyond.* Administrators and teachers often express a need to go beyond data to search for services that will address the needs of every child. They want to learn about research-based curriculum that will target needed skills. Teachers want to learn more about research in target areas such as reading. The Inventory Framework questioned whether programs had a library of research-based curriculum programs and other interventions with demonstrated evidence of improving student achievement. From the answers given and because of NCLB’s insistence on research-based materials, this is definitely an area for improvement.

Mathematics and Science Education Network

With ten centers statewide, MSEN provides staff development to mathematics and science teachers. These centers have access to collections of high-quality research-based materials and curricula developed with support from the National Science Foundation. The Center libraries have science, math, and education journals which are entirely devoted to research-based programs and interventions. Videos, monographs, and books deal with these issues. The Math and Science Education Network provides wonderful “check-out” materials. According to one high school teacher: *The things they loan us add so much to our class work. We could not afford a lot of it on our own.* All Center library materials are available for teacher checkout and are often used.

Funding is leveraged highly as MSEN seeks and attracts grants that exceed its state appropriations. A new MSEN grant will spend all of its resources on teachers, counselors, and administrators in high-poverty districts. Professional development priorities will be established from the needs in the field detailed in the district or school improvement plan.

Formative and summative evaluations are ongoing in MSEN Centers and in the large number of grant-funded programs. Many times external evaluators are used. Their designs can serve as a model for others who have not focused as specifically on effectiveness.

Principals Executive Program (PEP)

Principals and assistant principals expressed repeatedly the value of the PEP programs:
We come away with valuable information; they make it worth the time that you are there.

The new principals' program teaches testing information about student achievement data. The legal seminars and online tools received accolades. The technology program (PATL) was referenced a lot, with most stating that they use the computer more often.

PEP is seen as providing leadership development that was simply missing from their university coursework. A principal noted a variety of things PEP provided him: *I like the time spent just thinking about broad goals and a visionary statement. We had to do a school improvement plan. We seldom have the time to sit and focus on these key things; PEP provides that and more, even following up with its newsletter. Our getting to know others in class builds networking that just wasn't there.*

When asked what he does differently as a result of PEP, one principal responded by saying, *PEP reinforced what I was doing right and made me think about things I was not doing right. It made me question what I was doing. We compare notes with other principals, finding out what not to do as well as what to do. PEP works hard to create camaraderie.*

A few cite program follow-up as being left to the individual. Others feel that follow-up is well done. One practitioner criticized PEP for scheduling a follow-up day during testing time.

Several discussions centered on PEP's Closing the Gap work. This is viewed as quite helpful in addressing school needs.

SECTION FOUR: GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S LEGISLATIVE INTEREST IN FUNDING

"The North Carolina General Assembly, effective July 1, 1996, directed the State Board of Education to reallocate funds from the Technical Assistance Centers (TACS) to local school administrative units. Local boards of education can use these funds to contract with TACs, contract with other entities, hire personnel, or otherwise acquire staff development training, planning, and other forms of technical assistance.

At the school system level, each local board of education must distribute 75 percent of the funds in the staff development funding allotment to the schools to be used in accordance with that school's improvement plan. School principals are required to disclose to all affected personnel the total allocation of all funds available to the school for professional development, and to make available to all affected personnel a report of all disbursements from the building level professional development funds. The local superintendent has the same disclosure and reporting requirements for the system level funds.

In 2000-01, the State invested over \$11 million in direct appropriations for professional development for public school professionals. Local Education Agencies spent an additional \$22.4 million from other State allotment categories for professional development. The General Assembly also appropriated \$12 million to the Center for School Leadership Development."

...from State of North Carolina RFP 01-2002063

Federal Funding for Professional Development

This section describes federal funding available to local districts to support the professional development of teachers. As *No Child Left Behind* revamped many of the programs that supported staff development and final state consolidated plans are not due until May 2003, little is known about how districts will allocate and spend these funds.

History of Federal Funding – Prior to *No Child Left Behind*

With the introduction of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965, the federal government provided assistance to states, particularly focusing on services to schools with high proportions of low-income children. Since that time, ESEA has expanded to address other aspects of education like teacher professional development.

The largest federal professional development program devoted entirely to this purpose was the Eisenhower program, created in August 1984, as Title II of the Education for Economic Security Act. These funds were allocated specifically to advance professional development for K-12 mathematics and science teachers, yet they were allocated with some local flexibility for addressing specific teacher needs. When reauthorized as part of ESEA, 75 percent of each state's allocation—a function of student overall population and Title I eligibility—passed through the state to local school districts with the remainder going to colleges and universities. Evaluations of Eisenhower in its first decade offered a mixed picture of program results.⁹ While nearly one-third of all K-12 teachers with math and science responsibility participated in Eisenhower funded activities, most of the

allocations went toward low-intensity, inservice training. The training averaged just six hours or less per participant¹⁰ and had little impact on student achievement.

The 1994 reauthorization of Eisenhower brought a focus beyond math and science and a mandate to buy sustained and intensive support for teachers. State allocations rose from 75 percent to 84 percent of the dollars and a cost-sharing provision was added so that at least one-third of the cost of district Eisenhower professional development came from other sources. Further specific measurable performance indicators were included to assess the degree to which these funds were being effectively spent. New evaluations showed that most states continued to use funds on math and science. More than half of the professional development funded lasted one day or less and the added accountability measures were ineffective.^{11 12} "The problem was not that states and districts purposely frittered away the dollars, but that they did not then, and do not now, target Eisenhower dollars in ways that are likely to contribute to improving student achievement."¹³

While Eisenhower was the biggest, it was by no means the only source of federal professional development dollars. There were 96 programs that funded professional development for educators, 78 of which were administered by the U.S. Department of Education. The total expenditure for these programs in FY 2001 was \$34.8 billion.¹⁴ Yet, given that many of these program dollars can be spent on other purposes, it is virtually impossible to document the precise amount spent on professional development, or to connect how these dollars were leveraged to support high-quality professional learning.

No Child Left Behind and Beyond

The reauthorization of ESEA, more commonly referred to as *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB), has produced increased allocations to states to use on the teacher quality agenda. The largest amount available in NCLB is in Title II Part A (sec. 2111), which combined Eisenhower professional development grants (\$485 million for FY 01) and Class Size Reduction funds (\$1.6 billion for FY 01) as well as new monies for a \$2.85 billion allocation nationally for FY 2002. These funds, approximately \$60 million¹⁵ for the state of North Carolina, can be spent on many aspects of teaching quality, including intensive professional development. Ninety-five percent of these funds must go directly to schools, 2.5 percent is for partnerships with Institutions of Higher Education, Schools of Arts and Sciences and high-needs school districts, the remaining 2.5 percent (\$1.55 million) is intended for designated state activities. To receive these funds, states must submit an application with a plan that details its basis in scientific research. These funds must be used to supplement current services or introduce new programs, not supplant programs currently funded by the state.

Several other aspects of NCLB address professional development:

- Schools that fail to meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress standard for two years must be identified and provided technical assistance (Title I, Part A, Sec. 1116). Ten percent of district Title I, Part A funds must be allocated to professional development in these schools.

- Each school district that receives Title I Part A funds for 2002 and 2003 is to use no less than five percent and not more than 10 percent to help ensure that teachers are "highly qualified" through professional development and other recruitment and retention strategies. Local districts, after 2003, are to use no less than five percent of their Title I funds on continued staff development for teachers.
- Reading First funds (Title I, Part B, Sec. 1201) are available to help states adopt scientifically-based reading programs in grades K-3 (\$20.7 million for North Carolina). At least 80 percent of those funds must go to districts, with priority given to high-poverty areas and a high percentage of students reading below grade level. States can use the remaining funds for these activities: teacher preparation, professional development and licensure (65 percent of state funds), technical assistance (25 percent), and administration of the program (10 percent).
- Transitions to Teaching grants (Title II, Part C, Sec. 2301) encourage the creation of alternative routes to licensure to help recruit and retain mid-career professionals and local districts must use at least 25 percent of their funds from the Enhancing Education through Technology grants (Title II, Part D, Sec. 2401) on intensive, high-quality professional development that integrates technology into the curriculum.
- Math and science partnerships, focusing on increasing achievement through better practitioners' skills using professional development, were made available through the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. Twenty-four grants were given with a \$240 million investment over five years. The North Carolina Partnership for Improving Mathematics and Science (NC-PIMS), a collaboration between the University of North Carolina and the Mathematics and Science Education Network, received \$21.3 million over five years. Teachers will receive leadership training and intensive professional development.

In total North Carolina will receive \$80 million additional dollars. A sizeable portion must be and another portion is eligible for application to professional development. These increases demand a powerful planning and evaluation process that ensures annual expenditures produce the results sought by the state. In order to receive future appropriations the state is required to gather baseline data and set performance targets on the percentage of teachers receiving high-quality professional development.

Promising District Uses of Federal Funds

Given the flexibility accorded districts in using federal professional development funds, there has been scant research that directly links the use of these funds to specific professional development programs and their effectiveness. The U.S. Department of Education issued national awards for model professional development for five years (the awards program is currently under review), many of which incorporated federal funds into their designs. The Department's award criteria required that professional development include a plan with a clear description of the infrastructure, content and process components, and comprehensive evaluation. Goals must be clearly stated and data must establish that professional development lead to improved student learning and teaching.

Some district level award winners included:

- Lawrence Public Schools (Kansas): All schools were required to craft a school improvement plan that detailed the connection between professional development and student achievement. A local School Inservice Council developed the plan and gave it to a district council for review and approval. Each school detailed plans to use six half-days set aside by the district.
- Wilton Public Schools (Connecticut): Focused on math and science, test data was analyzed to determine what professional development was needed and School Planning Teams developed improvement plans that shaped professional development.
- Geneva City Schools (New York): Leaders at the district and school levels used data on students and continuous input from teachers to guide investments of time and money for professional development, with 45 hours required annually.
- Lewisville Independent School District (Texas): A comprehensive planning process used state-level achievement data to set school goals and plan professional development.

The aspects all these districts have in common are the use of student performance data and a comprehensive, team-oriented planning process to ensure that professional development is addressing identified needs. Evaluation is an essential component as is the ability to offer extended time for teachers to engage in job-embedded learning.

Professional Development Spending in North Carolina

A recent paper¹⁶ looked at federal data to determine district-level professional development spending and found that on average in 1994-95 that US school districts spent 2.76 percent of total expenditures on instructional staff support which in per pupil terms equates to about \$200. North Carolina spends 3.18 percent. Neighboring states that spent more than the average were Kentucky, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Florida. The study found moderate growth in the levels of spending on professional development with 1992-95 growth of about 25 percent in per pupil terms and an eight-percent increase in average budget share. They also found that urban and mid-size central cities spend more than rural areas (3.43 percent vs. 2.46 percent).

Currently, the North Carolina allocation system sends professional development resources directly to local schools. The amount varies according to the number of staff members and because of this the dollars are relatively small. Most schools reported using the funds to purchase services from regional authorities or to pay for substitutes. Schools and school systems expand their funding through grant applications, federal funding, and foundation funding.

Central office consultants said: *Most money is used for substitutes since so few days are set aside to support professional development.* Another consultant added: *Anyone who uses the funds to attend a workshop or seminar is expected to bring the information back to the school.* Another comment was: *Schools are getting smarter about sending lead teachers who can train the rest of the staff in the content they gain.*

Expenditures at the school level are reviewed at the district level as part of the annual school improvement cycle. However, the actual oversight and feedback schools receive rests on the capacity and commitment of central office and local school boards to invest in the process.

Most recently, as part of state appropriations approved for 2002-2003, funding for the Regional Education Service Alliances (RESA) was eliminated. Approximately three million had passed through to local districts and could be used to purchase RESA services. In our three case study districts, two of them specifically mentioned their reliance on the RESA for services. Overall local education agencies now have the option whether to purchase services from a RESA. It can be anticipated that RESA's viewed as providing assistance valued by LEA's will stay in business and others will fold. As a result, the pressure on the Center programs increases exponentially as there will be a void of outside expertise. The RESAs were able to work closely with the districts and provided them specific opportunities related to their identified needs.

Federal funds are an important component of the professional development spending structure of North Carolina. In 2000-2001 \$49.22 million was spent on staff development in the state (see Table 5.). Of those funds, \$17,621,409 (35.8 percent) was federal dollars; mostly covering purchased services with some additional funds devoted to salaries. Local districts contributed \$12,450,364 (25.3 percent) and \$19,147,895 (38.9 percent) came from state funding. Other expenditures coded outside of the area of staff development could also have been used in part to fund professional development.

Table 5.
Current Expense Expenditures for Staff Development: DPI Purpose Code 5930-
Other Instructional Programs-Staff Development (2000-2001)

Category	Local	State	Federal
Salaries	\$ 4,921,737	\$ 5,652,926	\$ 4,520,511
Purchased Services	\$ 7,374,067	\$13,494,969	\$13,099,682
Supplies and Materials	\$ 143,037	-	\$ 1,216
Instructional Equipment	\$ 6,265	-	-
Other Objects	\$ 5,258	-	-
TOTAL	\$12,450,364	\$19,147,895	\$17,621,409

Source: North Carolina Public Schools Statistical Profile 2002. Department of Public Instruction, p. 58.

School System Case Studies

Interviews in the school systems were designed to attain information on the impact of the Center programs. While conducting interviews in these districts, additional information was sought to address financial questions included in the study. While the case study produced the clearest understanding of the key programs studied, it provided less information in terms of district and school expenditures on professional development.

Lexington City (253 instructional personnel)

In Lexington, according to the Superintendent, the district is allotted approximately \$30,000 in state funds through the Department of Public Instruction for professional development. Dues to the Piedmont Triad, the Regional Education Service Alliance, were more than half (\$16,000) of those funds. The district appeared very satisfied with the professional development they received from the Piedmont Triad with administrators citing them most frequently as where they turned for their professional development needs. The additional funds are spent at the superintendent's discretion.

The district has invested in literacy training from an outside consultant and an audit, which lead to aligning curriculum with school and district goals. This professional development, while done with state and local funds, fits with services being provided by NCCAT both at their facility and on site. They are helping district teams, not only in Lexington, but also in Thomasville City and Davidson County, work on a mission, strategic plan, and curricular goals and objectives.

Vance County (576 instructional personnel)

The bulk of the resources used by Vance County come from federal funds. Vance has several sites that are part of a federal Comprehensive School Reform grant. The sites have adopted models and receive professional development around the implementation of their selected program. The district gives some funds to each school. For example, one elementary school principal discussed \$1,500 he received from the district and approximately \$60,000 from the state to target areas of need.

Vance appeared more concerned with teacher turnover and induction. The district is currently working on an induction program called "Connections" with NCCAT and has devoted \$20,000 to paying for substitute teachers so that mentors and new educators have release time to work together and attend NCCAT seminars provided on site. However, that only pays for 10-15 slots; the district hired 65 teachers in 2001-2002 with no previous public education experience and 120 new teachers. Almost 12 percent of Vance County teachers had no prior classroom experience in 2001-2002; only four districts in the state had a higher percentage.

Duplin County (618 instructional personnel)

The County has used much of its state funds to invest in assessment. Test Magic, an online program that uses End of Grade tests, are given at six-week intervals and analyzed to target professional development and services for students such as tutoring. The district gives half of its state allocation to the RESA, the Southeast Education Alliance. The district relies on the RESA for literacy training. Duplin County also provides staff development, which focuses on student results and contributes to the large number of high-performing schools in the district.

State Appropriations for Professional Development: Use and Impact

Determining the use of state dollars for professional development in LEAs as well as at the school site was challenging. While constituents could identify funds and explain the flow of dollars, there were few capable of explaining how dollars were spent and even fewer able to describe the impact. People needed assistance in thinking about how dollars are used to produce results and the means to document it. Only a few systems nationally have completed major audits of professional development expenditures (Boston and Chicago), and even then they found it difficult to realign the resources to the results they were seeking. Both are still working towards that goal. In addition, only one state (Florida) currently asks all districts to produce evaluation data regarding professional development investments, and in its first year of implementation, it is providing technical assistance to assist districts in meeting the new mandate.

Overall district leaders reported that they do not have enough resources to provide the types of opportunities that they would like. These districts used their assistance funds for RESAs and there is quite a bit of variation in how districts used other sources of state dollars and even less information as to how it impacted teachers. Researchers were unclear as to what LEAs desired in terms of professional development support and whether decisions regarding additional professional development would be tied to the kinds of research-based staff development known to produce results for students.

SECTION FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

These recommendations, expressed within the limitations of the study detailed earlier in this report, are offered as areas for consideration. They are organized according to the legislative interests expressed in the original proposal and based on the following premises:

- The purpose of North Carolina professional development is to improve classroom instruction and school leadership to increase levels of student performance.
- The state has a responsibility to assess how all professional development resources at its disposal do or do not effectively fulfill the purpose stated above.
- The state has to determine the extent to which the programs reviewed in this study fulfill the purpose.
- This study indicates that at a minimum the mission of each program, and its success in meeting the goals of the state, has to be critically reviewed by each program's authorizing/founding agency.
- If the state concludes a program is essential to the state's interest in improving student achievement, this study finds that it is necessary to strengthen each program.

Priority 1: National Research That Links Professional Development to Improved Student Achievement

Recommendation 1: Hold all state-level programs to high standards of professional development and ground them in research with a focus on improving educator practice and student achievement.

Rationale: "Professional development is only as good as the outcomes it pursues. High standards give educators a focus for their work. A system that sets high standards will seek powerful strategies for achieving them."¹⁷ All programs targeted by this study require regular review to ensure they meet the state expectation for high-quality professional development that will improve student achievement. Nationally accepted standards for professional development have been developed by representatives of more than 15 national organizations. The common language and common structure they provide for the design and delivery of professional development will increase its impact. Adopting national standards or developing state standards will produce a common framework for future development, revision, and evaluation of state professional development programming.

In addition, the standards provide benchmarks for planning and delivery of staff development. *No Child Left Behind* calls on all states to demonstrate that each year more teachers will receive quality staff development than the previous year. The standards as measures of quality could situate the state to respond to this query. Additional studies can

determine whether rigorous application of the standards results in improved student learning in some of North Carolina's most challenged schools.

Ensure state-level staff development programs are grounded in research. Research regarding the role staff development plays in contributing to improved student achievement is cited in Appendix A as well as the interim report. *No Child Left Behind* has increased the expectation that scientifically-based research will drive decisions schools make about professional development.

While it will be challenging to locate research that meets the definition of the law, an expectation that the state initiate the process will produce higher quality decision making. The process will become clearer as the federal government clarifies its own expectations for meeting this requirement. Further study might determine an appropriate place for the collection and dissemination of research by each of the programs or as a centralized function for the Center. Additionally, the state may consider establishing a center for professional development research at a university or community college.

Priority 2: UNC Center Program Analysis with regard to Mission, Governance, Efficiency, and Effectiveness

Mission

The Center programs were created with a mandate and that mandate may or may not be what is needed... they're busy doing what they are mandated to do, but times have changed.

... A Practitioner in the Field

Recommendation 2: Reexamine and rewrite the mission statements for the UNC Center for School Leadership Development and its constituent programs.

Rationale: The state of North Carolina has embraced a goal to be first in student achievement by 2010. The state must use every resource at its disposal to assist in this effort. This compels all state entities to align their programs and services toward achievement of this goal.

Without an unwavering focus on results, any program's value is questionable. The mission or goal statements for the targeted programs of the University of North Carolina Center for School Leadership Development were carefully crafted at program inception. Multiple documents demonstrate that the original missions have served the state well. **However, today's high-stakes accountability needs have either usurped or outdated several of the original missions.** NCCAT, used here to illustrate this point, is chosen as an example primarily because it is a strong, well-respected program.

Example: NC Consortium for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT)

The legislative mandated mission of NCCAT is “to provide career teachers with opportunities to study advanced topics in the sciences, arts and humanities and to engage in informed discourse assisted by able mentors and outstanding leaders from all walks of life; and otherwise to offer opportunity for teachers to engage in scholarly pursuits, through a center dedicated exclusively to the advancement of teaching as an art and as a profession.” Designed to reward excellence in teaching, to renew participants both personally and professionally, and to retain outstanding career teachers in North Carolina schools, the value of an NCCAT experience is proclaimed by teacher after teacher. Additionally NCCAT claims a 93 percent retention rate over a three-year period, while the state retention for the same period is 86 percent (according to an analysis by the DPI).

High school teacher: *NCCAT is wonderful! I was treated like a professional and came back so refreshed and eager to help my students learn since I had enjoyed so much being a learner myself.*

Middle school teacher: *I love NCCAT because you get away and you are treated like royalty. Meals are great, grounds are impeccable, and snacks are stocked. You have reflection time from 1-3 PM. You don't mind going to the computer lab until midnight because you have been treated so well.*

But one also hears reasons to reorient the mission. The following quotes illustrate this:

A Teacher of the Year: *My NCCAT experience was one of the best things that has ever happened to me. I took a course on medicine and just loved it. It had absolutely nothing to do with my classroom, but it was a great learning experience for me.*

A superintendent: *I want NCCAT to pamper teachers, to support them, and to send them back raring to go! BUT, I want them to do that in the context of what our grassroots needs are – not on some unrelated topic. We don't have a moment to waste on frills that don't focus on our accountability needs.*

The study would be misleading if it did not acknowledge that NCCAT has already begun operating beyond its original mission by linking its professional development offerings directly to North Carolina's accountability needs. This analysis of the missions and any re-writing will benefit from including a vertical team of practitioners from the field to establish stakeholder relevance, credibility, and ownership.

Recommendation 3: Align all state-level professional development with North Carolina's system of accountability.

Rationale: The UNC Center for School Leadership Development and the Department of Public Instruction will align all programming with the state's priorities and demonstrate leadership in helping educators understand “why” and “how” to align planning and professional development with the various requirements of state and local accountability.

Second to hiring qualified staff, professional development is the most important tool states have at their disposal to support the achievement of goals for student learning.

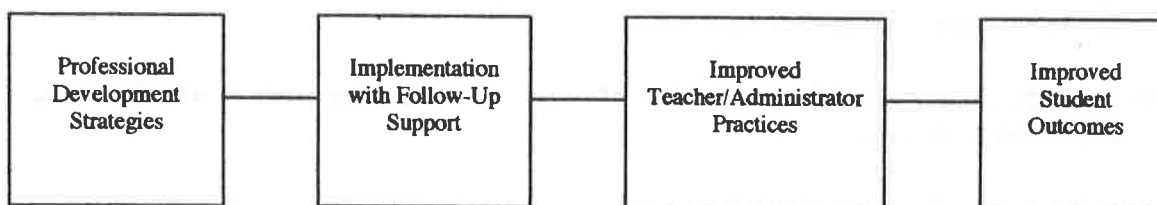
An aligned system ensures that leadership, resources, and expertise are focused simultaneously on the achievement of the system's priorities. Limited resources and commitments to students necessitate important choices. While there are many interesting topics for educators to explore in the name of professional development, an aligned system requires a laser-like focus on the goals of the state, district, and local school. Effective professional development begins with planning that addresses three critical questions: What knowledge and skills are expected of our students? What knowledge and skills must teachers have to support student learning of the required standards? What professional development will support teachers in acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills?

In a position paper on Teaching Quality (2002), the Education Commission of the States (ECS) explains: "*Alignment means, first of all, insuring that professional development helps teachers teach successfully to statewide student standards. Secondly, it means insuring that professional development enables teachers to be successful with the diverse range of students in their classrooms. In order to facilitate this, state and district incentives for professional development need to encourage teachers to participate in activities that directly address these objectives.*"¹⁸

Recommendation 4: Require annual program reports that document the application of research-based strategies and the impact of the work on improved educator practice and student results.

Rationale: Each program must be grounded in a theory of change that provides a rationale for the steps it will take to achieve the desired ends. Program design must be grounded in a sound theory of change that specifies the knowledge and skills educators acquire, the support they receive in order to improve practice, and the student performance that should result. The changes required at the district, school, and classroom levels to fully implement and institutionalize the programs' strategies must be clearly specified to improve participant knowledge and skills in a way that advances student performance.

FIGURE 1. A SIMPLE THEORY OF CHANGE



Program outcomes will be strengthened by the application of the following design principles.

Crafting Designs to Address Learners' Needs: Adults and Students. While all programs can defend their intent to meet learners' needs, most plan for the needs of teachers and principals; few of them plan or demonstrate ways to reach the most important learner, the student. Generally, all the targeted programs received good reviews, and even glowing accolades from program participants. However, the follow-up support necessary to achieve program goals is sometimes shallow or non-existent. Follow-up is vital to implementation of strategies that can improve performance.

Using Disaggregated Student Data. Most programs do not use student data unless they are working specifically with a school or district. When asked about data, most respond that they have difficulty in locating it. Practitioners in the field are increasingly focused on data. Programs can and should demonstrate their link to the Core Standards or to test items, and to the state statistics on content deficits.

Linking with Accountability Infrastructure. Every program can become more efficient and increase its impact by linking with one or more of the state's accountability components (i.e., school plans or individual plans, technology requirements, professional development requirements, certification or re-licensure). *No Child Left Behind* emphasizes the importance of this linkage, and when it is clearly specified, staff development is better linked to student results.

Targeting Diversity and At-Risk. Any program design must examine ways to target diversity and at-risk students. For example, one of the Teacher Academy's most popular programs, "Learning Styles" may need to incorporate cultural differences in learning styles. Programs must also make clear their intent by avoiding titles that can be misunderstood. For instance, NCCAT has a professional development offering that addresses diversity and is highly valued by teachers. Its title, however, is "Basketweaving," which may be misconstrued as a frivolous offering in this age of very serious accountability for student results.

In addition, information on budget expenditures and results achieved would be included in mandated staff development annual reports. Outside technical assistance may be necessary to help some program leaders produce powerful theories of change. Careful attention will be required to assisting programs with collection of data in a manner that is not over burdensome.

Governance

Recommendation 5: Establish a single governance authority for the UNC Center for School Leadership Development programs.

One governing board should lead the UNC Center for School Leadership Development programs. All governing, decision-making boards of individual UNC Center for School Leadership Development programs mandated by the General Assembly or through the University of North Carolina should be abolished.

The current governance structures appear to inhibit the various programs in meeting state priorities and needs of constituents. Center leadership needs the ability to negotiate across all parts of the state's educational entities and, its own programs. Without this ability to lead, the obstacles to high quality professional development can never be overcome.

Advisory Boards. Professional development programs could have Advisory Boards to offer feedback, to make recommendations, to assist with program evaluation to measure efficiency and effectiveness, and to secure additional funding. The UNC Center for School Leadership Development programs could work cooperatively to develop a structure to support work among the governing and advisory boards.

Collaboration and Efficiency. There can be little collaborative work to meet the state priorities and needs of constituents when individual programs plan and act autonomously. The Teacher Academy, NCCAT, and the Math and Science Education Network should work closely together to ensure that their offerings meet schools and students needs. The Department of Public Instruction should have a representative at Center meetings to ensure coherent planning. The UNC Vice President for University-School Programs can develop a "big picture" concept for high-quality professional development.

Service Duplication. Duplication of services could be eliminated or defended when everyone understands why it is occurring. One governing board can assist in identifying the highest leverage roles for DPI and UNC-CSLD.

Communication. A unified UNC-CSLD with one governing board would facilitate better communication with DPI, with practitioners, with other stakeholders, and with the Joint Education Oversight Committee.

The State Board of Education Professional Development Advisory Committee endorsed the need to reexamine the missions and governance systems of the Center.¹⁹ This larger stakeholder group's recognition of this need acting separate from this study team is validation of the support for this recommendation. Additional study could focus on less obvious costs and concerns associated with convening the programs into a single entity.

Efficiency

The key thing about staff development is if someone can talk to me about how it is going to be relevant to school improvement goals and what the costs are. We have to get services provided in the most efficient way.

... A Principal from a High-Performing/High-Poverty School

Recommendation 6: Give the educators in the field the information they require to make better decisions about professional development including professional development programs and services available from the state.

Rationale: People in the field do not know what professional development services are available. They hear from peers who have taken a course; sometimes they receive a newsletter; occasionally there is an announcement on a bulletin board; or, the superintendent tells them to attend a program. A compendium of state-level programs will augment planning while offering professional development providers and districts an arena for (1) collaboration for better student results and for (2) improving efficiency and effectiveness.

The website of the UNC-CSLD should go beyond its present descriptive focus and become a marketing tool for CSLD programs. The UNC-CSLD programs, in cooperation with the Department of Public Instruction, as relevant, could produce an online directory of professional development services, showing the strands for high-quality professional development that address the state's priorities. Content areas and targeted audiences, such as grade levels, should be accompanied by the clearly-specified school reform focus or student outcomes. The first task of Advisory Boards would be to determine the content to be given to stakeholders.

Recommendation 7: Determine a curricula of training modules that would encourage consistency, extend reach, develop leadership, and build capacity of educators throughout the state.

Rationale: Module development could produce resources for mentors and school-based staff developers (coaches) to ensure consistency in content and pedagogy for supporting high-quality professional development. The UNC programs have expertise in a number of areas but do not have staff necessary to deliver to all schools in North Carolina. By crafting training modules, offering intensive training-of-trainer programs, and providing follow up assistance they will ensure the state has a structure to support increased capacity to address state priorities.

The training of cadres of teachers could assist with the regional delivery of professional development. Consideration can be given to recruiting National Board certified teachers to participate in and lead such efforts. The emphasis on developing teacher cadres contributes to the professionalism of teachers, which enhances retention. A second purpose is to extend the impact of original training sessions. The Teacher Academy already has a model for using teachers as facilitators that could be adapted.

School-based staff developers are increasingly being used in the state to provide direct assistance to teachers in the classroom. Large urban districts (San Diego and District 2 in New York City) and some states (Texas, California, and Indiana) have found value in preparing staff developers and content that can be used in multiple sites. The North Carolina school systems in Charlotte Mecklenberg, Haywood, Guilford County, Forsythe County, and Alamane use state funding to support school-based staff development leaders to provide assistance with school improvement priorities.

Modules crafted and training-of-trainers offered by the program leaders would increase the impact of their work. A survey could be developed to determine the topics and training venues most desired by the school systems served by the Center.

Effectiveness

Many mistake their good faith efforts with their impact. Any professional development program that cannot answer the question, "What is the impact of our professional development on teacher practice and student achievement?" is "increasing the likelihood of self-deception."²⁰

.... Grant Wiggins

Recommendation 8: Require that a portion of the time and resources of each state-funded program be prioritized to support school-based and job-embedded learning.

Rationale: Powerful professional development that results in student achievement is results-driven, school focused, and team based. While these programs were not designed originally with those qualities in mind, most have recognized their importance and begun to incorporate these features. A requirement that the state-based programs provide a certain portion of their resources directly to schools will expedite the development and delivery of such an intention.

Job-embedded learning links learning to the immediate and real-life problems faced by teachers and administrators.²¹ For the past decade North Carolina has endorsed job-embedded learning, recognizing that adult learning can take many forms such as study groups, peer observations, or planning lessons with colleagues while searching for what works. This should be a priority for all professional development providers in the state.

Regular on-site support for professional learning will accelerate the application of new practices and increase credibility of the program. Additional study could focus on the feasibility of the various programs dividing the state according to needs for school-based services.

Recommendation 9: Institute a program review cycle that focuses on the issues of mission, governance, efficiency, and effectiveness.

Rationale: In addition to regular evaluation studies called for by the Oversight Committee, the Center should facilitate its own program review cycle. This process will call for regular review of mission, governance, efficiency, and effectiveness.

- Data will be required to support that each professional development program is successfully improving participant knowledge and skills and advancing student performance.
- Programs will report their effectiveness by using standards and benchmarking, including cost and benefit comparison with similar programs in the state and nation.
- All program missions, objectives, and expectations will be analyzed from the viewpoint of (1) *No Child Left Behind's* increased emphasis on staff development that is results-driven, standards-based, and job-embedded, and (2) North Carolina's decade-long similar emphases.

The UNC Vice President for University-School Programs should require annually from the Center for School Leadership programs targeted by this study a formative and summative evaluation report that is clear, brief and concise. Suggested components for the document follow:

- A brief description of measures of efficiency in a formative evaluation.
- Previous five years of funding, defined by amount of state appropriation, grants, federal funding, or other streams of revenue.
- Numbers of staff and a breakdown of job assignment and salaries.
- Cost per participant for sub-programs within the main program, allowing for difference in number of days per program. This cost per participant must be compared to other state or national programs and data for cost efficiency.
- Retention data that is benchmarked against other programs and against state and national retention data, if pertinent to the program.
- A detailed summative evaluation, making certain that student results are included.

Many professional development programs appear to be unconnected to measures of effectiveness. This must change. The format for this document can be collaboratively developed (and used) by UNC Center for School Leadership Development Program Directors. These formative and summative evaluation reports can be linked to requests for appropriation and/or serve as an evaluation component of other requests.

Priority 3: Recommendations for Teachers, Substitute Teachers, and Lateral Entry Teachers for Effectively Teaching At-Risk Students

Recommendation 10: Focus resources of the UNC-CSLD programs on staff development that will help teachers and other support staff reduce the gap in student achievement.

Rationale: This recommendation addresses the State Board of Education's directive to close the achievement gap. According to *No Child Left Behind* schools will be judged on the progress each student sub-group makes toward state goals. Schools must achieve acceptable levels of progress in order to maintain autonomy with regard to planning and resources. Schools with serious achievement gaps will seek answers to their dilemma. A cottage industry of staff development providers is growing overnight to respond to school requests for answers. States have a responsibility to ensure that all educators have access to the highest quality professional development that will help them to close the achievement gap. What works vs. what sounds appealing must guide them.

Staff development can enable teachers to address the learning needs of students who come to them performing one or more years below grade level. Content-rich staff development can prevent, or certainly narrow, the occurrence of this learning gap by linking professional development and student results. This recommendation may also be addressed through the development of cadres and modules suggested in Recommendation 7.

Recommendation 11: Design and deliver systematic induction programs plus training for mentor teachers.

Rationale: Research consistently verifies the importance of induction programs and services for retaining new teachers and accelerating their competence. Training for mentors is essential for ensuring they are as effective as possible. The three Center programs focused on teacher recruitment should be simultaneously focused on teacher induction. Fewer new teachers are replaced annually in states and districts with high-quality induction and mentoring programs.

Models of effective mentoring services exist in North Carolina (for example, the Charlotte full-time release program). Money has been set aside for stipends for mentors. However, variability exists regarding training for mentors. This is a unique opportunity to leverage existing programs and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of mentor programs while reducing the variability of the quality of services offered. Until the state focuses on the first three years of teachings, it will continue to put a disproportionate amount of its funds into teacher recruitment services as opposed to teaching quality and retention services.

Recommendation 12: Redesign the recertification/relicensure process so that it supports the goal that all teachers have the knowledge and skills to successfully close the achievement gap.

Rationale: Teachers should be relicensed according to their performance in the classroom. Teaching standards should be used as a guide to the knowledge and skills expected of teachers. Unfortunately, many states have chosen instead to tie seat time credits to relicensure standing. **There is no evidence that a teacher's accumulation of specified staff development hours will directly influence their performance in the classroom.** In addition, with limited resources and time available to serve teachers, states must take advantage of all opportunities to influence the learning and practice of its educators.

Based on reports from teachers and stakeholders, the quality of relicensure professional development activities varies greatly. There is no standard for evaluation, and approval of professional development activities is left to the discretion of the LEA with little guidance for those decisions. Altering the relicensure system in the state offers an important option for strengthening teaching quality.

**Priority 4: Recommendations for Professional Development for Principals
to Acquire Leadership Skills to Manage Schools
with Diverse Populations and to Increase Student Achievement**

Recommendation 13: Focus additional resources of the UNC-CSLD programs on support for new principals and staff development that will help them reduce the gap in student achievement.

Rationale: The CSLD preservice programs: Principals Fellows Program, NC TEACH, and the NC Model Teacher Education Consortium should collaborate to provide support for beginning administrators, teachers, and paraeducators to ensure a higher retention rate. Retention of new hires is of paramount importance, at least as great as that of recruitment. NCMTEC's proximity to other CSLD programs should trigger a move that can spur greater collaboration, as well as possible savings on rent.

Programs focused on principals have a similar responsibility to address the role of principals in designing a learning environment that closes the achievement gap. Follow up and on-site services assist principals to put theory into action. Nationally, programs for providing mentors and coaches for principals are reporting some success. Even telephone coaching is being used by some comprehensive school reform models (Different Ways of Knowing) and by some large urban systems (Dallas, Cleveland).

Principal recertification requirements should also be reexamined. Delineation of the knowledge and skills expected of highly competent principals should serve as the basis for issuing license updates to principals. This is a controversial, but important issue to bring to the table for discussion.

**Priority 5: An Analysis of Professional Development Support Offered
by the Department of Public Instruction**

Recommendation 14: Establish a vision and adopt a comprehensive state plan for professional development.

Rationale: According to the Report to the State Board of Education and the State Superintendent by the North Carolina Professional Development Committee (2002): *North Carolina's current system is inadequate....Program administration lacks coherent alignment with a Statewide framework of the Strategic Priorities due to lack of leadership and guidance. Legislative action during the 1990s required the State Board of Education to define the critical functions of DPI. Due to decreased staff, professional development was excluded as a critical function....Consequently, professional development is fragmented at best.*²²

Data collected through this study supports this finding as well. North Carolina needs a vision for professional development and a coherent plan for achieving it. Such a plan would enable the state to clarify the functions of the Department of Public Instruction and then budget accordingly. A state-level plan developed by representatives of all stakeholders would clarify how and by whom each expectation associated with high-quality staff development will be achieved.

Recommendation 15: Mandate a standard format and due date for school/ district improvement plans.

Rationale: School/district plans throughout the state presently have no common format or due date. This impairs the ability to focus statewide on common needs pinpointed by the school/district plans. It impairs DPI's and the Center's ability to focus on common needs of similar schools, and it impairs providers' ability to focus on other common needs.

The North Carolina Professional Development Committee (2002) noted the following: *LEAs need to use a clearly-defined improvement process, developed by the State, to develop and implement a comprehensive, high-quality professional development program that leads to in-depth content knowledge, skill in pedagogical methodologies and the disposition to implement the new learning. The new learning must be applied to classroom practice and to school leadership.*²³

Currently schools submit plans to central office, and local schools boards approve the plans. Because DPI does not have the staff capacity to provide feedback on each plan, it is recommended that only those schools that do not meet annual yearly progress goals submit plans for review. A feedback system for strengthening plans would be put in place. In addition, these plans become accessible to the DPI and the UNC programs for charting new services to the state's neediest populations.

Priority 6: Recommendations regarding Use of Federal, State, and Local Funds

Recommendation 16: Align the allocation of state dollars to state priorities.

Rationale: Resources must support priorities. It is premature to recommend increasing or decreasing dollars for various programs discussed in this report. The Department of Public Instruction needs to clarify its position and needs with regard to professional development. Each UNCLD program should revise its mission. Budgets should be submitted to address these revisions. Future budgets and allocations would be considered in light of the Department and programs success in meeting their goals.

If North Carolina intends to continue to provide technical assistance to low-performing schools, it should consider strategies for increasing such support. North Carolina resources currently limit technical assistance to low-performing schools to one year. While preliminary data shows the intervention to be helpful, research shows that such improvement will rarely be sustained without long-term work. Therefore, it is critical that North Carolina find the means to continue technical assistance to low-performing schools for a minimum of three years. Various methods would be studied and powerful solutions for each site would be locally selected.

NCLB will provide additional dollars to North Carolina school systems and the state department. Further investigation into expenditures by the state department is necessary to determine the points of highest leverage. However, all funds specified for staff development and/or school improvement purposes should be aligned with state priorities. Program expenditures not aligned would be reallocated to such priorities unless otherwise determined by the Education Oversight Committee or its designee.

Priority 7: An Analysis of the Feasibility and Merits of Consolidating and Reducing Professional Development Programs

Recommendation 17: Determine whether the need still exists for the Model Teacher Education Consortium (MTEC) in light of the recent establishment of the Regional Alternative Licensing Centers and a new grant to Elizabeth City State University to support Transition to Teaching programs.

Rationale: It seems premature to recommend the consolidation and reduction of any program until the reexamination of the program missions is complete. However it is important to raise issues regarding replication of services in the area of lateral entry support programs.

Data that specifically suggested an examination of the Model Teacher Education Consortium arrived late in the study. Staff developers suggested that many of their previous needs to assist lateral entry teachers would be served by the new Regional Alternative License Centers. In addition, college courses previously served by MTEC, could now be offered through the grant to Elizabeth City State University. Those in the field who have participated

in MTEC testify to massive confusion surrounding enrolling, developing a course of study, and working through problems associated with the institutions in which they are enrolled.

Similar issues may be raised by other such support programs and duplication of services through other universities Transition to Teaching grants. Further study is necessary to clarify this situation.

Recommendation 18: Require collaboration among the DPI, Center for School Leadership Development, local colleges and universities, and other recipients of large federal and state grants.

Rationale: Collaboration is essential to the achievement of North Carolina's educational goals. There is no place in the plan for refusals to work together.

Realigning existing resources, increasing oversight, and formalizing a collaborative approach can significantly enhance the State's ability to provide equitable access to high-quality professional development opportunities for teachers and school leaders and result in improved student achievement. State-level leadership and support can enable the Office of the Governor, Education Cabinet, State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction, Center for School Leadership Development; colleges, universities, community colleges, regional service alliances, local education agencies, and professional organizations to become stronger collaborative partners for improving achievement for all students in North Carolina.²⁴

Some consolidation at the Center for School Leadership Development may ultimately follow the convening of all programs under one roof and one governing board. A commitment to collaborate is critical-- to problem solving, to enhancing services, to studying geographically the greatest needs, and to moving from a focus on individual professional development to school-based professional development.

Further study can identify whether preservice programs (NC TEACH, Principals Fellows Program, and NC Model Teacher Education Consortium) should eventually move from the UNC Center for School Leadership to community colleges, colleges, or universities. This assumes a successful start-up and module development for replication. Further study that examines all state-level staff development contributors and additional data from field practitioners will assist in determining where further collaboration and consolidation are essential.

Priority 8: Recommendations regarding Regionalization of Services and Cooperative Arrangements with Higher Education and Community College Authorities

Recommendation 19: Consider the recommendation of the State Board Professional Development Committee regarding the establishment of limited regional staff development services.

Rationale: In 1995-96 the state-supported Technical Assistance Centers were eliminated in the restructuring of the State Department of Public Education. Funding previously allocated directly to the centers was reallocated to LEAs with the option to retain the funds or join RESA groups of their own design. When state funding was eliminated, no funding was available for collaborative services beyond regular staff development or combinations of other local, state, and federal sources. RESA's had to consider the services that would ensure their survival. District purchased services, and that funding determined whether a RESA stayed in business. In the rural, and often underserved areas of the state, the need continues to exist for delivery through collaborative services.

The surfacing of the recommendation by the State Professional Development Task Force regarding the establishment of area professional development centers is however, an affirmation of the value of such arrangements. Perhaps new regional authorities, established independently or at local universities or community colleges, focused solely on improved professional learning required to collaborate with the Center programs, can leverage support for local systems who are either too small to be able to offer substantive staff development services or too far removed from large city resources. Development of regional programs should be focused on strengthening alignment with state priorities. The regional centers could provide leadership and opportunity for all personnel to access quality professional development opportunities designed to meet state priorities and standards of NCLB. This recommendation requires further study and discussion.

Conclusion

In the end there are several caveats to consider. David Cohen and Heather Hill (1998) provide the context for this important work: "Well-planned state efforts to improve instruction can successfully influence not only teaching but also student learning."²⁵ The Education Commission of the States reasserted the policymakers role by stating: "It is the responsibility of state and district policymakers and educators to take the lead in making sure all teachers have the skills, knowledge, and support they need to succeed."²⁶ Dennis Sparks (1999) reiterates its importance: "The rationale for the importance of teacher development is not exactly rocket science: To be successful in teaching all students to high standards, teachers need to be engaged in sustained, intellectually rigorous study of what they teach and how they teach it."²⁷ Finally Richard Elmore (2002) reminds us of what is key: "Improvement is a discipline, a practice that requires focus, knowledge, persistence, and consistency over time."²⁸

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

National Research on Professional Development That Links to Improved Student Achievement

Professional Development

Links to Improved Student Achievement

Americans consistently say the number one way to improve schools is to raise teacher quality; according to multiple surveys¹ and polls.² Is the American public right? A large body of research proves that the quality of teaching is the single most important factor influencing student achievement.^{3 4} An ETS study by Weglinsky,⁵ using National Assessment of Educational Progress data, found that the greatest influences on student achievement are classroom practices and professional development that is specifically tailored to those practices. Research on the public schools of Pittsburgh found that well-informed practice of strategies learned through professional development can overcome the achievement gap between white students and minorities.⁶ Haycock's ongoing research with The Education Trust that has culminated in the series of reports on high-performing/high poverty schools⁷ calls for professional development as a strategy to close the achievement gap.⁸

North Carolina – A National Leader for Professional Development

North Carolina has exhibited leadership for decades, demonstrating its belief that the success of all reform efforts hinges on teacher and teaching quality. In the early 1980s, North Carolina determinedly began its mission to improve teaching quality. Investing millions of dollars, the state adopted policies that invested heavily in professional development programs; required its schools of education to be accredited; increased license renewal requirements for teachers; encouraged National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Certification with monetary support and increased salary incentives; started a mentoring program for beginning teachers; and authorized funds to raise teacher salaries to the national average.⁹

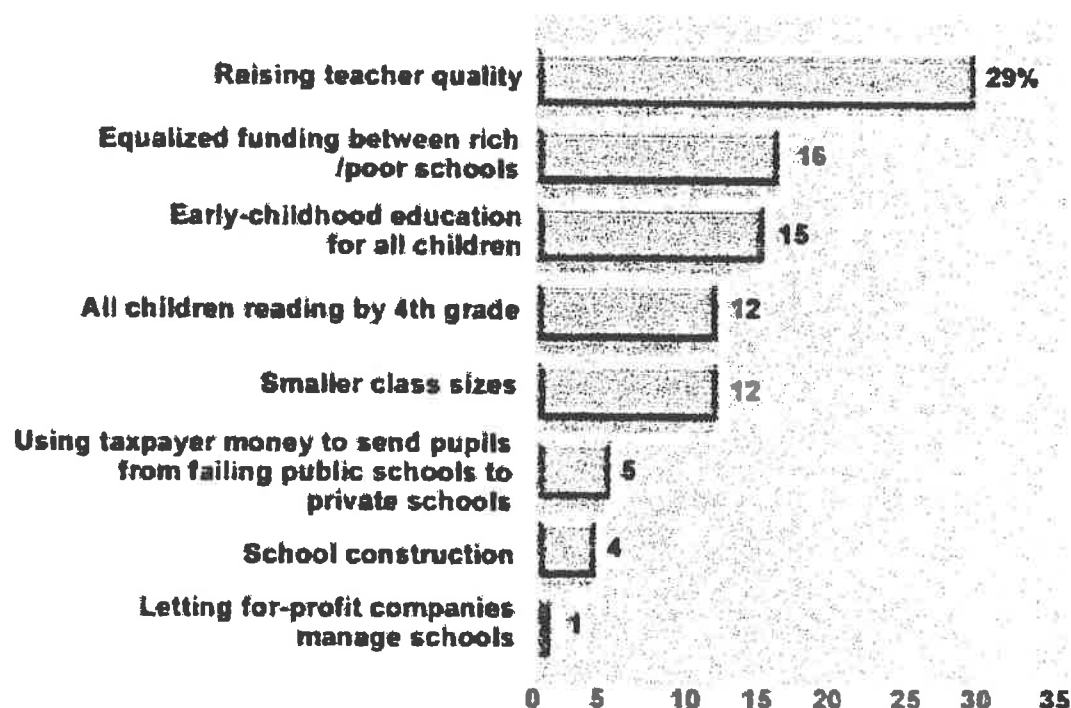
North Carolina has been rewarded for its investment in professional development for quality teaching and school leadership. The state outpaces all other states in its student achievement gains. Even with a larger than normal high-poverty student population, in math and reading, students moved from being near the bottom in 1990 state rankings to being well above the national average in 2000. This posted the largest student achievement gains in mathematics and reading of any state in the nation.^{10 11} The state continues the determined pursuit of academic excellence, just recently announcing that the average state SAT score is now above the southeast average for the first time.

The charts on the next page illustrate "America's Top Priorities for Improving Education." They are from recent polls commissioned by the Public Education Network and *Education Week*.¹² The national challenge is to act before the momentum for teaching reform depicted in the charts dissipates.¹³ Securing and retaining high quality public school professionals in these difficult economic times requires vigilance and commitment.

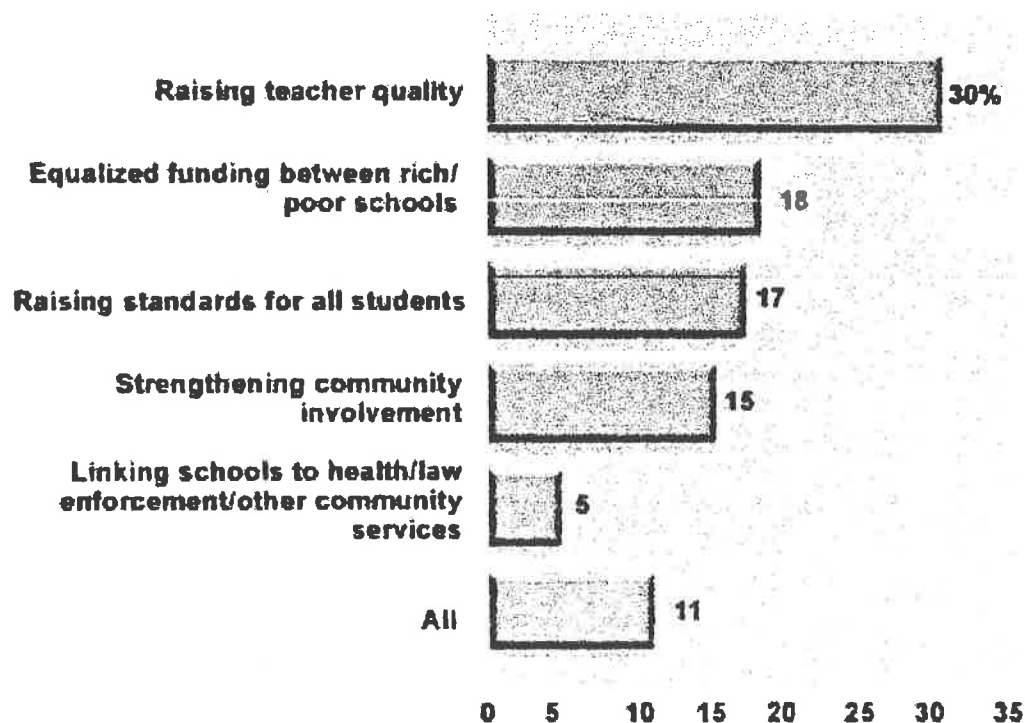
North Carolina recognizes professional development as the major prerequisite to student achievement gains. The cost of high quality professional development is causing concern as legislators face declining revenues during these times of economic downfall.

Charts 1 and 2:

American's Top Priorities for Improving Education in 2002



American's Top Priorities for Improving Education in 2001



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Appendix B

Methodology of the Study

Includes

Methodology for Each Work Phase
Inventory Framework
List of Prior State Reports

Appendix B

Study Methodology for Each Work Phase

Phase One Methodology

Program information was gathered from a variety of sources. Work began on an inventory document and protocols for future site visits and interviews.

Websites. National Staff Development Council staff collected program information from the website of North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction and from the 21st Century University of North Carolina website. This frequently led to individual program websites where more data was gathered. National organizations websites that track educational policy information and those that compile longitudinal research yielded much relevant information.

Phone Interviews. A phone interview with the UNC Vice-President just recently named to head the Center for School Leadership Development (in addition to his other duties over University-School Programs) yielded wide-ranging initial analysis of the UNC programs and a pledge of cooperation. Phone interviews were held with DPI staff named as liaisons by the Research Division of the General Assembly.

Phase Two Methodology

Backmapping Model. Backmapping or backward mapping is a planning and evaluation tool that has been used by policy analysts to gather meaningful information from the field from an implementation analysis perspective. It is used in this study "to begin with the end in mind," with the assumption that any educational professional development program identifies the student results it wants. After those results are identified, new teacher or principal knowledge, skills, and behaviors are specified. Staff development is then designed to nurture teacher or principal learning. Planning is done to access resources and to develop a culture of improvement.

Inventory Framework. Developed by NSDC, and based on the Backmapping Model, this Inventory was designed for distribution to each of the UNC Center for School Leadership's programs through the UNC Vice-President of University School Programs. Each professional development program director responded to the Framework in August. Exceptions were made for several of the preservice programs, as their goals were different from the student results professional development focus of the Inventory. These directors responded with descriptive and historical information. See Appendix A for the Inventory Framework.

Orientation Meeting. Stephanie Hirsh, NSDC Deputy Executive Director, and BettyAnn Fuels, Project Director for this North Carolina Study of Professional Development met September 3, 2002, with Dr. Richard Thompson and all the CSLD program directors to explain the purpose of the study and how NSDC planned to conduct the study. The meeting, held over a period of several hours, allowed for questioning and interaction.

Individual interviews. NSDC staff interviewed the UNC Vice-President of University School Programs and each program director the first week in September. Follow-up through e-mail and phone calls continued to inform and clarify program descriptions and initial analysis.

Research of Prior Studies, Evaluations, and Plans. NSDC staff gathered reports, studies, and evaluations that pertain to North Carolina's professional development for public school professionals. A listing of these documents is found in Appendix B.

Phase Three Methodology

Inventory Frameworks. These formed the basis for analysis of the individual programs completing them, the inservice programs.

Historical Data, Evaluations, and Marketing Materials. All the programs provided these types of materials to describe their programs. This contributed to programs analysis.

Document Review. Careful review of the *Final Report* adds quality control to this study. Leaders in the field of professional development reviewed the document:

Dennis Sparks	NSDC Executive Director
Stephanie Hirsh	NSDC Deputy Executive Director
Joellen Killion	NSDC Special Projects Director
Thomas R. Guskey	Professor of Education Policy Studies and Evaluation, University of Kentucky
Hayes Mizell	Director of the Program for Student Achievement at the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation and "Executive-on-Loan" to the National Staff Development Council

Phase Four Methodology

Site Selection Process. This phase of assessing sites evolved over a period of several weeks, developed cooperatively by NSDC staff, the UNC Center for School Leadership staff, and staff from the Department of Public Instruction. Many variables were incorporated into the process due to the breadth of this study.

Protocols for Focus Groups and Individual Interviews. The Backmapping Model formed the basis for the protocols used in interviewing the practitioners in the field. Focus groups were held with principals who shared a commonality, such as having been identified as high-performing, high-poverty schools. Focus groups were held with groups of teachers. We worked primarily around availability of teachers, interviewing both groups and individuals.

Gathering of Funding Information. Discussions with superintendents, central office administrators, and principals described professional development funding. NSDC staff gathered information on federal funding for professional development.

Phase Five Methodology

