



# Central Carolina Regional Educational Service Alliance

Serving School Districts in the Heart of North Carolina

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Neil Pedersen  
Executive Director

SUBJ: Executive Director's Report

DATE: October 14, 2016

We recognize that this has been a tough week for many of our districts, with some remaining closed for the entire week. For those of us in the less impacted areas of the state, we hope that those who were less fortunate will be able to recover and resume operations shortly. Let us know if there is anything that we can do for you.

We learned of Danny's pending retirement at the end of the calendar year. Danny's been a great resource for the CCRESA having worked in the HR division at DPI for many years. He will be missed.

## **EdLeader21**

Since we last met, I attended the EdLeader21 meeting in Denver. Also in attendance were teams from the Orange County Schools and the Wake County Public Schools. Below are some of my major takeaways:

- Don't have to proceed sequentially through the seven steps that Ken Kay and Valerie Greenhill identify in their book. Play to strengths and take local conditions into consideration when deciding how to proceed.
- I asked Ken Kay for better terminology to use instead of the 4Cs or 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills. Ken suggested coming up with our own terminology, but, reluctantly, suggested "21<sup>st</sup> Century Education." "Personalized learning" and "student-centered learning" speak to process, not to curriculum or skills.
- This is messy work. Be flexible about implementation. Play off of where teachers are now; i.e. let them take a project/unit and then ask them to polish it to incorporate one of the Cs. May even start with one line in one of the competency rubrics instead of tackling the whole rubric.
- Ken suggested that the 4Cs should permeate all levels in the organization, in what we expect of teachers and administrators and what we expect to see reflected in the culture.

- What I heard at the school visit to Mountain Vista High School. They really want teachers to relate what they are learning to their real world experiences. They want to work hands-on. They want their work validated by presenting to an audience or having their work actually used (e.g. children's study of homelessness or pollution or the need for a specific restaurant in their community). They want to have a healthy, meaningful relationship with their teachers. Students want group work to be voluntary when it involves a grade.
- Give teachers latitude and freedom to teach. This is how teachers become enthusiastic about their teaching.
- Teachers need time (PD) to understand the rubrics. They should feel free to modify and/or have students put rubrics into their own words.
- Incorporate the 4Cs into grading and progress reporting. Transition to the focus on education being about the mastery of skills, not content.

Several aspects of the discussions in which you'll engage at our October 14<sup>th</sup> Board meeting pertaining to vision, mission, and 21<sup>st</sup> Century education grew out of ideas from the EdLeader21 meeting.

### **Digital Learning Competencies**

We are in the process of signing a contract with DPI to assist with the conducting of professional development for district leaders and teachers on the newly developed Digital Learning Competencies. Four programs will be conducted this year for which we are responsible for finding and reserving space, paying for snacks and meals, and assisting with operational arrangements. The budget for each of the sessions provides \$1500 to cover Dana's and my time. The dates are as follows: November 21<sup>st</sup>, January 20<sup>th</sup>, March 7<sup>th</sup>, and April 13<sup>th</sup>. All four of these sessions will be held at the McKimmon Center on the campus of NC State.

### **Most Likely to Succeed: Preparing Our Kids for the Innovation Era**

**By Tony Wagner and Ted Dintersmith**

We are conducting six book studies this year, and last week we held our first one on Tony Wagner's and Ted Dintersmith's book, Most Likely to Succeed: Preparing Our Kids for the Innovation Era. This book was very well received, and if you conduct book studies in your district, I would suggest that you consider this book. It makes a strong case for imparting in students skills that they will need in their future careers and lives through giving them engaging work and allowing them to learn content through this process. It also challenges the use and importance of standardized tests, and questions the effectiveness and value of traditional higher education programs and degrees. There is a documentary based on this book, and I'm considering renting it and offering a session for a larger audience. This book is very much aligned with the work of EdLeader21.

Also, on a related topic, I have followed a series that The Atlantic recently concluded on education in which it interviewed a diverse group of educators on topics such as assessment, content, homework, teachers, and school calendars. [Here](#) is a link to the final installment on assessments, which also has links within it to the earlier topics. Like the book, this series of articles would be great to promote thinking and discussion about how and what we should be teaching students.

### **Upcoming Programs**

In your packets will be an overview of the professional development that we have coming up this year. I encourage you to send at team to the offering on October 31<sup>st</sup> on a Restorative and Accountable Approach to Student Discipline. Related to this, [here](#) is an interesting tool that allows you to look by district at academic and discipline gaps across racial/ethnic groups. Like many indicators like this, I believe it's dangerous to draw immediate conclusions from the data. Instead, the data should prompt questions in your mind that need to be further investigated.

Not included in this overview is a program that we're in the process of planning with the **Friday Institute** as an extension to the program last year on Digital and Blended Learning. This will be similar in format to last year's program, with teams from your districts participating in four days of face-to-face professional development. We are recommending that you include on your teams two or three principals, and we suggest that you not send HR, Finance, and PIO Directors, since this will be focused exclusively on instruction.

### **RFP's Distributed by DPI**

You may have noticed that DPI issued two RFPs recently that may be of interest to you. I will not print them for your packet; however, links to them are included on the Board's webpage under this date.

### **Advanced Teaching Roles and Compensation Models**

The State Board of Education shall establish a three-year pilot program to develop advanced teaching roles and organizational models that link teacher performance and professional growth to salary increases in selected local school administrative units for classroom teachers.

The pilot shall be to do the following:

- Allow highly effective classroom teachers to teach an increased number of students by
  - Assuming accountability for additional students,
  - Becoming a lead classroom teacher accountable for the student performance of all of the students taught by teachers on that lead classroom teacher's team; or,
  - Leading a larger effort in the school to implement new instructional models to improve school-wide performance.

- Enable local school administrative units to provide salary supplements to classroom teachers in advanced teaching roles. Selection of an advanced teaching role classroom teacher and award of related salary supplements shall be made on the basis of demonstrated effectiveness and additional responsibilities.
- Enable local school administrative units to create innovative compensation models that focus on classroom teacher professional growth and student outcomes.
- Utilize local plans to establish organizational changes related to compensation in order to sustain evidenced-based teaching practices that have the capacity to be replicated throughout the state.

#### Local Alternative Teacher Preparation Programs

The intent of the program is to increase retention of lateral entry teachers in classrooms across the state. To that end, this RFP allows for up to five local education agencies (LEAs) or consortia of LEAs to be approved to create customized local alternative teacher preparation (LATP) programs to prepare, support, and recommend initially licensed lateral entry teachers for continuing licensure. Each approved LATP program will offer a rigorous evidence-based course of preparation, comparable to the quality of instruction required for a traditional teacher preparation program (G.S. 115C-296.10), that leads to a continuing license. Each LATP program shall have a completion rate of no less than seventy percent (70%) of initial enrollees, a minimum of 150 contact hours of learning, and a minimum of 150 contact hours of mentoring/support.