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North
Carolina

Race to the Top Online Professional Development Evaluation

Year 1 Report

Authors:

Shaun Kellogg, Jenifer Corn, and Sherry Booth,
Friday Institute for Educational Innovation

Contributors:

Adrian Good, Jennifer Maxfield, Brandy Parker, Sara Pilzer, and
Jennifer Tagsold

Friday Institute for Educational Innovation

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Executive Summary

The North Carolina Race to the Top (RttT) proposal (North Carolina Office of the Governor, 2010) specifies that the state's Professional Development Initiative will focus on the "use of e-learning tools to meet the professional development needs of teachers, schools, and districts" (p. 191). It points to research demonstrating that "well-designed and -implemented online professional development programs are not only valued by teachers but also positively impact classroom practices and student learning." It then states that:

[North Carolina will leverage technology to] strengthen professional development offerings in many ways, such as:

- Ensuring that professional development that addresses priority content is available statewide;
- Providing alternatives for educators who prefer the flexibility, pacing, and learning styles possible through online learning;
- Providing opportunities for teachers to interact with mentors and content experts when face-to-face meetings are not possible;
- Engaging educators in virtual learning as students, thereby providing them with first-hand experiences that will help them understand and employ the potential of e-learning with their students; and
- Extending and enhancing on-site workshops, professional learning communities, coaching, mentoring, classroom observations, and other components of local professional development programs through the use of online communications and resources. (p. 191)

This first annual report on the State's progress to date on designing and implementing online professional development addresses the following general evaluation questions that guide the overall evaluation of all RttT professional development efforts:

1. *State Strategies*: To what extent did the state implement and support proposed RttT professional development efforts?
2. *Short-Term Outcomes*: What were direct outcomes of state-level RttT professional development efforts?

As a supplement to the previously-submitted baseline evaluation report on the Professional Development Initiative, *Building LEA and Regional Professional Development Capacity*, the purpose of this report is to evaluate the extent to which the state has implemented and supported the proposed RttT online professional development, as well as the direct outcomes of those efforts (outlined in Appendix A). It focuses exclusively on progress made through June 30, 2012 (the first year of implementation) toward meeting the goals for online professional development (OPD) as set out in the state's RttT proposal and scope of work; all progress after that date will be addressed in future reports. It is primarily intended to provide formative feedback about the state's approach to and progress to date in using online (also called e-learning) technologies to extend opportunities for professional learning for K-12 teachers and administrators. As such, the report focuses on professional development efforts in which online formats were the primary

method for delivering content or facilitating activities (e.g. webinars, online learning modules, and content repositories).

Overview of NC RttT Online Professional Development Activities

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) is responsible for leading and managing the Professional Development Initiative. One of the primary goals of this initiative is to “expand the online professional development infrastructure to provide accessible and high-quality online professional development for all educators throughout North Carolina” (North Carolina Office of the Governor, 2010, p. 10).

NCDPI’s primary approach to addressing the state’s RttT OPD goals has been to provide LEAs with access to self-paced online modules that present to educators instructional content related to RttT priority areas via text, graphics, and audio and video components, along with some embedded questions and offline activities (the latter implemented locally) to check for understanding or to suggest further reflection and discussion. NCDPI also has provided a series of real-time webinars in which NCDPI staff present information and provide opportunities for questions to be addressed. Finally, NCDPI has provided various online resources (for example, crosswalks of the current and new standards) to support professional development activities.

NCDPI created a RttT Facilitator’s Guide¹ (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2011) for LEA professional development teams. The plan outlined in this Guide conveys that each LEA is responsible for providing effective professional development for local educators, and that the NCDPI online resources should be used as a part of those LEA-level programs. The systemic, blended approach to providing online and offline components outlined in the Facilitator’s Guide defines effective professional development as job-embedded, research-driven, data-informed, professional community-based, and aligned to RttT initiatives. The Facilitator’s Guide also articulates seven specific responsibilities of the RttT Regional Professional Development Leads in supporting Local Education Agency (LEA) and charter professional development efforts, including establishing and supporting professional learning communities (PLCs).²

Through June 2012, the primary online resources provided by NCDPI were 90-minute modules provided via the NC Education Moodle Learning Management System. To date, the Phase I and Phase II modules, including NC FALCON, have addressed the following key RttT-related priority areas: (a) successful transition to the new Common Core and Essential Standards; (b) implementation of formative and summative assessment; (c) use of data to support instruction; (d) effective utilization of the new North Carolina Educator Evaluation System (NCEES); and (e) use of technology for teaching and learning.

¹ <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/acre/resources/facilitator-guide.pdf>

² One such model recommended by NCDPI for PLCs is the DuFour framework, which emphasizes a culture of collaboration and a focus on results:
<http://www.allthingsplc.info/pdf/articles/DuFourWhatIsAProfessionalLearningCommunity.pdf>

NCDPI also has provided a series of webinars, or “chats,” that address RttT priority areas. These are 60- to 90-minute live online sessions with NCDPI leaders and content experts, intended for LEA professional development leaders and other educators. The webinars are archived online so that educators can continue to access them after the live event. They have covered a range of RttT-relevant topics, such as the new standards and assessments, the planned Instructional Improvement System, the Educator Evaluation System, resources to help schools meet the state’s STEM strategic plan, planning professional development, and curriculum mapping.

In addition, NCDPI has provided a set of web-based resources that can be used in local professional development programs. These include materials from RttT-funded regional summer institutes for LEA-level professional development teams, the Facilitator’s Guide to assist LEA and charter school teams that are planning local professional development initiatives, resources that unpack the new standards and provide crosswalks showing how they differ from the previous standards, resources supporting formative assessment processes, information about changes in writing instruction, and a variety of other information about RttT-related plans and activities. Additional modules and resources were released beginning in June 2012, including six new RttT Phase II modules and a cohort-based, facilitator-led version of the *North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards* module (which became available on September 17, 2012); an additional NC FALCON module will be released in Fall 2012. In addition, an online tutorial on the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System (NCEES) was developed for administrators and made available through the NCEES Wiki. These additional modules and resources will be discussed in future evaluation reports.

Evaluation Findings

The evaluation findings are based upon data collected from NCDPI web analytics, surveys of the users of the online resources, reviews of the online modules and resources, observations of webinars, and detailed data (via surveys, interviews, and focus groups) from schools participating in the RttT Professional Development Evaluation longitudinal descriptive study. Major findings are summarized below.

Overall Relevance, Interest, and Access

- Online modules, webinars, and resources were aligned to the RttT professional development priorities and directly addressed the standards for teaching adopted by North Carolina.
- Website analytics show that, since July 2011, there has been considerable interest in and access to the RttT online materials. Approximately one-half of the state’s educators had completed at least one module as of June 30, 2012, with an average of about 2.1 modules per educator. Between August 2011 and March 2012, approximately 1,800 educators participated in the webinars, with those on mathematics attracting the most interest by far. There were more than 27,000 visitors to the NC Essential Standards webpage in January alone.
- Educators reported difficulty finding specific RttT resources, since they are distributed across multiple online locations.

*Online Modules*³

- Evaluator reviews and educator feedback revealed that the online modules provided a concise overview, objectives were clearly described, and directions for activities were easy to follow. The online modules and webinars were aligned to the RttT professional development priority areas and directly addressed the North Carolina standards for teaching.
- The state's original RttT Detailed Scope of Work (DSW) (pp. 52-53) specified that 16 modules to support the transition to the new standards and assessments would be available by the end of 2011. In July, 2012, USED approved an amendment asking for an extension to the original timeline for development in response to delays in the state hiring process for online developers, with new target dates of November 2011 for the first seven modules and June 2012 for the remaining nine. As of June 30, 2012, 13 of the 16 modules specified in the revised timeline were developed and made available to educators, with two additional modules planned for release later in the year. Within the original timeframe proposed by the DSW, however, only one module was released on schedule; several LEA Professional Development Coordinators stated that these delays negatively impacted local professional development plans to incorporate the modules.
- Approximately 76% of educators agreed that the modules were easily accessible. Of those who indicated difficulties with access, teachers reported more issues than did school administrators. Access issues included difficulty locating the modules, outdated software, unreliable or slow Internet access, and incorrect log-in information.
- Overall, 78% of module participants agreed that the modules were relevant to their professional development needs. Two major weaknesses educators reported that limited the value of the modules were that they were (a) redundant with prior professional development activities and (b) not sufficiently tailored to specific content and grade-level needs for teachers.
- When asked whether the modules were of high quality, 78% of educators agreed or strongly agreed. Administrators were more likely to agree that the modules were of high quality than were teachers, and, among them, elementary and middle school teachers were more likely to do so than were high school teachers.
- On more specific survey items, 83% of participants rated the modules as well-organized, but only 71% agreed that the modules provided meaningful opportunities for collaboration and/or social interaction. While 79% agreed that the modules increased their understanding of the material, 70% agreed that the modules provided constructive feedback and were free of technical issues.
- A review of the online modules using a rubric aligned to the Learning Forward/NSDC (2011) professional development standards (Appendix B), in addition to participant data, suggest

³ The evaluation findings are limited to the Phase I Online Learning Modules, including NC FALCON (detailed in Section I), webinars, and additional online resources made available to LEAs during the 2011-12 school year. The Phase II modules released in June 2012 are included for the purpose of addressing the scheduled timeline for module development proposed in the state's detailed scope of work through June 2012, but are not reflected in the findings throughout this report. These modules will be addressed in the September 2013 Annual Report.

that many of these standards are not being fully addressed. Areas in which the modules could better align include: learning community approaches; prioritization and coordination of professional development resources and activities by local leadership; use of data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning; effective adult learning designs; support for long-term professional development implementations; and a focus on specific student learning outcomes.

Webinars

- Almost 83% of webinar participants agreed that the webinars were relevant to their professional development needs, while 78% agreed they were of high quality.
- More recent webinars were highly rated for accessibility, with 92% of survey participants agreeing that they were easily accessible.
- Members of the Evaluation Team who observed webinars selected “*listening to a formal presentation by the facilitator*” as a primary activity in 95% of observations. Evaluators also indicated that opportunities for meaningful collaboration and/or interaction were present in only 30% of the session periods observed (protocol, Appendix C; results, Appendix D).

Local Use and Capacity

- While the NCDPI Facilitator’s Guide recommends that participants complete the modules in PLCs, the actual context for their use varied widely. Only 27% of survey participants reported that they completed the online module activities in a PLC setting, as recommended. Approximately 74% of participants reported that they completed the module activities independently, with only some of those indicating that they had opportunities for follow-up discussions. More detailed information from 18 LEAs participating in the RttT PD Evaluation’s longitudinal study revealed that, of the 14 LEAs that reported having accessed the modules, six used the modules in PLCs. Two schools reported that they completed the modules in a large-group face-to-face setting with a facilitator and six LEAs directed educators to use the modules independently, with three of those facilitating some follow-up discussions. One LEA provided opportunities for educators to have online discussions related to the content of the modules. Overall, these results suggest that local professional development leaders may need additional support to ensure that they are able to incorporate the modules into their local professional development programs as intended.
- Educators have interest in using technology tools (such as threaded discussions, shared content repositories with social networking features, collaborative wikis, synchronous chat, messaging, and blogs) to enhance professional development, but many LEAs do not have the technology resources and/or expertise to support the effective use of these tools. While tools exist within the NC Education Moodle Learning Management System and across the Internet to support the kinds of online communication and collaboration described in the RttT proposal, by June 2012, NCDPI and LEAs had not yet made full use of these tools to support implementation of the modules. Many LEAs may lack both the models and the tools to provide the kinds of high-quality online professional development envisioned by the RttT proposal.

Summary of Findings

NCDPI has created and utilized a substantial set of online resources, conducted dozens of webinars, and developed online learning modules to support local PLCs. To date, the online resources provided by NCDPI have been designed and used primarily to disseminate information to educators statewide; LEAs have been primarily responsible for providing the collegial interactions, connections with practice, opportunities for reflection, and differentiation to meet varied professional needs required for effective professional development.

While NCDPI's efforts have positively impacted thousands of educators throughout the state, and the majority of educators have indicated their satisfaction with these resources, the current collection of OPD activities and resources does not yet fully leverage all of the potential benefits of technology to extend and enhance professional development. The findings suggest that the use of these resources at both the state and local level is not yet wholly consistent with national standards for online professional development. Many LEAs likely will need additional guidance, training, support, technology tools, and/or content resources to ensure that local efforts contribute to the quality of the experiences for educators and that the vision for online professional development outlined in the state's RtT proposal is realized and can be sustained beyond RtT.

As detailed below, NCDPI already has recognized the steep learning curve resulting from a project of this scale, has learned from many of the challenges encountered during the first implementation year, and is working to address these issues during the second year of implementation.

Recent Developments in RtT-Related Online Professional Development

After review of a preliminary draft of this report, NCDPI staff noted that several developments already were underway to ensure that NCDPI can continue to build its internal capacity for developing and delivering online instructional resources and activities, and for supporting local implementation. To that end:

- Since the completion of the Phase I online learning modules, NCDPI has expanded its instructional design team to five members;
- NCDPI has established a new development process for the next phase of online professional development modules scheduled for release after June 2012; NCDPI has developed a plan for implementation of the new modules, outlined in its *Phase II Online Module Implementation Guide*.⁴ This supplemental guide provides guidance to LEA and charter school teams in the implementation of the Phase II online modules for professional development developed by NCDPI for the 2012-2013 school year. It also details six different models for implementation at the LEA level, including best practices and strategies for facilitation and incorporation of PLCs;

⁴ http://www.rt3nc.org/pubs/implementation_guide_2012.pdf

- NCDPI has partnered with the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation's Education Workforce Development team⁵ to provide their staff with training and support for technology-enabled learning, including training related to online professional development; NCDPI also now hosts a central online location for all professional development resources⁶;
- NCDPI will continue to explore ways to provide participants with online opportunities to interact with peers and participate in facilitated online professional development experiences, including the use of a cohort-based, facilitator-led online course; and
- NCDPI also will continue to provide targeted support to LEAs to ensure that online modules and resources are integrated successfully into local professional development plans.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this evaluation, the following recommendations are provided for consideration as NCDPI seeks to achieve the goals for OPD outlined in the RttT proposal, build statewide capacity, and better align future efforts to standards for high-quality online professional development.

1. Ensure LEAs have the guidance and support needed to implement the new strategic plan outlined in the *Phase II Online Module Implementation Guide* to further the use of effective online and blended professional development statewide.
2. To improve alignment to the state's RttT proposal and to national standards for online professional development, expand statewide OPD activities and/or support local initiatives to: (1) provide educators with access to a greater variety of online learning experiences (e.g., online communities, workshops, peer mentoring); (2) increase opportunities for online peer interaction across LEAs and across all online professional development offerings; and (3) further differentiate professional development activities to meet the specific needs of teachers of different content areas, grades, and levels of expertise.
3. Where possible, leverage existing online professional development workshops and resources available through the national e-Learning for Educators Consortium, other RttT states, local providers like LEARN NC, and others.
4. Focus on building statewide capacity for effective implementation and facilitation of OPD in order to ensure sustainability beyond the period of RttT funding. To do so, build upon multi-LEA and regional coalitions that will share expertise and resources to develop OPD programs throughout the State.
5. Leverage the additional tools available via the NC Education Moodle Learning Management System to support both state and local professional development initiatives with asynchronous and synchronous discussions, content repositories, and wikis.
6. Continue to focus on organizing all online resources into a centralized, searchable content repository, to make them more easily accessible.

⁵ A unit of the Friday Institute separate and distinct from the Evaluation Team

⁶ <http://wikicentral.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/NCDPI+WikiCentral+Page>

Introduction

In 2010, North Carolina was one of 12 states chosen through a competitive application process by the U.S. Department of Education to receive \$400 million in federal Race to the Top (RttT) grant funding. The RttT grant requirements recognized the importance of professional development for the successful implementation of education reforms by requiring states to develop comprehensive strategies for the expansion and subsequent evaluation of their professional development offerings. In response to this call for professional development, the state of North Carolina crafted an ambitious plan to support educators through a multi-faceted and ongoing approach to professional development focused on: the changes driven by the new Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards; the increased use of data to inform classroom and school decisions; the increased use of technology tools and digital resources for teaching and learning; the new teacher and administrator evaluation processes; increased emphasis on formative assessment to inform instructional decisions; and increased emphasis on differentiating professional development needs for individual educators with different backgrounds. All of the major RttT initiatives depend upon professional development to ensure that North Carolina's educators are well-prepared and supported as they work to implement these changes in their schools and classrooms.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) is responsible for carrying out the RttT professional development plan and for creating a professional development infrastructure that is sustainable beyond the period of the RttT grant. One of the primary goals of this initiative is to “expand the online professional development infrastructure to provide accessible and high-quality online professional development for all educators throughout North Carolina” (North Carolina Office of the Governor, 2010, p. 10). The progress made towards accomplishing this goal is the focus of this report.

RttT Proposal Plan for Online Professional Development

The RttT proposal details North Carolina's strategic plan for carrying out RttT-related reform initiatives. Highlighting the importance that North Carolina has placed upon technology-enabled e-learning, the use of online professional development resources and activities to support these initiatives is embedded throughout the proposal. Section D5 of the proposal specifically lays out the plans for the RttT Professional Development Initiative with a series of core activities. Below is an excerpt from section D5 of the RttT proposal that provides both the rationale and scope for the use of e-learning tools to support professional development:

Core Activity 4: Support the effective use of technology-enabled e-Learning to extend professional development opportunities. North Carolina is a geographically large state, with many rural districts, a strong technology infrastructure, and a successful record of using online learning approaches in high schools, colleges, and professional education settings. North Carolina's RttT plan focuses on the use of e-learning tools to meet the professional development needs of teachers, schools, and districts. Research from a USED-funded e-Learning for Educators project (Russell, 2009) and from other studies (Carey et al., 2008; Dede, 2006; Treacy et al., 2002) demonstrates that well-designed and -implemented online professional development programs are not only valued by teachers but also positively

impact classroom practices and student learning. The plan for the RttT Professional Development Initiative leverages the technologies made available by the proposed North Carolina K–12 Education Technology Cloud (described in section A2) to strengthen professional development offerings in many ways, such as:

- Ensuring that professional development that addresses priority content is available statewide;
- Providing alternatives for educators who prefer the flexibility, pacing, and learning styles possible through online learning;
- Providing opportunities for teachers to interact with mentors and content experts when face-to-face meetings are not possible;
- Engaging educators in virtual learning as students, thereby providing them with first-hand experiences that will help them understand and employ the potential of e-learning with their students; and
- Extending and enhancing on-site workshops, professional learning communities, coaching, mentoring, classroom observations, and other components of local professional development programs through the use of online communications and resources.

Oversight. The North Carolina eLearning⁷ Commission, appointed by the Governor and chaired by Lt. Governor Walter Dalton, will join with the State Board of Education to oversee the development of online professional resources to further the use of technology-enhanced and technology-enabled forms of professional development. The e-Learning component of the RttT Professional Development Initiative will make online learning tools, such as learning management systems, wikis, virtual conferencing systems, etc., readily available to all LEAs through the K–12 Education Technology Cloud. It will also provide training and support to state and local professional development leaders in the effective uses of technology. Finally, it will coordinate with the Content Working Groups described above to ensure that priority professional development content is available to all teachers online.

Provider. LEARN NC, a statewide online professional development provider based at UNC-Chapel Hill, will play a central role in the e-Learning component of the RttT Professional Development Initiative, building upon the state's existing e-Learning for Educators partnership, which includes UNC-TV (public television), NCDPI, NC Virtual Public School, and the Friday Institute at NC State University. North Carolina is a member of the multi-state e-Learning for Educators consortium that is led by Alabama Public TV and Education Development Center, Inc. and funded by a USED Ready to Teach grant. The RttT Professional Development Initiative will make extensive use of the resources available through this consortium, including the online professional development workshops in teaching reading at the elementary level and algebra readiness at the middle school level that

⁷ There is not yet a clear punctuation standard for the term; the eLearning Commission does not include a hyphen in its title, but other organizations (like the e-Learning for Educators Consortium) do. This report defaults to “e-learning,” but retains the variant “eLearning” when included as part of the Commission’s name.

have been shown to be effective in large, randomized-control studies (Meeks and Russell, 2010; Master et al., in press). Since online resources can reach teachers throughout the state and can be cost-effective once the initial development work is completed, North Carolina will allocate significant RttT resources to this component of the RttT Professional Development Initiative.

Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to provide detailed information about the extent to which the online professional development components of the RttT application have been carried out, and the immediate impact of RttT online professional development efforts on educators. Although the current report is not a required deliverable under the RttT Professional Development Evaluation contract, the importance of this initiative warranted an expansion of the previously-submitted baseline professional development evaluation report, *Building LEA and Regional Professional Development Capacity*. The findings from this interim report are intended to inform future online professional development efforts by providing timely formative evaluation information based on data that was to be included in the previous report, but was not available before publication. In future, data about OPD efforts will be integrated into the overall evaluation report of professional development, as originally planned (September 2013 Annual Report; September 2014 Final Report: Impact).

The evaluation of online professional development efforts is aligned with the initial report in that it addresses the following general questions that have guided the overall evaluation of all RttT professional development efforts:

- 1. State Strategies: To what extent did the state implement and support proposed RttT professional development efforts?*
- 2. Short-Term Outcomes: What were direct outcomes of state-level RttT professional development efforts?*

This report is divided into two sections directly aligned to these two overall evaluation questions. The first section provides an overview of the North Carolina RttT professional development plan and its use of online activities and resources to support state-level professional development efforts. More specifically, it focuses on professional development efforts in which online formats were the primary method for delivering instructional content (e.g., webinars and online learning modules). The purpose of the first section is to assess the progress made through June 30, 2012, the first year of implementation, in addressing the online professional development components embedded throughout the RttT proposal (North Carolina Office of the Governor, 2010) and the RttT detailed scope of work (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2010). The evaluation findings are limited to the Phase I Online Learning Modules, including NC FALCON (detailed in Section I), webinars, and additional online resources made available to LEAs during the 2011-12 school year. Information about the Phase II modules released in June 2012 are included for the purpose of addressing the scheduled timeline for module development proposed in the state's detailed scope of work through June 2012, but findings throughout this report do not include analysis of these modules. These modules will be addressed in the September 2013 Annual Report.

The second section of this report describes the extent to which online professional development activities and resources have resulted in the expected outcomes of the initiative. More specifically, Section II reports on the use of online professional development resources at the local level and the extent to which online resources provided by NCDPI resulted in access to high-quality professional development that met K–12 educators’ professional needs. The evaluation framework provided in Appendix A provides a more detailed overview of these core activities and short-term outcomes.

In addition to helping answer the overall formative evaluation questions, the report provides recommendations to help inform future decisions for effectively using online tools to support and extend professional development. The report concludes with next steps for continuing the evaluation of online professional development.

Data Sources and Analyses

Data Sources for Analyses of Statewide Efforts

Online Resources Review

The RttT Professional Development Evaluation Team developed an Online Professional Development Rubric (OPD Rubric) to help determine the extent to which online professional development offerings—in particular, the Phase I Online Learning Modules—are aligned to standards for high-quality professional development as identified in the RttT proposal. The OPD Rubric (Appendix B) is organized around standards for professional development developed by Learning Forward (formally the National Staff Development Council). It is based largely on indicators of high-quality online professional development as determined by several organizations nationally recognized for leadership in the fields of professional development and online learning. The primary sources of the indicators included in the rubric are Learning Forward's publication, *E-learning for Educators: Implementing the Standards for Staff Development* (National Staff Development Council, 2001) and the Southern Regional Education Board's *Online Professional Development Standards* (Southern Regional Education Board, 2004). Finally, the International Association for K–12 Online Learning's publication, *National Standards for Quality Online Courses* (iNACOL, 2010), provided guidance for evaluating the quality of assessment and instructional design.

The Phase I Modules were initially reviewed between September and December of 2011. Using the rubric to guide the review, members of the Evaluation Team reviewed each module to assess the extent to which the modules aligned to the standards. Modules were revisited periodically throughout the remainder of the 2011-12 school year in order to note any significant changes and to reassess earlier reviews. Due to the recommended blended approach for implementing the online modules (i.e., inclusion of offline activities to be completed locally in PLCs or other settings determined by LEAs), as well as variations in local conditions and organizational support, the presence of many indicators could not be directly assessed solely through the review. As a result, data about local implementation and participants' perceptions regarding quality and value of the resources were combined with the Evaluation Team's review in order to assess alignment to these standards. Data sources and findings are reported in Section II of this report.

RttT Professional Development Observation Protocol

To better assess during webinars the extent to which the RttT Professional Development Initiative has leveraged available online resources, the Evaluation Team adapted its RttT Professional Development Observation Protocol (Appendix C; results in Appendix D) to include two sections specifically related to the use of online tools to support professional development. The original observation protocol was adapted from a professional development tool developed by Horizon Research, Inc.⁸ and is used to collect data about the design and implementation of professional development sessions. The protocol includes both closed-form and Likert-scale

⁸ <http://www.horizon-research.com/instruments/lsc/pdop.pdf>

items related to general characteristics of high-quality professional development. Consistent with standards for evaluation identified in the RttT proposal, a section was added to address the online professional development standards of Learning Forward (previously National Staff Development Council) (2001, 2011), the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (2011), and the Southern Regional Education Board (2004). One observation was completed every 30 minutes, with a new protocol completed for each segment. This 30-minute observation cycle provides consistent periods of observations for comparison across sessions that last anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours. During each 30-minute observation, observers identified the online professional resources used by participants and/or facilitators, described the primary activities, and recorded their level of agreement on a number of items related to the use of these resources in contributing to the overall effectiveness of the sessions. Due to the online format of the webinars, many items could not be directly observed (e.g., number of participants and grade levels attending) and were excluded from reporting. The Evaluation Team attended 21 webinars during the 2011–12 school year, resulting in 40 separate 30-minute observations.

Online Resources Survey

The Online Resources Survey (Appendix E) was created to collect data on the use and quality of the online resources described in Section I. The online survey was adapted from standards for onsite and online professional development identified in the RttT proposal. The survey consists of 7 to 10 Likert-scale items (depending on the type of resource selected) and two open-ended questions about the perceived benefits of the online resource and participants' suggestions for improving it. The online survey initially was e-mailed to a sample of 9,000 registered module participants, as well as all 1,812 webinar participants, and it was also made available on the RttT Weekly Update, an online newsletter distributed to approximately 1,500 LEA RttT coordinators, LEA Professional Development Coordinators, LEA Curriculum Coordinators, and some principals. A low response rate (approximately 9%) and concerns over sampling bias prompted the Evaluation Team to delay the report until additional responses could be collected. To increase the number of responses, a survey link was embedded directly within the modules, and participants were prompted to complete the survey prior to receiving their certificate. The Evaluation Team also requested that webinar facilitators embed the survey link at the end of their webinars, and follow up with an email containing the survey link. Findings from the original email distributions of the survey were combined with responses from the embedded surveys for a total of 10,612 respondents for the modules and 1,165 respondents for the webinars. A complete breakdown of survey completion rates, participant demographics, and item-by-item responses related to modules and webinars respondents is reported in Appendix F.

NC FALCON PreK-12 Formative Assessment Post-Survey

In order to also include data specific to individual NC FALCON modules, the Evaluation Team requested and received data on August 1, 2012 for the PreK-12 Formative Assessment Post-Survey (Appendix G) for participants who completed the survey from June 2011 onward. These survey data were collected from participants as they finished their final module. The item of interest for the purpose of the evaluation was participants' responses to the item asking them to rate the benefit of each module and provide an explanation for their rating. There were 6,791 respondents to the post-survey, with completion rates ranging from 26% to 47% (Appendix G, Table G.1).

Quantitative analyses were completed using SPSS and STATA and focused primarily on descriptive analysis of item-level responses. In addition, quantitative data from these surveys were analyzed to examine patterns in responses by participants' role, event type (e.g., module, webinar, resource), and region. Responses to open-ended survey items of the Online Resources Survey were imported into Microsoft Excel and coded by their relation to each Learning Forward professional development standard.

NC Education and NCDPI Site Analytics

The evaluation teams received site analytics for North Carolina Education from the Center for Urban Affairs & Community Services at NC State University; information included certificates, module completions, and other data related to access and completion of the online modules. From NCDPI, the evaluation team received site analytics related to unique visitors and downloads from ncpublicschools.org for the period of July 2011 through June 2012, as well as GoToWebinar attendee reports for webinars conducted between August 2011 and March 2012 related to the Instructional Improvement System, the Content Area Live Chats, and the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System. These reports were used to provide descriptive statistics related to access to online professional development resources and participation in online professional development activities.

Data Sources for Analyses of Local-Level Efforts

As described in the first annual RttT professional development evaluation report (2012) the Evaluation Team identified a *purposeful sample* of 27 schools in 27 LEAs to participate in a longitudinal descriptive study. The sample includes schools from rural, suburban, and urban locations that range in grade levels, size, student demographics, student achievement levels, and professional development ratings on the Teacher Working Conditions Survey, so that the sample reflects the variety of schools found across the state (see Appendix H). With the exception of the Professional Development Leader survey (which was distributed statewide), the data sources described below were used to collect data only from schools in this purposeful sample.

Professional Development Leader and Teacher Surveys

Central office staff, school leaders, and teachers from the schools participating in the longitudinal study completed annual surveys. To construct these surveys, Evaluation Team members used the approved professional development evaluation questions, the RttT proposal, and both state and national standards for teaching and learning to guide question identification and development. Survey protocols were designed in cooperation with NCDPI to systematically collect information about local professional development, state-level supports, use of available RttT professional development resources, and organizational and classroom practices in the schools, which will serve as a baseline to assess changes over the period of the North Carolina RttT initiatives. The LEA Professional Development Leader Survey (Appendix I) consists of 77 Likert-scale items and addresses the following areas: quality and alignment of professional development, leadership, and LEA capacity to support professional development. In addition to these areas, the Teacher Surveys (Appendix J) also address the impact that professional development has had on the respondents' knowledge of and skills associated with the Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards, as well as how instructional time is

spent within the content areas. Quantitative analyses were completed using SPSS and STATA and focused primarily on descriptive analysis of item-level responses.

LEA Interviews and Focus Groups

Interviews and focus groups were conducted with Central Office staff, principals and teachers for the longitudinal school sample (see Appendix K). At the time of this report, the Evaluation Team had complete data from 18 of the 27 LEAs. The purpose of the interviews and focus groups was to elicit more detailed information regarding RttT professional development activities and supports than is available through surveys alone. To develop the interview protocol, Evaluation Team members revisited the RttT evaluation questions, the RttT proposal, and Learning Forward's standards. Based on these documents, an interview protocol was created to systematically collect information about current professional development processes in the schools. The protocol included several questions directly aimed at developing a better understanding of the outcomes of online professional development activities and resources. Responses to protocol questions were imported into ATLAS.ti qualitative analysis software and initially coded based on the related professional development standards, followed by a second round of coding to determine commonly-appearing categories within each standard.

I. Evaluation of the Implementation of State-Level Online Professional Development

Section I of this report is guided by the following overall evaluation question from the baseline evaluation report, *Building LEA and Regional Professional Development Capacity*:

Evaluation Question 1. State Strategies: To what extent did the state implement and support proposed RttT professional development efforts?

This section begins with an overview of the online professional development resources and activities provided through the RttT Professional Development Initiative as of June 30, 2012. The overview describes how these resources and activities are being used to support RttT professional development efforts, and it addresses the following core activities outlined in the RttT proposal:

- Identify, evaluate, and develop, as needed, professional development resources.
- Support the effective use of technology-enabled e-learning to extend professional development opportunities.

The overview is then followed by an evaluation of the extent to which these activities and resources are in alignment with the plan outlined throughout the entire RttT proposal, including the online professional development components described in the RttT detailed scope of work.

Since the primary purpose of this section is to report on the extent to which the RttT Professional Development Initiative has carried out the online components of the core activities highlighted above, it relies primarily on a review of available documents, online communications, artifacts, and online resources (e.g., modules and wikis) for descriptive purposes.

Overview of Online Professional Development Resources and Activities

One of the core activities of the RttT Professional Development Initiative is to “identify, evaluate, and as needed, develop professional development resources” (RttT proposal, p. 189). A key product of this development work is an expansion of the current online professional development repository, enabling teachers and administrators to access appropriate professional development offerings relevant to their needs, such as preparation for implementing new standards, assessments, and curricula. An overview of the online professional development resources identified or developed for RttT professional development is provided below. These resources include the North Carolina Education Learning Management System (LMS) and its collection of online modules (the North Carolina Education Online Learning Modules), a series of ongoing webinars, state and regional wikis, and other web-based resources.

North Carolina Education Online Learning Modules (NC Education)

In Summer 2011, NCDPI launched the NC Education website, “a resource for professional development, online assessments, student learning, and other activities for the North Carolina education community.” NC Education is built using Moodle, a free, open-source software package for creating web-based courses and websites. NC Education is primarily used to offer a

series of online learning modules to North Carolina educators. Most of the modules are designed to take approximately 90 minutes to complete. Although teachers may complete the online modules independently, the modules were designed to be used by collaborative teams in order to promote professional dialogue. NCDPI recommends that participants complete the modules in either a face-to-face setting (e.g., a Professional Learning Community) or, if available, through online collaborative tools provided by their local education agency (LEA). LEAs and charter schools determine scheduling for teachers to complete both the online and face-to-face components of the blended professional development sessions. NCDPI assists LEA and charter teams in planning and implementing the blended (online and onsite) RtT professional development activities related to transitioning to the new standards, assessments, data systems, and technologies. NCDPI incorporated into NC Education modules from North Carolina's Formative Assessment Learning Community's Online Network (NC FALCON), which were developed and piloted prior to RtT. NC FALCON consists of five professional development modules designed to support the implementation of formative assessment in classrooms (Table 1a). In addition, NCDPI developed six Phase I online modules for use during the 2011-12 school year (Table 1b, following page).

Table 1a. Summary of NC FALCON Online Learning Modules

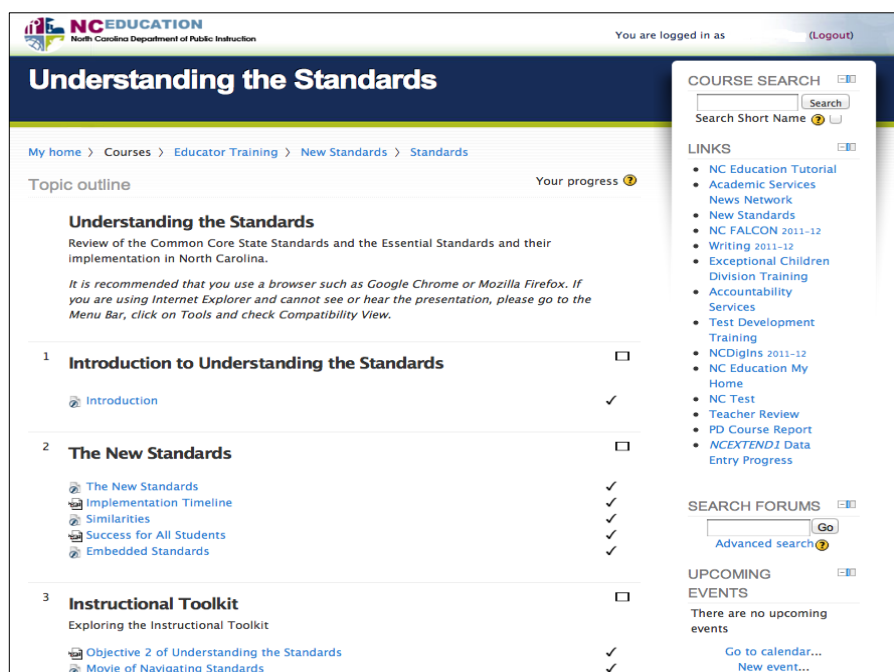
Module Title	Module Summary
I. Importance of Formative Assessment	This module provides an introduction to formative assessment, its importance and role in North Carolina's 21st Century Balanced Assessment System. The estimated time to complete this module is 4 hours.
II. Learning Targets and Criteria for Success	This module focuses on helping teachers write clear learning targets and define criteria for success. The estimated time to complete this module is 4 hours.
III. Collecting and Documenting Evidence	This module explores how teachers can collect and document evidence of learning. The estimated time to complete this module is 2 hours.
IV. Analyzing Evidence and Descriptive Feedback	This module provides teachers with an understanding of how to analyze evidence of learning and use descriptive feedback to reflect student strengths and weaknesses. The estimated time to complete this module is 4 hours.
V. Administrator's Role in Formative Assessment	This module looks at the role of the administrator in formative assessment. The estimated time to complete this module is 4hours.

Table 1b. Summary of NC Education Phase I Online Learning Modules

Module Title	Module Summary
The Call for Change: An Overview of CCES	A pre-requisite to the 2011 Summer Leadership Institutes, this module provides a historical perspective of NCDPI's basic conceptual framework addressing the call for change and how this change evolved. The rationale for why North Carolina chose to participate in Common Core State Standards and create the Essential Standards is addressed. The online component of this module takes approximately 90 minutes, but time offline for the inclusion of various activities will vary for each user or group.
Understanding the Standards	This module compares the current standards and the new standards, including structure, concepts, and themes, to distinguish what makes Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards new, better, and different. Two Instructional Toolkit documents (<i>Crosswalks</i> and <i>Unpacking Standards</i>) are introduced. The core online component of this module takes approximately 90 minutes, with additional time required to complete subject-specific areas and offline activities.
Revised Bloom's Taxonomy	This module provides an overview of Cognitive Dimensions and Knowledge Domains, and their relationship to instruction, learning, and assessing the North Carolina Essential Standards. The online component of this module takes approximately 90 minutes, but time offline for the inclusion of various activities will vary for each user or group.
Designing Local Curricula for the 21st Century Learner	This module is organized into sections that illustrate three suggested phases and teams needed during the process of developing standards-based local curricula that reflect research-based theories regarding curriculum design and classroom instruction. The module is designed to be viewed by LEA and school teams as they make the transition to the new Standard Course of Study.
North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards	This module provides educators with an exploration of the teacher standards and the rating scales for each indicator. Participation in this module will build deeper conceptual knowledge of each standard and lead to greater agreement among teachers and evaluators in the rating of a teacher's performance. The time to complete this entire module is approximated to be up to seven hours.
Understanding Student Behavior I	This module helps teachers develop an enhanced awareness of behavioral health issues in the classroom. The teacher may implement the knowledge to foster communication that will increase academic achievement, decrease dropout rates, and increase graduation rates for all of our K–12 students.

The online modules in NC Education use the Moodle course structure, which presents links to instructional resources and activities that are organized by topic and are presented on a single webpage (Figure 1, following page). Each module includes an introductory presentation that provides an overview of the content and objectives of the module as a whole. The introduction is followed by a sequence of presentations and related resources organized by topic. Instructional presentations typically include a concise overview of the content, clearly described objectives, and instructional material in multiple formats, including video, audio, animation, and text. Instructional activities are embedded throughout the presentations and provide opportunities for reflection through questions and discussion prompts, as well as occasional opportunities to interact directly with the content through point-and-click activities. In addition to reflection and discussion activities, each of the online modules provides some form of assessment activity. These include pre-assessment activities such as KWL (What I *Know*—What I *Want* to Know—What I *Learned*) charts, short quizzes, and summative assessments designed to determine participants' understanding of content.

Figure 1. Screenshot of an Online Learning Module



As part of Phase II, six new modules were developed and released through NC Education in June 2012. One additional NC FALCON module also is scheduled for release in late 2012, and a cohort-based, facilitator-led version of the *North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards* module began on September 17, 2012. In addition, an online tutorial on the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System (NCEES) was developed for administrators and made available through the NCEES Wiki. Due to their release dates, these modules are not included as part this evaluation but will be included in next year's report. The titles of the new modules:

- *Connecting with Our 21st Century Learners*
- *Digital Literacies in the K–12 Classroom*
- *Introduction to Data Literacy*
- *North Carolina School Executive Standards and Evaluation Process*
- *Understanding Young Student Behavior in the Classroom*
- *Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects*
- *The North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards*
- *NC FALCON: Student Ownership Module*
- *The North Carolina Educator Evaluation System: Online Tutorials for Administrators*

Webinars

NCDPI is also providing several ongoing webinar series and “Live Chats” using GoToWebinar as the delivery platform (see Table 2, following page, for a summary of webinars). The webinars are aimed at members of LEA Professional Development Leadership Teams, though all North Carolina educators can access either live or recorded versions. The webinars conducted prior to the Summer Leadership Institutes provided an overview and goals of the institutes and introduced teams to the state’s blended approach to professional development. Following the Summer Leadership Institutes, NCDPI has been providing regular webinars for Professional Development Leadership Teams that focus on individual content areas in support of the transition to the Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards. These Content Area Live Chats are designed to address topics that are more focused than those covered in the face-to-face workshops or institutes and are intended to provide opportunities for educators to chat online with content experts. In addition, NCDPI has provided informational webinars addressing RttT-related topics such as the Instructional Improvement System and the new Educator Evaluation Process. Those who did not attend can view recordings of webinars posted online.

Web-based Resources

NCDPI also offers a wide range of web-based resources to support the communication and dissemination of information related to RttT reform efforts (Table 3, p. 21). In addition to RttT-related documents, guides, recordings, and presentations available for download on NCDPI’s website, educators also have access to both state-level and regional wikis where they can view event calendars, materials, recording of past webinars, RttT updates, and other information related to their content areas and regions. NC Education has been expanding the number of instructional resources available to educators by using the Moodle course structure to house online content repositories such as NCDigins and Online Writing Instruction, which are described in Table 3.

Table 2. Summary of NCDPI Webinars

Webinar Title	Webinar Summary
Content Area Live Chats	Using GoToMeeting.com, an online meeting space, North Carolina educators are given the opportunity to “chat” with NCDPI content experts in the K–12 Curriculum and Instruction Division. These content-specific live sessions dedicate 60 to 90 minutes to addressing critical components and answering questions regarding the new Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards.
Instructional Improvement System Webinar Series	NCDPI partnered with the North Carolina Association of Educators to present webinars around how the new Instructional Improvement System (IIS) will help teachers assess their students and target curricular resources to meet individual students’ needs. Teachers also were asked to provide feedback regarding the kinds of resources they are currently using, what they like best about them, and suggestions for additional resources that would be helpful.
North Carolina Educator Evaluation System Webinar Series	The North Carolina Educator Evaluation System webinar series provides information on the new evaluation system for teachers and administrators. All webinars are approximately 60 to 90 minutes in length. These webinars address topics such as: rating observations and evaluations, summary ratings, the new Standards 6 and 8 that use student learning gains data, and professional development plans.
Summer Institutes Webinar Series	In preparation for the Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards Summer Leadership Institutes, this webinar was offered on four separate occasions. Accessed through the NCDPI website, it informs local Professional Development Leadership Teams of expectations of them before, during, and after the Summer Leadership Institutes.
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Webinar Series	This webinar series is designed to introduce tools, resources, and activities for schools, LEAs, and programs under the North Carolina Statewide STEM Strategic Plan. The first webinar in the series provided an overview of STEM work to date, an introduction of the rubric and designation, and an opportunity to discuss the STEM Learning Network.
Standards and Assessment Webinar	This webinar summarizes RttT requirements and process for LEAs and charter schools, outlines the state’s plan, and covers implications for the Common Core State Standards, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), and the Instructional Improvement System (IIS).
Professional Development and Strategic Staffing*	This webinar summarizes RttT requirements and processes for LEAs and charter schools, outlines the state’s plan, and covers implications for local professional development and staffing.
Mapping Curriculum, Planning Success: Integrating the Common Core Standards*	Author and expert Dr. Heidi Hayes Jacobs presented this webinar on integrating the Common Core State Standards in the K–12 classroom. The webinar addressed topics such as curriculum mapping, text complexity, and formative assessment. Included in this webinar was an interactive Q&A session with Dr. Jacobs responding to questions about curriculum, assessment, standards, and mapping.
Common Core State Standards for Math High School 2012 and Beyond*	The webinar discussed ensuring student proficiency in the Common Core High School Mathematics Standards by the 2014–15 school year for those students entering ninth grade in the 2012–13 school year. Also addressed was the launching the Common Core High School Mathematics Standards within the current course titles.

*Note: Webinar sessions scheduled after the completion of data collection for this evaluation report.

Table 3. Current Summary of RttT-Related Web Resources

Title	Summary	Intended Audience
Facilitator's Guide	This guide assists LEA and charter teams in planning and implementing NCDPI's blended RttT professional development initiatives for the new standards. The guide can be accessed on the Accountability and Curriculum Redesign Effort (ACRE) website.	Local Professional Development Leadership Teams
Presentation Resources	Content-specific presentations from the 2011 Summer Leadership Institutes, facilitators' notes, and sample agendas to design content sessions are located on the North Carolina RttT website.	Local Professional Development Leadership Teams
Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards Instructional Support Tools	This resource provides instructional and classroom assessment information for each content areas. In the toolkit are two documents: <i>Unpacking Standards</i> , which illustrates the skills and knowledge students are expected to master at a particular grade level; and <i>Crosswalks</i> , which compares the present State Course of Study to the new Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards. The toolkit is posted on the ACRE website.	All North Carolina educators
NCDPI Collaborative Workspaces	The NCDPI wiki is a website that provides access to materials from all Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards training and provides the opportunity for cross-state educator collaboration around content areas.	All North Carolina educators
RttT Weekly Updates and Monthly Reports to USED	These regular updates report on all RttT activities and upcoming opportunities. They are located on the NC RttT website.	All North Carolina educators
Comprehensive Professional Development Calendar	All face-to-face professional development sessions in the Annual Professional Development Cycle, including dates and locations, are posted for public access.	All North Carolina educators
Summer Institute Video	This short video summarizes the Summer Leadership Institute sessions, with excerpts from each training, participant interviews, and clips of facilitators in action.	Local Professional Development Leadership Teams
TodaysMeet	TodaysMeet provides an online public chat room that allows face-to-face professional development through which educators can make comments, ask questions, and communicate with each other about professional development activities.	Local Professional Development Leadership Teams
NCDigins	NCDigins was created through a collaborative partnership between NCDPI and Technical Outreach for Public Schools (TOPS) and provides materials and resources related to the formative assessment process in a balanced assessment system.	All North Carolina educators
Online Writing Instruction	The Online Writing Instruction repository provides educators with resources related to the new system of writing instruction, such as samples of student writing across content areas.	All North Carolina educators

Alignment with Race to the Top Proposal and Detailed Scope of Work

In addition to describing the extent to which NCDPI has provided online professional development resources and activities to support statewide professional development efforts, this section also assesses the extent to which efforts are aligned with the RttT proposal and detailed scope of work. A description follows of the progress made towards implementing the online

professional development components embedded throughout North Carolina's RttT proposal and detailed scope of work.

Section A2: Statewide Technology Infrastructure and Resources: The K–12 Education Technology Cloud

As part of the North Carolina K–12 Education Cloud strategy described in Section A2 of the RttT application, North Carolina proposed to leverage technology resources to extend and enhance professional development programs for teachers and administrators through online workshops and webinars, virtual learning communities, virtual classroom observations, and online coaching (North Carolina Office of the Governor, 2010, p. 29).

Work to date. Even though the North Carolina K–12 Education Cloud is not yet operational, NCDPI has made extensive use of webinars to provide information about RttT-related reforms and to support local Professional Development Leader Teams as part of the Annual Professional Development Cycle. NCDPI has indicated that Regional Professional Development Leads have begun to lay the groundwork for extending existing collaborations between LEA professional development leaders to an online environment, such as through the utilization of technology to support online communities.

Section B3: Supporting the Transition to Enhanced Standards and High-quality Assessments

As part of Transition Goal 2 under Section B3 of the RttT proposal, North Carolina described a blended approach to professional development, with both onsite (face-to-face) and online (virtual) activities centered on the new standards (see also Section D5), and differentiated for educators based on their roles (North Carolina Office of the Governor, 2010, p. 65) to ensure that every teacher in North Carolina has a deep, specific understanding of the standards and can implement them to improve student outcomes.

Work to date. NCDPI has provided ongoing support to LEAs and charter schools based on the Annual Professional Development Cycle, a collaborative effort between NCDPI and Regional Educational Service Alliances (RESA). This cycle has incorporated both onsite professional development sessions, as well as online activities in the form of webinars designed to follow up on face-to-face sessions, and online learning modules intended to incorporate face-to-face elements to complete instructional activities. Both face-to-face and online activities have been differentiated to the extent that offerings have been designed for educators based on their roles within the LEA and school (e.g., teacher, principal, LEA leadership team member, etc.) and organized around content-specific resources. However, online resources and activities targeted for teachers will need to be further customized to specific content areas and grades in order to better meet teachers' professional development needs (see Section II).

Section C3: Using Data to Improve Instruction

As part of Section C3 of the RttT proposal, educators should be provided professional development that is related to the deployment of the statewide North Carolina Instructional Improvement System (IIS). NCDPI is responsible for deploying online learning modules and professional development leaders that will support best practices and train teachers in using data

to improve instruction, including the use of the IIS (North Carolina Office of the Governor, 2010 pp. 99–103).

Work to date. NCDPI has hosted a series of informational webinars to solicit feedback regarding the kinds of resources that educators are currently using and suggestions for additional resources to be incorporated in the IIS. NCDPI also collaborated with the North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE) on webinars focused on how the new IIS is intended to help teachers assess students and target curricular resources to meet individual students' needs. Prior to the RttT initiative, NCDPI developed a series of online modules called North Carolina's Formative Assessment Learning Community's Online Network (NC FALCON). As described in the overview of online resources, NC FALCON makes up the core online professional development modules on the formative assessment process for RttT. Two modules related to data literacy were released in June 2012.

Section D5: Providing Effective Support to Teachers and Principals

This is the major professional development section of the proposal, containing multiple goals relevant to this evaluation.

1. Providing Professional Development Resources

As part of Section D5 of the RttT proposal, NCDPI was to develop an extensive set of professional development resources, including online modules. The North Carolina RttT detailed scope of work outlines the timeline and targets for the development of new professional development modules to populate the professional development repository focusing on supporting the transition to new standards (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2010, pp. 52–53). According to the original RttT State Detailed Scope of Work, eight modules focusing on the transition to the new curriculum standards and eight modules focusing on assessment related to the new standards and data literacy were to have been developed by the end of 2011. However, recognizing their initial limited capacity to develop the online material and due to delays in the state hiring process for online developers, NCDPI submitted an amendment to USED asking for an extension of the original timeline for development. The amendment called for the completion of seven modules by November 2011 and 9 modules by June 2012. The amendment was approved on July 5, 2012.

Work to date. As described earlier in this section, the RttT Professional Development Initiative has made a wide range of resources available to LEAs and schools. The online modules were designed to support and extend the onsite training, to increase educator understanding of the new standards and to promote professional learning and dialogue. Six online modules were developed and released by November 2011. A series of nine additional online instructional modules were released in June 2012 to address topics such as literacy across content areas, data literacy, learning maps, digital literacy, North Carolina School Executive Standards, and 21st Century Skills.

2. Leveraging Online, Interactive Technologies

Core Activity 4 in Section D5 of the RttT proposal states that North Carolina will leverage the technologies made available by the K–12 Education Technology Cloud to strengthen

professional development offerings in many ways, such as: ensuring that professional development that addresses priority content is available statewide; providing alternatives for educators who prefer the flexibility, pacing, and learning styles possible through online learning; providing opportunities for teachers to interact with mentors and content experts when face-to-face meetings are not possible; engaging educators in virtual learning as students, thereby providing them with first-hand experiences that will help them understand and employ the potential of e-learning with their students; and extending and enhancing onsite workshops, professional learning communities, coaching, mentoring, classroom observations, and other components of local professional development programs through the use of online communications and resources.

Work to date. As detailed in Section I, NCDPI has made frequent use of online tools to extend and enhance face-to-face onsite workshops. These tools were primarily used to access, broadcast, and manage information, with occasional opportunities to collaborate and connect with peers. However, NCDPI has made limited use of the tools currently available through NC Education and across the web to actively engage educators through online professional development. Although the online learning modules, webinars, and resources provided are well-aligned to priority content and provide ample RttT-related information, they provide limited opportunities to interact with mentors and content experts, provide alternative professional development approaches, and engage educators in virtual learning as students. The asynchronous online modules developed for RttT do not provide the option for educators to interact with a facilitator or participants online, although the tools to support these activities are available in the Moodle platform upon which NC Education is built. The synchronous webinars are the only opportunity for real-time interaction with mentors, content matter experts, and other educators. However, based on data from observations, these webinars have been primarily passive in nature and the embedded tools to support interaction limited to a moderated question and answer format. When observers were asked to select the primary professional development activities of the webinar observed, 95% of observations indicated listening to a formal presentation by the facilitator as the primary activity. In only 30% of observations did observers find that there were opportunities for meaningful collaboration and/or interaction (Appendix D). Without the opportunity for educators to actively participate in online activities and to interact with facilitators and peers, the opportunities to engage in virtual learning and have access to alternative forms of professional development are limited.

3. Providing Online Learning Tools to LEAs

Section D5 of the RttT proposal also indicated that NCDPI would make online learning tools, such as learning management systems, wikis, and virtual conferencing systems, readily available to all LEAs through the K–12 Education Technology Cloud. The plan for RttT-focused professional development also included training and support in the effective uses of technology for state and local leaders.

Work to date. NC Education has an extensive set of communication and collaboration tools that are part of the core of the Moodle learning platform. For example, NC Education has the ability to support activities such as threaded discussions, shared content repositories with social features, collaborative wikis, synchronous chat, messaging, blogs, journals, peer workshops, and more. Currently, these tools have not yet been made available to the LEAs to be used in support

of the online learning modules or other local professional development efforts. Although some educators have participated in locally-provided online professional development opportunities that incorporate online activities, the individual LEAs have provided these tools.

4. Leveraging LEARN NC and the e-Learning for Educators Partnership

In order to provide effective support to teachers and principals, the proposal stated that North Carolina would make extensive use of already-existing resources through the state's e-Learning for Educators partnership. LEARN NC, a statewide online professional development provider and e-Learning for Educators lead partner, was to play a central role in the e-learning component. NCDPI also indicated it would build on the resources available through the North Carolina e-Learning for Educators Consortium, including the online professional development workshops in teaching reading at the elementary level and algebra readiness at the middle school level (both of which have strong research evidence of effectiveness); and it would develop instructional tools and professional development aligned with the Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards. These tools were to be delivered via a continually updated Online Clearinghouse of Instructional Resources.

Work to date. NCDPI has yet to leverage the collection of online professional development courses and content available through the e-Learning for Educators Consortium. A proposal from LEARN NC on behalf of the North Carolina e-Learning of Educators Consortium, submitted to NCDPI in December 2010, outlined plans to develop 20 new cohort-based, facilitator-led courses to add to the 60+ existing online/blended professional development courses that LEARN NC already provides. The proposal also included a plan to train online professional development leaders from each LEA to facilitate these courses as well as any of the courses in the LEARN NC catalogue, thereby building capacity for online professional development at the local level. This was not awarded, and no contract currently exists for this work. Changes in roles, leadership, and staffing at LEARN NC may now limit its organizational capacity to carry out the type of work previously proposed.

Section I Summary

NCDPI has made many RttT-focused documents, videos, and other resources available online to support local professional development efforts. It has facilitated webinars to communicate information related to RttT priorities and to support LEA and school-level professional development leadership teams. It also has developed online learning modules that provide content and suggested activities for local professional development efforts. However, NCDPI's current use of technology to support professional development is primarily limited to broadcasting RttT-related information in a uniform manner across the state. While this information is critical to support RttT reform efforts, NCDPI has yet to address the full scope of the RttT proposal's plan for online professional development. Available online activities primarily consist of viewing and accessing information that may be discussed in local face-to-face groups, resulting in limited opportunities for online interactions, mentoring, or professional community building both within and across LEAs. While tools exist within the NC Education Moodle and across the Internet to support the kinds of online communication and collaboration described in the RttT proposal, NCDPI and LEAs have made limited use of these tools. Many LEAs may still lack the models and the tools to provide the kinds of high-quality online

professional development envisioned by the RttT proposal. The extent to which local schools and LEAs have utilized the current online resources available through NCDPI to support professional development efforts is the focus of the next section of this report.

II. Evaluation of the Short-Term Outcomes of Online Professional Development Activities and Resources

This section will address the following RttT overall professional development evaluation question and related sub-questions:

Evaluation Question 2. Short-Term Outcomes: What were direct outcomes of state-level RttT professional development efforts?

- 2a. To what extent were educators aware of and able to access RttT-funded online professional development resources?*
- 2b. In what ways and to what extent did educators make use of online resources to enhance and extend their professional development?*
- 2c. To what extent were online professional development resources appropriate to educators' needs?*
- 2d. To what extent did educators participate in high-quality online professional development?*
- 2e. To what extent did the RttT online professional development increase LEA capacity to provide and sustain high-quality professional development?*

Findings

2a. To what extent were educators aware of and able to access RttT-funded online professional development resources?

One of the major strategies for North Carolina's RttT initiative focuses on educators' access to online professional development resources. Site statistics collected from NC Education and NCDPI websites provide two data sources about accessibility. To provide a more complete picture, questions related to educators' awareness of and access to online resources also were embedded in the Online Resources Survey and longitudinal study interview protocols.

Awareness of online resources. During LEA Professional Development Coordinator interviews and teacher focus groups, the Evaluation Team asked participants about their awareness of online professional development resources created by NCDPI. Of the 13 LEA Professional Development Coordinators interviewed, 11 were fully aware of the online resources offered through NCDPI and reported completing one or more RttT online modules. One person reported "hearing of the online modules" but had not accessed them, and another LEA staff member was completely unaware of any online resources. LEA expectations for use of online professional development resources ranged from requiring everyone in the LEA to complete the RttT modules to making them optional for staff.

Although nearly all teacher groups had some awareness of online professional development offered by NCDPI, focus group interviews revealed that many teachers did not have a clear understanding of distinctions between types and purposes of online resources available, or of expectations for their use. While LEA Professional Development Coordinators could distinguish

between RttT modules and NC FALCON modules, teachers generally thought of RttT modules and NC FALCON modules as being the same. Professional development leaders typically used e-mail announcements, newsletters, or links on their LEA website to inform teachers of online professional development opportunities. While some teachers believed that NCDPI was doing a good job of promoting awareness of online professional development resources through e-mails and reminders, several indicated that the state could do a better job of promoting the resources through more targeted marketing based on teacher professional development needs. One teacher mentioned that the state could do a better job of promoting modules by using teachers' licensure information.

Access to modules. There was an expectation by NCDPI that all educators throughout the state would complete the Phase I online modules. As of June 30, 2012, 48,942 educators were enrolled in at least one Phase I online module. Of those enrolled, 44,025 educators had completed at least one module, with an average of 2.1 modules completed per educator. Between June 2011 and June 2012, 32,833 educators also enrolled in at least one NC FALCON Module. Of those enrolled, 30,603 completed at least one module, with an average of 3.6 modules completed per educator. Across all online modules, 68,554 educators have completed at least one online module.

To put this in perspective, nearly one-half of all public educators across the state have completed an online module. As shown in Table 4 (following page), *Call for Change* and *Understanding the Standards* had the greatest number of enrollments and completions. These were two of the first modules made available and were designed to introduce the Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards during the first year of the Annual Professional Development Cycle. It is important to note that many participants indicated that they used the online module as part of a face-to-face Professional Learning Community (PLC) or whole-group training and may not have directly accessed the modules themselves. For example, several teachers indicated during focus groups that content from the modules (e.g., videos, activities, slides, etc.) were embedded into a facilitator's presentation during a school-level professional development session, suggesting that they may not actually have been logged into NC Education. As a result, the figures below may underrepresent the actual number of educators who have utilized materials from the online modules as part of local professional development efforts.

After viewing the required components of each learning module, educators earn certificates that indicate completion of a module. Two of the modules, *Understanding the Standards* and *North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards*, offer multiple certificates. This might explain the discrepancy in the number of completions compared to the number of enrollments. For example, *Understanding the Standards* offers a certificate after completing the overview of the standards, and additional certificates for the content areas. Some participants may have skipped the overview of the new standards and only completed the activities specifically related to the subject area(s) they teach. For the purposes of this evaluation, the completion of this module was based upon participants having earned the Certificate for Completion for the Understanding the Standards. Therefore, participants who only earned a content area certificate were not considered to have completed the module.

Table 4. Number of Educator Enrollments and Completions by Module June 2011- June2012

NC Education Learning Module	Enrollments	Completions
Phase I: Call for Change	39,858	37,856
Phase I: Understanding the Standards ^a	31,543	16,659
Phase I: North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards ^b	17,673	14,756
Phase I: Revised Bloom's Taxonomy	25,363	23,794
Phase I: Designing Local Curriculum	14,058	13,352
NC FALCON: Importance of Formative Assessment	27,839*	25,067
NC FALCON: Learning Targets and Criteria for Success	28,640*	25,599
NC FALCON: Collecting and Documenting Evidence	26,456*	25,538
NC FALCON: Analyzing Evidence and Descriptive Feedback	25,699*	25,542
NC FALCON: Administrator's Role in Formative Assessment	11,082*	9,090

Note. Understanding the Standards and North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards offer multiple certificates.

^a Completion is based only upon receipt of Certificate of Completion for the overall module and does not factor in additional content area certificates earned.

^b Completion is based upon having earned a total of five certificates, one for each of the five standards.

**Note:* Enrollments were determined based on participants' first view dates of the module. Because dates were not available for all participants, these figures likely underestimate actual enrollments.

As shown in Table 5, educators from across the eight State Board of Education regions have accessed and completed each of the modules offered. It should be noted, however, that completion of the modules across regions is not equally distributed. Region 2, one of the smaller regions in terms of number of educators and less than half the size of Regions 3 and 5, has earned more than twice the number of certificates as the two larger regions and has a much higher proportion of its educators who have completed each module.

Table 5. Module Completions as an Estimated Percentage of Total Educators per Region

NC Education Learning Module	1 (7,250)	2 (12,656)	3 (29,280)	4 (16,281)	5 (26,089)	6 (26,213)	7 (14,659)	8 (10,192)
Call for Change	16%	74%	23%	23%	21%	9%	35%	20%
Understanding the Standards	7%	43%	5%	14%	4%	5%	18%	12%
NC Professional Teaching Standards	5%	49%	3%	19%	3%	2%	8%	13%
Revised Bloom's Taxonomy	11%	55%	9%	24%	11%	3%	8%	13%
Designing Local Curriculum	4%	50%	0.3%	18%	2%	1%	9%	6%

Beyond simple raw use numbers, the Evaluation Team was interested in knowing if the online professional development sessions were easily accessible to educators. Table 6 (following page) shows the proportion of responses to our Online Resources Survey item: *To what extent do you agree with the following statements? This online professional development resource was easily accessible.* Approximately 76% of educators agreed or strongly agreed that the modules were easily accessible. The findings do, however, suggest that roughly one out of every 10 educators had difficulty accessing the online modules.

Table 6. Distribution of Responses to Survey Item about Ease of Access by Online Module

NC Education Learning Module	<i>n</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Call for Change	1,004	3%	7%	13%	59%	18%
Understanding the Standards	1,410	3%	8%	14%	56%	19%
NC Professional Teaching Standards	1,833	2%	9%	14%	57%	19%
Revised Bloom's Taxonomy	3,079	3%	8%	12%	56%	21%
Designing Local Curriculum	2,714	3%	8%	14%	58%	18%

Comparison across professional roles revealed notable differences in the percentage who agreed or strongly agreed with ease of access to modules. For example, teachers (75%) were less likely than Central Office staff (83%), school executives (83%), and support staff (81%) to agree that the modules were easily accessible (Table 7). Additional information is needed to explain why teachers seem to have the most difficulty accessing the modules, perhaps due to local connection issues or attempting to log in during especially high-traffic times.

Table 7. Distribution of Responses to Survey Item about Ease of Access by Role

Professional Role	<i>n</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Teacher	9,196	3%	9%	14%	57%	18%
School executive	418	3%	6%	8%	57%	26%
Central Office staff	136	1%	7%	9%	40%	43%
School support staff	522	3%	6%	10%	60%	21%

Among the eight regions, the percentage of agreement with a survey item about ease of access ranged from 70% in Region 3 to 82% in Region 1 (Table 8). For comparison, Region 1 covers the mostly rural northeastern portion of the state, whereas Region 3 contains a diverse group of north-central counties, including urban areas in Wake and Durham and very rural areas in Halifax and Vance. The 12 percentage point range in agreement with ease of access to modules may be attributed to LEA-based technology infrastructure inequity issues.

Table 8. Distribution of Responses to Survey Item about Ease of Access by Region

North Carolina State Board of Education region	<i>n</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Region 1	232	4%	4%	10%	52%	30%
Region 2	4,003	3%	9%	15%	56%	17%
Region 3	468	4%	14%	12%	53%	17%
Region 4	1,565	3%	7%	12%	58%	21%
Region 5	554	1%	6%	12%	58%	22%
Region 6	290	1%	8%	12%	51%	28%
Region 7	1,989	2%	6%	12%	61%	19%
Region 8	1,015	5%	9%	12%	55%	19%

On open-ended items, survey respondents who reported difficulty with access to the online modules cited the following reasons:

- Navigation issues, including difficulty locating desired modules;
- Browser compatibility issues;
- Incorrect login information ;
- Video files not working or requiring updates to their local computer that were not installed;
- Unreliable access to Internet at the school;
- Lack of adequate space on the host server; and
- Bandwidth issues when too many educators try to access the modules at the same time.

Access to webinars. Reports obtained from NCDPI indicate that approximately 1,800 educators from across the state participated in webinars related to the Educator Evaluation System, Instructional Improvement System, Content Area Live Chats focused on the new Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards, and STEM (Table 9). As these webinars were primarily aimed at local Professional Development Leadership Teams rather than North Carolina educators at large, it is not surprising that this number is considerably lower than those who have completed the online modules. Of the Content Area Live Chats, math by far attracted the most interest, averaging nearly 500 attendees per webinar, followed by English Language Arts with an average of 174 attendees and Science with 74 attendees.

Table 9. Webinar Attendance August 2011 through March 2012

NC Education Webinar	Number of Webinars	Total Registered	Total Attended*	Average Webinar Attendance
Instructional Improvement System Webinar Series	5	493	235	81
North Carolina Educator Evaluation System Series	8	880	647	47
STEM Webinar Series	3	491	284	95
Content Area Live Chats—All	19	4,143	2,591	136
Content Area Live Chats—Math	3	2,365	1,438	479
Content Area Live Chats—ELA	3	871	521	174
Content Area Live Chats—Science	2	453	321	161
Content Area Live Chats—Social Studies	3	232	174	58
Content Area Live Chats—Arts	2	128	89	30
Content Area Live Chats—World Languages	2	70	52	17
Content Area Live Chats—ESL	2	221	221	111
Content Area Live Chats—PE & Health	2	68	50	25

Note: These figures include all data from webinar usage reports provided by NCDPI.

*Webinar registration data revealed that many educators attended more than one webinar.

Results also suggest that access to the webinars was less of an issue for educators than access to the online learning modules. Among all webinar participants surveyed, 91% agreed or strongly agreed that the webinars were easily accessible (Table 10).

Table 10. Distribution of Responses to Survey Item about Ease of Access by Webinar Focus Area

Webinar Focus Area	<i>n</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Content Area Live Chats	379	1%	4%	5%	62%	29%
NC Educator Evaluation System	215	0%	2%	4%	50%	43%
Formative and Summative Assessment	40	0%	3%	5%	70%	23%

Note: The number of respondents for webinars focused on the Instructional Improvement System, the Summer Leadership Institute, and STEM were too low for reporting purposes and are exclude from similar tables below.

Access to web-based resources. Website analytics obtained from NCDPI suggest that there has been considerable interest in and accessing of the online professional development resources for supporting educators as they transition to the new standards. With the exception of webpages hosting the Summer Leadership Institute presentations, there has been a general upward trend in the number of unique visitors to the Common Core State Standards and the North Carolina Essential Standards webpages since the July 2011 professional development Summer Leadership Institute, with as many as 27,097 unique visitors to the North Carolina Essential Standards webpage in January 2012 alone. Webpages containing documents detailing specific grade-level and content area standards, as well as tools to understand the new standards—such as *Unpacking Standards* and *Crosswalk*—clearly have generated the most interest (Table 11). The relatively low visit counts to the professional development repositories and online professional development courses suggest that educators may be locating professional development opportunities by other means, such a direct links to NC Education provided by LEAs.

Table 11. Number of Unique Visitors to Professional Development Resource Webpages July 2011-June 2012

NCDPI Webpages	Average Monthly Visitors
NC Essential Standards	18,502
NC Essential Standards Support Tools	13,887
NC Essential Standards Presentations	223
Common Core State Standards	12,356
Common Core Instructional Support Tools	18,744
Common Core State Standards Presentations	320
ACRE Resources (Facilitator's Guide)	1,736
RttT Professional Development Calendars	1,277
RttT Weekly Updates	496
Teacher Professional Development Repository	119
School Executive Professional Development Repository	335
Online Professional Development Courses	606

In addition to the online modules and webinars provided by NCDPI, some LEAs also reported using a variety of other online resources, such as LiveBinder, ASCD resources, PD360, and videos from the Hunt Institute.

While the majority of survey participants agreed that the modules and webinars were easily accessible, professional development leaders and teachers in the longitudinal study highlighted some accessibility issues that could help NCDPI improve the overall experience for educators. For example, survey participants stated that the NCDPI website was not well-organized or user-friendly. Educators said they often became frustrated when trying to find online resources. The difficulty in finding the desired professional development resources also came up frequently during interviews and focus groups. RttT-related online resources are spread out across more than 10 different state and regional wikis, numerous NCDPI pages, locally curated websites, and other locations. Educators reported that searches for specific resources using the search tools on current sites yielded irrelevant hits. Many resorted to locating resources by navigating through a series of “non-intuitive” menus and page links, causing frustration with the online professional development experience before they began. As one educator among the focus groups noted, “I pull up the DPI website looking for the Common Core stuff and you keep clicking and clicking and clicking—I don’t know what I was clicking on ... I was lost.”

2b. In what ways and to what extent did educators make use of online resources to enhance and extend their professional development?

The NCDPI Facilitator’s Guide for District Leadership Teams recommends that participants complete the modules in collaborative teams (e.g., PLCs) or, if available, through online collaborative tools provided by the LEAs. Understanding the context in which the modules and webinars were completed is important for determining whether they enhanced or extended professional learning. Items in the Online Resources Survey and in the longitudinal study interview protocols were designed to better understand how the online modules were incorporated into local professional development efforts.

Professional development setting. In order to determine how online professional development resources were being used to support local professional development, and if this was consistent with the methods recommended by NCDPI, participants who completed the Online Resources Survey were asked: *Which of the following best describe(s) how you completed any suggested activities (e.g., reflection/discussion questions, assessments, etc.)? Select all that apply.* Table 12 (following page) shows the percentage of respondents who selected the methods used to complete activities in the online modules and webinars. For the online modules, approximately half of the respondents (49%) indicated that they completed the activities with colleagues. However, only 27% of educators indicated they completed activities in a PLC setting, the method recommended by NCDPI. Methods for completing professional development activities were similar between online modules and webinars, with discussion within a PLC and working independently offline the two most common methods for completing the activities.

Table 12. Methods Used to Complete Modules and Webinar Activities

Online Resources Survey Item: “Which of the following best describe(s) how you completed any suggested activities (e.g., reflection/discussion questions, assessments, etc.)?”	Online Module (n = 10,597)	Webinar (n = 695*)
Independently: Reflection journal or notebook	60%	38%
Independently: Online journal or blog	14%	14%
With colleagues: Discussion in a traditional PD setting	20%	26%
With colleagues: Discussion with a PLC	27%	31%
With colleagues: Discussion board or group wiki online	2%	5%
I did not complete the suggested activities	3%	7%
Other method not listed here	1%	9%

Note: Respondents were permitted to select more than one option.

*Analysis excludes webinar participants who selected “Not Applicable.”

Variation in implementation was also evident among the sample schools in the longitudinal study. Interviews and focus groups from 14 of the 18 schools revealed that teachers have accessed the modules and are using them in the following ways:

- Six schools are using them within their PLCs with group discussion and professional dialogue;
- One school reported completing the modules independently and then uploading reflections to an online discussion area within Moodle;
- Two schools reported that they completed the modules in a large-group face-to-face setting with a facilitator;
- Two schools reported completing the modules independently and then getting together as a school for follow-up activities and discussion; and
- Three schools reported completing the modules independently with little or no follow-up.

The six schools that reported using the online modules in a face-to-face PLC setting reported completing the modules in subject area and grade level PLCs. All reported engaging in informal professional dialogue around the content of the module, and then typically completing the assessment activities and reflections verbally. Teachers generally agreed that the “back and forth” conversations within their PLC provided valuable opportunities to ask clarifying questions, receive immediate feedback, and extend their professional learning. Four LEAs reported positive experiences with using the modules in face-to-face PLCs, one group of teachers complained that the repetitive process of “watch a video, take notes, talk about it; watch a video, take notes, talk about it” did not enhance or extend their professional learning. The teachers in the latter group noted that they had little time to internalize the content before jumping back into the classroom. Without time to collaborate within the PLC, one teacher noted, “It is easy to get back into the way you were doing things and not make that change.”

Teachers from two LEAs reported that they completed the modules independently and then came together within their face-to-face PLC to discuss the content. They indicated that they appreciated being able to do the modules at their own pace and at a time that fit their schedule.

One LEA Professional Development Coordinator created an online discussion area within a local Moodle for teachers to reflect on and discuss the content of the modules. Central Office staff gave teachers a “viewing guide” to prompt individual reflection as they completed each module. After completing the module, teachers uploaded their thoughts and reflections to an online discussion area designated for their PLC. District staff explained that rather than having teachers complete the modules in a large group setting and then try to participate in a conversation in a room of 30 people, the intent was to provide an online space in which teachers could engage in more meaningful and reflective ongoing dialogue around the content of the modules. Despite these intentions, teachers reported that use of the online discussion space was not an effective form of learning and did not serve to enhance or extend their learning. One teacher commented that the process of uploading her thoughts and reflections was “purely mechanical” and “just one more thing to check off the list.” Other teachers in the focus group agreed and added that the process did not foster the “back and forth dialogue” as intended. While online communities can potentially provide an effective form of communication, collaboration, and support among teachers, several factors come into play in realizing this potential (Booth, in press). Engaging members of an online community in meaningful and authentic discussion requires active and sustained facilitation by a skilled moderator. Effective moderation is a form of “social artistry” (Wenger, White, & Smith, 2010) that encourages and extends learning among members of the community. Carefully selecting, training, and supporting community moderators is critical for cultivating and sustaining a vibrant online learning community.

In summary, it was evident from both the survey responses and the longitudinal study data that many educators did not have the opportunity to use the online learning modules with collaborative teams as NCDPI intended. Educators who completed the modules independently with little or no follow-up were unable to capitalize on the value of professional dialogue and the benefits of learning within a PLC. State and regional professional development leaders may need to provide greater support to LEAs to ensure that the online learning modules are being used in a manner consistent with their design in order to maximize professional learning.

2c. To what extent were online professional development resources appropriate to educators’ needs?

When participants were asked on the Online Resources Survey about the extent to which they agreed that the online professional development was relevant to their professional development needs, 78% of online module participants and 83% of webinar participants surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed. Table 13 provides distributions of responses to relevance to professional development need for each online module.

Table 13. Distribution of Responses to Survey Item about Relevance to Needs by Module

NC Education Learning Module	<i>n</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Call for Change	1,004	3%	4%	17%	59%	16%
Understanding the Standards	1,410	3%	6%	17%	55%	19%
NC Professional Teaching Standards	1,835	2%	6%	13%	59%	20%
Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy	3,082	2%	4%	15%	57%	23%
Designing Local Curriculum	2,710	2%	5%	17%	59%	18%

While agreement about relevance was fairly consistent across modules, notable differences were found on item comparisons of participants' school role and region. As shown in Table 14, 71% of support staff and 77% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the online modules were relevant to their professional development needs, while agreement by Central Office staff (88%) and school executives (89%) was higher. Teachers rated the modules lower than educators in administrative positions, which could be attributed to teachers' expressed need for professional development focused specifically on instructional content relevant to the grades they teach. One comment of note is that several teachers and leaders in the sample schools said that the information in the online modules would be particularly relevant for beginning teachers. As one respondent stated while referencing North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards, "I really hope that the module becomes a requirement for new teachers. Everyone I spoke with about this module told me how much more they understood the evaluation system."

Table 14. Distribution of Responses to Survey Item about Relevance to Needs by Role

Professional Role	<i>n</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Teacher	9197	2%	5%	16%	58%	19%
School executive	418	1%	3%	7%	59%	30%
Central Office staff	139	0%	4%	8%	46%	42%
School Support staff	523	2%	8%	19%	53%	18%

Across regions, levels of agreement ranged from 71% in Region 3 to 84% in Region 4 (Sand Hills/South Central region, which includes a large, urban, military community surrounded by rural county school systems).

Results for this survey item across RttT-related webinar focus areas were slightly higher than those for the online modules. The percentage of educators who agreed or strongly agreed that the webinars were relevant to their professional development needs ranged from 73% for Formative and Summative Evaluation to 90% for the series of webinars on the North Carolina Educator Evaluation Process. Note that there are only 40 responses for Formative and Summative Evaluation webinars, so these data may not be as reliable as data with higher response rates (Table 15).

Table 15. Distribution of Responses to Survey Item about Relevance to Needs by Webinar Focus Area

Webinar Focus Area	<i>n</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Common Core and Essential Standards	380	1%	8%	12%	57%	22%
NC Educator Evaluation Process	216	0%	3%	6%	46%	44%
Formative and Summative Assessment	40	3%	13%	13%	53%	20%

Although survey participants were not explicitly asked to explain why these modules were or were not relevant to their needs, analysis of open-ended survey items coupled with focus group and interview data provide insight into how NCDPI and LEAs could increase the relevance of current and future modules, particularly for teachers and support staff. Data suggest that redundancy and the lack of content tailored to educators' specific teaching assignments were two

factors that kept the online learning modules from fully addressing educators' professional development needs.

Redundancy. A common theme that emerged both from open-ended survey items and from teacher focus groups was that content from the online modules or webinars was a repetition of information previously received. Many teachers asserted that they had "already learned the content" or that it was previously addressed by face-to-face professional development or college coursework. The following comment is representative of this perceived overlap:

This resource is the third presentation I have had on this topic. I attended a NCAE presentation before implementation as an option after school hours, a staff development by our LEA assistant administrator, and additional information from my principal before developing my PDP and observations. I feel I have ample exposure to the information.

Part of this may have been the result of a delay in the release of some of the modules. As noted in Section I, eight modules were scheduled for release by July 2011. However, only *Call for Change* was available at that time, while the other online modules to be incorporated into local professional development efforts were not released until after the start of the school year. When the modules were not released on a schedule anticipated by LEA leaders, LEA Professional Development Coordinators had to "regroup" and "backfill" with other resources that may have made the completion of the modules at a later date seem repetitive.

Lack of content tailored to specific teaching assignments. In several cases, LEA Professional Development Coordinators reported that the modules were not well differentiated and, as such, content was often not relevant to the needs of local staff and teachers. Educators from these LEAs noted that the types of overviews provided in the modules and the content of the modules was too general to be useful. In reference to *Call for Change*, one LEA Professional Development Coordinator stated that teachers were not interested in "the origin of the professional development" or "general, vague ideas"; they simply need the practical tools that will make them more effective teachers. A group of teachers in one focus group noted that the modules were too general to help them with immediate classroom concerns. For example, they explained that once they had progressed to the point of creating new pacing guides and curricular material to align with the Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards, "a general overview was simply not helpful." The desire for grade-level and subject-area specific "examples", "ideas", and "resources" was also a common recommendation among open-ended responses to the Online Resources Survey. Finally, webinar participants also noted issues such as too much repetition of concepts from previous trainings and the need to divide the professional development by grade level.

In summary, the majority of educators indicated that the modules were relevant to their professional development needs. However, both focus group and open-ended survey data suggest that the modules and webinars could better meet teachers' professional development needs by minimizing overlap with other local professional development efforts and providing greater attention to educators' specific teaching assignments, including providing teachers with more concrete examples of classroom applications, as well as lesson plans and resources that they can use immediately in the classroom.

2d. To what extent did educators participate in high-quality online professional development?

One of the goals of RttT-related professional development is ready access to high-quality professional development. Therefore, this evaluation question focuses on the extent to which online professional development offerings met standards for high-quality professional development. To guide the design of professional development, the RttT proposal identified standards developed by Learning Forward (2011), the International Association for K–12 Online Learning (2010), and the Southern Regional Education Board (2004) for effective onsite and online professional development. Items from the Online Resources Survey were used to gauge overall perception of the quality of the online resources, and these are presented first. They are followed by an assessment of the degree to which the online resources addressed each of the Learning Forward professional development standards. These assessments are based on Evaluation Team reviews, as well as comments from interviews and focus groups. Additionally, distribution tables are provided for all items by module and webinar type.

Perceptions of module quality. One item on the Online Resources Survey asked module and webinar participants the extent to which they agreed that the online resource they were reviewing was of high quality. For modules (Table 16), the percentage of those who agreed or strongly agreed ranged from 77% to 80%. Compared to educators' ratings of other online professional development activities, these ratings are slightly lower. For example, when participants in the Distinguished Leaders in Practice (DLP) program were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the item: *The online modules were of high quality*, 91% of DLP participants agreed or strongly agreed. Note that the online modules in the DLP program were multi-session, cohort-based, facilitated modules targeted at school principals, and were therefore different in nature from those provided by NCDPI. This is also slightly lower when compared to NCDPI's face-to-face professional development efforts such as the Summer Institute in which 88% of survey participants agreed or strongly agreed it was of high quality overall.

Table 16. Distribution of Responses to Survey Item about Quality by Online Module

NC Education Learning Module	<i>n</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Call for Change	1,003	2%	4%	14%	63%	17%
Understanding the Standards	1,409	2%	4%	17%	59%	18%
NC Professional Teaching Standards	1,836	1%	5%	16%	60%	18%
Revised Bloom's Taxonomy	3,085	1%	4%	16%	60%	20%
Designing Local Curriculum	2,714	1%	4%	18%	61%	16%

Aside from differences across modules, notable differences were also found based on participants' professional role. As shown in Table 17 (following page), teachers (77%) were least likely to agree or strongly agree that the online modules were of high quality. Among teachers, levels of agreement ranged from 71% (high school) to 80% (middle), suggesting that middle school teachers were more satisfied with the quality of the modules than were elementary or high school teachers.

Table 17. Distribution of Responses to Survey Item about Quality by Role

Professional Role	<i>n</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Teacher	9,204	2%	5%	17%	60%	17%
School executive	417	1%	3%	10%	65%	22%
Central Office staff	136	0%	4%	10%	43%	43%
School support staff	522	1%	2%	14%	65%	19%

Although NC FALCON participants who completed the PreK-12 Formative Assessment Post-survey were not explicitly asked the extent to which they felt the modules were of high quality, participants were asked to rate how beneficial they felt each module was. As show in Table 18, the proportion of educators who though the modules were beneficial or very beneficial ranges from 80% for module five to 92% for module four.

Table 18. Distribution of Responses to Survey Item about Relevance to Needs by Module

NC Education Learning Module	<i>n</i>	Not Beneficial	Not Sure	Beneficial	Very Beneficial
I. Importance of Formative Assessment	6741	4%	7%	64%	25%
II. Learning Targets and Criteria for Success	6732	3%	7%	62%	29%
III. Collecting and Documenting Evidence	6733	2%	7%	61%	30%
IV. Analyzing Evidence and Descriptive Feedback	6726	2%	6%	57%	35%
V. Administrator's Role in Formative Assessment	4315	5%	15%	55%	24%

Perceptions of webinar quality. Consistent with the other findings, participant perceptions of the overall quality of webinars were similar to the online modules, with 78% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that the webinars were of high quality. Across webinar focus areas, the percentage of educators who agreed or strongly agreed that the webinars were of high quality ranged from 73% to 81% (Table 19). Again, note that the small number of responses for Formative and Summative Assessment limit the reliability of the data.

Table 19. Distribution of Responses to Survey Item about Quality by Webinar Focus Area

Webinar Focus Area	<i>n</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Common Core and Essential Standards	381	1%	9%	16%	57%	17%
NC Educator Evaluation Process	216	0%	5%	13%	51%	30%
Formative and Summative Assessment	40	0%	10%	18%	55%	18%

Results from additional items related to the general indicators of quality are presented in Table 20 (following page). The findings from these items suggest that educators felt more positively about the organization of the modules and their impact on participants' understanding of the topics addressed than they did about the feedback and professional dialogue they provided. The lowest percentages of agreement for the modules were related to technical issues (68%) and constructive feedback (70%). For the webinars, the lowest percentages of agreement were related to meaningful opportunities for collaboration and constructive feedback.

Table 20. Percentage of Respondents Who Agree or Strongly Agree with Items Related to Overall Quality.

Online Resources Survey Item: “This online professional development...”	Online Modules (n = 9,907-10,617)	Webinars (n = 760-762)
was well organized.	83%	88%
was enhanced by the use of technology.	76%	73%
was free of technical issues.	68%	76%
provided me with useful resources.	76%	74%
increased my understanding of the material presented.	80%	80%
will be valuable to my teaching/leadership practice.	76%	76%
will likely result in positive changes in my professional practice.	75%	70%
provided me with constructive feedback.	70%	63%
provided opportunities for meaningful collaboration and/or social interaction.	71%	58%

The Evaluation Team asked participants in focus groups and interviews to describe their experiences with online professional development resources, as well as the benefits and challenges they perceived in using these online resources. Comments from focus groups and interviews suggest that, in general, professional development leaders and teachers were positive about the current implementation of the modules and the potential for online learning and professional development alternative. Professional development leaders in one school commented, “They’re very well done,” referring to the resources; they had received good feedback from teachers and said they were looking forward to the *Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy* module as a good refresher for their staff. Another LEA Professional Development Coordinator noted:

I like the idea of the online modules and being consistent across the state. And then, the more that they provide would allow us at the district level as we move forward to be able to differentiate based on the needs of our district and the needs of our teachers but yet having that resource library, per se, to go back to.

A common theme from teacher and LEA Professional Development Coordinator focus groups and open-ended survey responses was the convenience of online professional development. One teacher in a focus group stated, “I liked the format. And the way that it was given, it was at your own pace, which works well for our schedules ... I wish that the county would adopt professional development in that way. I love it.” A professional development leader also noted:

The Understanding the Standards module is awesome. I heard great things from my teachers, particularly the math and ELA content piece of that. It was laid out in a manner that was so specific to the way the standards are laid out on paper ... If you’re a new teacher, or heck, if you are a seasoned teacher ... those modules were very helpful in understanding the vocabulary of the new standards.

Educators also frequently cited that the information and resources provided through the modules bettered their understanding of the new standards and the teacher evaluation process. Many educators also appreciated having continuous access to the information and resources from the modules. When asked what the most beneficial or valuable aspect of the module was, one educator

responded, “Having the information at your fingertips as well as being able to go back and revisit the information at any time.”

Webinar participants appreciated the useful, updated information presented through a combination of PowerPoint slides and video clips. Specifically, respondents noted that the best part of the resource was receiving updated information regarding the Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards. Participants noted the benefits of flexibility that online learning allows; they appreciated not having to travel for a professional development event.

Assessment of online resource alignment to professional development standards. In October 2011, the State Board of Education endorsed the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning (2011). While the online modules were developed prior to this endorsement, key issues that emerged from our application of those standards to a sample of online resources, as well as from comments from participants, indicate areas in which state and local online professional development efforts could better align with these standards for high-quality professional development. The findings presented below—generated from the Evaluation Team’s review of the Phase I modules (rubric, Appendix B), observations of online resources, and participant feedback—are organized by the seven Learning Forward professional development standards in order to highlight areas for improvement to better meet nationally recognized standards for high-quality professional development:

1. *Learning Communities*
2. *Leadership*
3. *Resources*
4. *Data*
5. *Learning Designs*
6. *Implementation*
7. *Outcomes*

1. *Learning Communities: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.* Although educators were encouraged to complete online module activities in their local PLCs, the effective utilization of learning communities statewide was limited due to the limitations of online professional development resources for supporting collaboration and the inconsistency in implementation across LEAs. The online modules provided prompts for educators to share their thoughts and ideas with “reflection points” and assessment activities embedded throughout the instructional presentations. However, discussions with teachers, webinar observations, and Evaluation Team reviews of the modules suggest that activities to promote peer interaction were used inconsistently throughout the modules and webinars. Moreover, these activities primarily focused on peer reviews to check comprehension rather than fostering the kinds of collaboration and team problem solving described by the Learning Communities standard.

While emphasis was placed on using the modules with local PLCs, responses from the Online Resources Survey suggest that roughly half of the educators did not have this opportunity, as noted above. Moreover, many participants emphasized the importance of collaboration with other educators outside of their school and LEA. The following quote is representative of the desire expressed by educators who participated in this evaluation to connect with other teachers across the state:

When you're working within a district, you're isolated within that district and you don't know what else is going on around you, so it was good to hear what smaller districts could do, and what some of the larger districts...could possibly be doing... since we are all going towards the new assessments and new curriculum. And then we can decide within our county cohort, things we think might work, if we need to go back in and redesign our plan, or move forward with what we think are our best practices.

The use of cohort-based online professional development, in which educators participate in a series of learning activities and engage in facilitated online discussion with a cohort of peers, can provide an effective strategy to meet this expressed desire.

2. *Leadership: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.* The state's RttT Professional Development Facilitator's Guide emphasizes the use of the online learning modules and webinars as part of a blended learning approach. However, local policies and procedures were not always aligned with these guidelines. Several LEA Professional Development Coordinators expressed frustration with the amount of time required to adapt the modules for their administrators and teachers—previewing the modules ahead of time, vetting and selecting those that are relevant and add to prior professional development activities, or modifying activities for local use. Although many LEA leaders were judicious in their implementation and adaptation of the modules so as not to overburden their staff and to make effective use of their time, others simply required administrators and teachers to complete the entire online module without considering previous professional development efforts or customizing to local needs. These differences suggest that local professional development leaders may need additional support to better integrate online professional development modules into their comprehensive professional development plans.
3. *Resources: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.* Findings from sample schools indicate that LEA Professional Development Coordinators and teacher focus group participants from four different LEAs reported that they had planned their professional development for the year based on the projected roll-out of modules, but had to modify their plans due to delays in the module development timeline. While some schools set aside time for the online professional development modules during regular LEA professional development sessions, others required teachers to complete them independently on their own time. Focus group participants who did not access the online modules cited lack of time as the primary reason, noting, “At this point, we’re so overwhelmed with other professional development ... There’s no time. There are no hours in

the day to ask for more. Even if we were truly interested, which some of us could be, there just isn't time in the day."

4. *Data: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students uses a variety of sources and data types (student, educator, and system) to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.* Although each of the online learning modules provided some form of assessment (response to journal prompt, KWL chart, etc.) to determine the participants' mastery of content, it was clear from our focus groups and interviews that there was limited accountability at the local level for gauging participant learning in online modules or webinars. When asked how they were monitoring progress and completion of the modules, most LEA Professional Development Coordinators indicated that they relied on the certificate of completion to track participation, or would look for evidence of learning during classroom walk-throughs. Only two schools reported a system in place for monitoring progress. One school, for example, had teachers complete the activities using journals so they could monitor progress and provide feedback, but noted:

We're a small district, and I am it as far as Curriculum and Instruction goes. So it's just very cumbersome to be able to follow up and monitor the detailed kind of completion. I get certificates and it tells me that they sat through and they were able to print it out, but as far as being able to really hone in on "Did they walk away from something that can really be implemented and is it going to change their behavior in the classroom?" that's where I feel like it's muddy and I don't know.

The design of the learning modules was not necessarily conducive to supporting local leaders in monitoring progress and ensuring accountability. While many of the teachers indicated that they completed the modules as directed, one LEA Professional Development Coordinator stated, "They're turning in their certificates for their face-to-face piece, but the [fact remains that] they can turn the computer on and walk away or print modules out without reading and they still get their certificate." This was also a concern raised among several survey respondents, with one respondent noting: "As someone who was responsible for making sure they were completed by staff, this was very frustrating. I know that not all the teachers in this state actually did that training but it looks like they did."

Review of the modules by the Evaluation Team confirmed that, after working through a module, a certificate could be obtained and printed simply by clicking through the activities without any active participation required on the part of the learner. It was evident from our review of the modules and from our findings among our sample schools that the use of data by local professional development leaders to evaluate professional learning was absent or very limited. Printed certificates were the most frequently cited method for determining completion of the online modules. Since these can be printed without actually working through the module content, the fact that they are the primary basis for awarding CEUs is a concern.

5. *Learning Designs: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.* The online modules provided a concise overview, objectives were clearly described, and directions for activities were easy to follow. Using the instructional materials

provided, participants likely would be able to meet the learning objectives stated at the beginning of each section of the modules. Many of these learner outcomes, however, would fall on the lower end of intellectual behaviors described by the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy. For example, typical phrases used to define learner outcomes or expectations include verbs such as "describe," "identify," "summarize," and "explain." As one participant noted in reference to the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy module:

I recognize the importance and relevance of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy as an educator. However, I found it extremely ironic that part of Bloom's Taxonomy is allowing students to "create" and "evaluate," yet this module allowed virtually no time for practical curriculum application, evaluation, and creation with a PLC. The group discussion questions were rehashing factual knowledge and providing examples of answers within "vignettes" that are completely unrelated to the content I teach.

Although modules presented content through varied media (i.e., audio, text, and video), provided options within assessments and activities, and occasionally incorporated interactive features, these methods alone were not always effective in sustaining participant engagement. As one teacher noted in a survey response about the presentation, "I dislike having someone 'read to me' from a PowerPoint or video file." Several educators also noted that the amount of information presented was "too much" or "overwhelming" and could have been broken into "smaller chunks" to help sustain their engagement. Several webinar participants also suggested a need for greater interaction among participants, for less reading directly from PowerPoint presentations, and for facilitators to sound more enthusiastic about their material.

6. *Implementation: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.* Due to the blended design of the modules, the ongoing instructional support needed to make the modules have longer-term learning impacts was dependent primarily on local resources. Professional development leaders from nearly half of the schools in the sample noted efforts to adapt the modules by incorporating professional dialogue or extending activities as part of local professional development. One LEA Professional Development Coordinator noted the importance of active facilitation and stated:

In a PLC that I'm leading, I have them look at the literacy standards that they're going to be held accountable for in their subject and then there are new Essential standards. How are they going to blend them? What do they see themselves doing? Again, it's this back and forth discussion about how are things changing.

Given the number of educators who indicated on the Online Resources Survey that they independently completed activities suggested during the modules and webinars, it seems likely that they did not receive the instructional support or feedback necessary to foster a deeper understanding of the content and application to their practice. This is consistent with educators' lower level of agreement with items related to opportunities for meaningful collaboration and constructive feedback. While the modules did provide some feedback for

those who completed them independently, the feedback participants received was limited to short quizzes restricted to identifying correct or incorrect responses to closed-ended items.

Many of the schools in our longitudinal sample indicated that technical support for the modules also was inadequate, resulting in impeded implementation. Six of the 14 schools that accessed the modules had technical difficulties with them, and only one of these was able to resolve them immediately. Technical issues were also frequently cited among open-ended survey responses. One educator stated:

I am savvy when it comes to technology and this was difficult for me to navigate. Many of the videos were incompatible with the systems here at work and would not load the majority of the time. When they did load, half of the screen was unable to be seen. This resulted in me having to view these at home.

A final thing to consider is compatibility of the learning modules across multiple platforms. The instructional presentations of the online learning modules were created using Flash-based technology that is not supported by many popular mobile devices, such as iPads and iPhones. In addition, older web browsers and operating systems may have difficulty playing these files, which may explain some of the difficulties teachers reported in accessing the modules.

7. *Outcomes: Professional development that builds educator effectiveness to increase student achievement focuses on outcomes defined by educator performance standards and student content standards.* The online modules are aligned to the RttT professional development priorities and directly address the standards for teaching and learning adopted by North Carolina. However, while many teachers and professional development leaders in the sample schools found the material “useful,” “enlightening,” “informative,” “effective,” and even “awesome,” many others found that the depth of the content was insufficient to meet their needs. Survey comments, interviews, and focus groups suggested that many educators, particularly teachers, would have liked the content of the modules to go deeper into content area and grade level specifics.

In summary, due to the wide variation in implementation, the quality of the professional development experience when using the online modules varied greatly. It is clear that when the modules were used as a stand-alone form of professional development, many critical components of high-quality professional development were absent. Strategies such as supporting statewide online learning communities, providing active online course facilitation, offering thoughtful feedback on participants’ learning, and providing training and support in online professional development to local professional development leaders would help RttT online professional development efforts better meet the learning needs of North Carolina teachers and leaders.

2e. To what extent did the RttT Professional Development Initiative increase LEA capacity to provide and sustain high-quality online professional development?

Several items on the LEA Professional Development Coordinator Survey and Teacher Survey focused on local readiness for online professional development. These surveys were intended to provide baseline data for the first year of RttT so that growth of LEA capacity to deliver online

and technology-supported professional development could be measured over the course of the initiative.

Survey results from local professional development leaders imply that most LEAs across the state already have the capacity to provide access to high-quality online professional development and resources. As shown in Table 21, the vast majority of professional development leaders know that online resources such as NC Education, webinars, and collaborative spaces are available and accessible. Leaders also feel that their LEAs have a comprehensive plan in place for integration of face-to-face and online professional development. The one area where local professional development leaders have the greatest doubts (8.5% disagree) is taking into account staff technology proficiency when planning for professional development. NCDPI may want to focus on helping local professional development leaders identify and support those teachers who are new or uncomfortable with learning online, which parallels findings from the Teacher Survey in the longitudinal study. However, results from the RttT Professional Development Teacher Survey (Table 22, following page) suggest that LEAs may not be as adequately prepared to deliver online professional development as leaders believe. More than one third of educators across all 27 schools did not agree that they had access to online professional development resources and support for using these resources.

Table 21. Distribution of Responses for LEA Professional Development Leaders about LEA Capacity to Support Online Professional Development

Professional Development Leader Survey Item: “To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following questions? Our district...”	Agree/ Strongly Agree (n = 139-150)
provides online resources related to the revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards.	87%
has determined that all online resources related to the Race to the Top are accessible in the LEA.	89%
provides support to assist staff with using online professional development resources (NC Education, webinars, etc.).	81%
has ensured all staff have equitable access to technology for accessing Race to the Top professional development resources.	85%
leaders provide opportunities for networking and support (both online and offline) in high-quality professional development.	66%
has communicated with our local testing coordinator to ensure all staff has NC Education login capabilities.	77%
has a comprehensive plan to coordinate the integration of face-to-face and online professional development.	78%
has developed a plan for implementing PLCs (online and/or face-to-face) related to Race to the Top Initiative.	73%
has provided educators with an online space (e.g., wiki, website, Moodle, etc.) for sharing resources, experiences, and/or information to related to RttT Professional Development.	77%
has collaborated with district technology staff to determine the extent of online communication and collaboration tools available for Professional Development.	72%
has utilized data on staff’s technology proficiency when planning Race to the Top professional development.	64%

**This survey was distributed to LEA Superintendents and Professional Development Coordinators in 115 LEAs and 33 charter schools.*

Table 22. Percentage of Teacher Who Agree or Strongly Agree with Items Related to District Capacity for Online Professional Development.

Professional Development Teacher Survey Item: “To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following questions? Our district...”	Agree/ Strongly Agree (n = 338-340)
Provide opportunities for networking and support (both online and offline) in high quality professional development	66%
Extend and enhance on-site professional development through the use of online communication and resources	61%
Support professional learning communities by providing access to web 2.0 tools such as blogs, wikis, and social networking tools	60%
Provide access to high-quality online professional development opportunities	57%
Provide support for users uncomfortable with online professional development opportunities	57%
Support professional learning communities by providing an online space to share ideas and resources	56%
Model effective use of web-based communication and collaboration tools to support professional development	55%

The review of baseline survey data from the LEA Professional Development Coordinators and teachers revealed that LEA leaders and classroom teachers had differing perspectives and opinions about the success of local efforts to support online professional development during this first year of the RttT Initiative. Many teachers agree with LEA staff that the technical infrastructure and resources may be in place locally to support online professional development; however, research around capacity building for innovations in schools (Newmann, King, & Young, 2000) indicates that the availability and utilization of relevant resources is just one part of a larger picture. In this case, the local-level innovation is supporting or delivering high-quality online professional development. Other important components include changes in educators’ knowledge, skills, and attitudes about the innovation (Guskey, 1986, 2000); participation in a professional community around the innovation (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002); building a sense of unity and coherence around the innovation (Newmann et al., 2001); and sharing leadership responsibilities among key players (Lambert, 1998). It is clear from the teacher survey data and focus groups that many local leaders are not providing access to high-quality online professional development or supporting professional communities using online resources.

Section II Summary

The purpose of Section II is to report on the immediate outcomes of local access to online professional development resources provided through RttT. The Evaluation Team examined the extent of local access and awareness, implementation, relevance to educators’ needs, and quality of the professional development experience. Most educators seem to be aware of the online resources offered through NCDPI, with nearly 70,000 educators having completed at least one online module and 1,800 participating in webinars. Despite some technical difficulties, many educators agreed or strongly agreed that the online tools and resources were easily accessible, and website analytics suggest that since July 2011, there has been considerable interest in and accessing of the RttT online professional development resources. The majority of educators also agreed that the online professional development activities were well organized, of high quality, and relevant to their needs. The online modules and webinars were aligned to the RttT

professional development priorities and directly addressed the standards for teaching adopted by North Carolina.

However, data also suggested the redundancy of content, lack of differentiation, and limited use of technology to support instructional feedback, collaboration, and peer interaction were factors that kept the online learning resources from fully addressing standards for online professional development. It was also evident from the survey analysis and visits to schools in the longitudinal sample that there is wide variation in the quality of the RttT-related professional development experience for teachers across the state. The current blended design of the RttT professional development modules required dependence on local resources for the ongoing instructional support needed to achieve longer-term learning impacts. Finally, although educators were encouraged to complete online module activities in their local PLCs, the effective utilization of learning communities statewide was limited due to inconsistency in implementation and accountability policies across LEAs.

Conclusions, Recommendations, and Next Steps

Conclusions

One of the primary goals of RttT is to “expand the online professional development infrastructure to provide accessible and high-quality online professional development for all educators throughout North Carolina” (North Carolina Office of the Governor, 2010, p. 10). This report focused on the progress made toward accomplishing this goal. Data for this baseline report demonstrate that NCDPI has created and utilized a substantial set of online resources, conducted dozens of webinars, and developed online learning modules to support local PLCs. These efforts have impacted tens of thousands of educators across the state and have provided LEAs with additional resources to support their local professional development efforts. However, these online resources and activities have been primarily leveraged by NCDPI and LEAs to broadcast information rather than to engage educators in the kinds of sustained discussion, sharing, and collaborations, tied to their specific grade level and content needs, that high-quality online professional development entails. Data in this report also suggest that many LEAs do not yet have the capacity to provide high-quality online professional development and may need additional support to fulfill the vision for online professional development outlined in the RttT proposal.

Recent Developments in RttT-Related Online Professional Development

After review of a preliminary draft of this report, NCDPI staff noted that several developments already were in motion to ensure that NCDPI can continue to build its internal capacity for developing online learning modules and supporting local implementation of online professional development resources. The following summary is based on a discussion with professional development leaders on June 18, 2012, as well as information presented at the Governor’s Education Transformation Commission on June 13, 2012.

NCDPI has expanded the Instructional Design Team to four instructional design staff and one team lead to handle the development of all future modules in-house. Two instructional designers are specifically responsible for coordinating the efforts of the various teams, and ensuring that the content of future modules is of consistent depth and quality. As part of the North Carolina Learning Technology Initiative, NCDPI also has partnered with the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation’s Education Workforce Development team⁹ to provide their staff with training and support for technology-enabled learning, including training related to online professional development. NCDPI will continue this partnership throughout 2012.

The Instructional Design Team established a new development process for the Phase II online professional development modules released in June 2012 and beyond. The process includes the introduction of an instructional design template intended to promote a more systematic process for the planning, design, testing and implementation of the next phase of modules. Teams working on the development of the modules now have access to an online space for contributing development materials and following the work of other teams. NCDPI will continue to refine the

⁹ A unit of the Friday Institute separate and distinct from the Evaluation Team

development process to ensure that the modules follow best practices for instructional design, align to Learning Forward's standards for online professional development, and allow LEAs greater flexibility for repurposing the online modules to meet their specific professional development needs.

In an effort to make online resources more accessible to LEAs, NCDPI has moved toward a central online location for all professional development resources.¹⁰ The development team also plans to gradually introduce online tools such as wikis and discussion forums in future modules in order to provide online opportunities for peer feedback and collaboration. Mindful of the scale of statewide online professional development efforts and the variety of settings in which the online modules will be implemented and used, NCDPI will continue to explore ways of providing participants online opportunities to interact with peers and participate in facilitated online professional development experiences.

As an extension of the broader support provided to LEA Professional Development Leadership Teams through the Annual Professional Development Cycle, NCDPI will continue to provide targeted support to LEAs to ensure that the online modules and resources are successfully integrated into local professional development plans. To that end, NCDPI has developed the *Phase II Online Module Implementation Guide* to support LEAs in their implementation of the modules.¹¹ This supplemental guide provides guidance to LEA-level and charter school teams with the implementation of the Phase II online modules for professional development developed by NCDPI for the 2012-2013 school year. During the 2012 Summer Institutes, NCDPI also provided educators the opportunity to learn more about NC Education through a booth set up during the Resource Expo. Regional PD Leads also will continue to collect information regarding online professional development needs from their conversations with local leaders and lay the groundwork for extending online existing collaborations between LEA professional development leaders. Beginning in Fall 2012, NCDPI will also use the LEA Fidelity Checks to purposefully collect information about local implementation of the online professional development resources. Information gathered from both informal conversations and regional professional development sessions will be used to help guide decisions regarding the design and develop of future online professional development resources and activities, and to determine additional ways to support LEAs.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this evaluation, the following recommendations are provided for consideration as NCDPI seeks to achieve the goals for OPD outlined in the RtT proposal, build statewide capacity, and better align future efforts to standards for high-quality online professional development.

1. Continue to support LEAs as they implement the new strategic plan outlined in the *Phase II Online Module Implementation Guide* to further the use of effective online and blended professional development statewide. This plan provides guidance about how to develop local

¹⁰ <http://wikicentral.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/NCDPI+WikiCentral+Page>

¹¹ http://rt3nc.org/pubs/implementation_guide_2012.pdf

and regional capacity to incorporate online technologies to enhance and extend professional development opportunities. Such a plan will benefit from a greater focus on incorporating principles of effective professional development into online and blended programs. Successful implementation of this new plan requires NCDPI and LEAs to go beyond developing resources to disseminate information broadly via web-based technologies in order to fulfill the research-based potential of OPD.

The goals, standards, and research that informed relevant sections of the RttT proposal, as well as the recommendations of the North Carolina e-Learning expert panel and the recommendations of the North Carolina eLearning Commission (Appendix L), all share this focus. In addition, a potentially useful model for the redeveloped plan might be the approach described in a proposal submitted by LEARN NC to NCDPI in December 2010, which includes cohort-based, facilitated online workshops along with online training to prepare local education leaders to facilitate these workshops.

2. To improve alignment to the state's RttT proposal and to the standards for online professional development, expand statewide OPD activities and/or support local initiatives to: (1) expand OPD activities to provide educators with access to a greater variety of online learning experiences; (2) provide more opportunities for online peer interaction across all online professional development offerings; and (3) provide more differentiation of professional development activities to meet the specific needs of teachers of different content areas, grades and levels of expertise.
3. Where possible, leverage existing online professional development workshops and resources available through the national e-Learning for Educators Consortium, other RttT states, local providers like LEARN NC, and others. It will be more time- and cost-efficient to license and adapt existing resources to support (for example) the transition to the Common Core Standards than to create all-new resources.
4. Focus on building statewide capacity for effective implementation and facilitation of OPD in order to ensure sustainability beyond the period of the RttT funding. To do so, build upon multi-LEA and regional coalitions that will share expertise and resources to develop OPD programs throughout the state. OPD is not limited to LEA boundaries, and small LEAs have limited capacity, so these coalitions will be essential for successful statewide outreach. These LEA coalitions need specific guidelines for local policies and programs, models of meaningful interaction, supports for building local OPD capacity, and shared leadership in a professional online learning community in order to promote high-quality online learning across the state.
5. Leverage the tools available via the NC Education Moodle Learning Management System to support both state and local professional development initiatives with asynchronous and synchronous discussions, content repositories, wikis, and other tools that will be provided through the NC K-12 Education Cloud upon its completion. Online tools provide educators with opportunities to enhance their local PLCs and extend personal learning networks beyond their schools and LEAs. Participant feedback on both webinars and modules highlighted a strong desire to connect with educators both locally and across the state in order to share ideas, resources, and best practices. Through the RttT initiative, the NC Education Moodle in the near term, and the K-12 Education Technology Cloud in the future, NCDPI is in an excellent position to foster these online communities and build a network of educators by

providing both structured and informal opportunities for educators to communicate and collaborate online.

6. Organize all online resources into a centralized, easily searchable content repository to make them more easily accessible. NCDPI has created a substantial set of online resources to support RttT initiatives. However, these resources are spread across multiple sites that require different accounts and passwords. These resources should be located on one site and should be accessible from the homepage through a highly visible link. The NC Education website would be a suitable location, and Moodle provides a flexible set of tools for managing content repositories.

Next Steps for the Evaluation

The Evaluation Team will continue to record the use of online resources and tools used as part of the Annual Professional Development Cycle for RttT. The Evaluation Team will continue to work closely with NCDPI staff to ensure that data relevant to online professional development is collected regularly, and data reports are easily accessible to inform timely decision-making and improvements. Data are currently being collected on how online resources are being used during face-to-face professional development activities for RttT. All future findings related to online professional development will be included within the overall evaluation of RttT professional development reports rather than released as interim reports.

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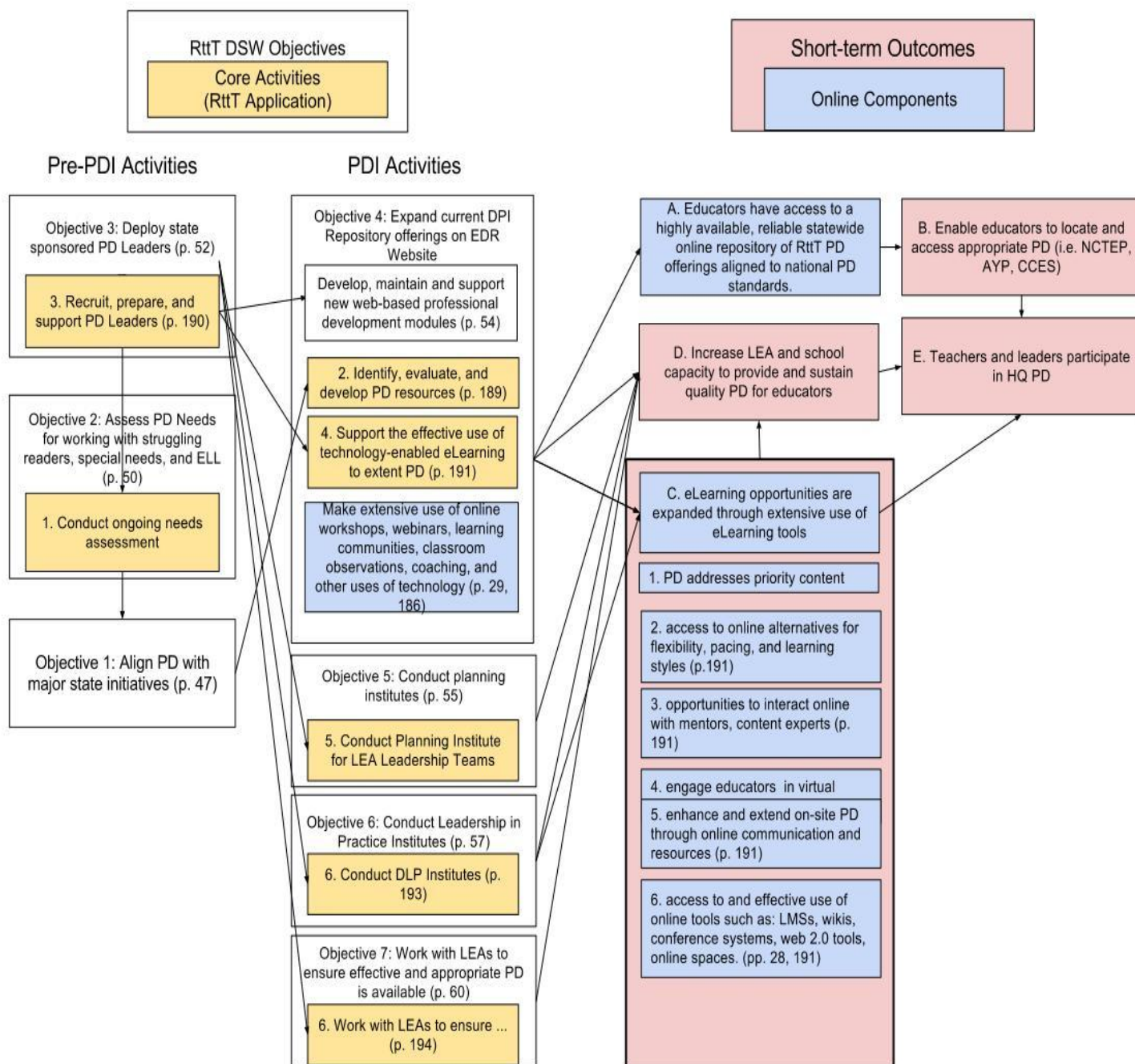
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Appendix A. RttT Online Professional Development Logic Model



Note. Page numbers referenced refer to North Carolina's RttT Application and Detailed Scope of Work

Appendix B. Online Professional Development Rubric

Context Standards				
Learning Communities – Online professional development that builds educator effectiveness to increase student achievement provides opportunities for educators to build online learning communities and to work together in pairs or teams, with access to follow-up discussions to share information. Interactive communication tools—such as forums, chats and discussion boards—are used to develop and maintain a collegial online learning community.				
	Not Present	Limited	Implementing	Exemplary
Continuous Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides no opportunities for participants to collaborate during and following professional development <input type="checkbox"/> No strategies are in place promote sharing and working together to achieve common goals <input type="checkbox"/> Learners are not encouraged to provide constructive peer feedback and engage in reflective dialogue, and sustained discourse	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides few opportunities for participants to collaborate during or following professional development <input type="checkbox"/> Strategies are seldom used that promote sharing and working together to achieve common goals <input type="checkbox"/> Learners are rarely encouraged to provide constructive peer feedback and engage in reflective dialogue, and sustained discourse	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides occasional opportunities for participants to collaborate during and following professional development <input type="checkbox"/> Strategies are occasionally used that promote sharing and working together to achieve common goals <input type="checkbox"/> Learners are occasionally encouraged to provide constructive peer feedback and engage in reflective dialogue, and sustained discourse	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently provides meaningful opportunities for participants to collaborate during and following professional development (SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> Strategies are used to promote sharing and working together to achieve common goals (SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> Learners are frequently encouraged to provide constructive peer feedback and engage in reflective dialogue, and sustained discourse (NSDC)
Collective Responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides no opportunities for participant interaction <input type="checkbox"/> Provides participants no opportunities to exchange resources, experiences and information with others within and outside of the school or district <input type="checkbox"/> Does not provides participants with communication options and data storage	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides few opportunities for participant interaction <input type="checkbox"/> Provides participants few opportunities to exchange resources, experiences and information with others within or outside of the school or district <input type="checkbox"/> Provides participants with public or private communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides opportunities for participant interaction <input type="checkbox"/> Provides participants opportunities to exchange resources, experiences and information with others within their school <i>or</i> district <input type="checkbox"/> Provides participants with public and private communication or data storage	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides opportunities for multiple forms of participant interaction, both online and offline (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides participants opportunities to exchange resources, experiences and information with others within <i>and</i> outside of the school and district (NSDC, SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides participants with public and private communication and data storage (NSDC)

Alignment	<input type="checkbox"/> No indication that online delivery of PD is integrated into a comprehensive professional development plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Components of online delivery of PD are integrated into the organization's comprehensive professional development plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Online delivery of PD is integrated into the organization's comprehensive professional development plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Online delivery of PD is clearly integrated into the organization's comprehensive professional development plan. (SREB
Leadership – Staff development that improves the learning of all students requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement. School and state leaders view online professional development as an integral part of the organization's overall professional development plan, build the capacity for leadership, and publicly advocate online instruction.				
	No Indicator	Limited	Implementing	Exemplary
Capacity	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants are not provided opportunities to help facilitate professional development through leading peer instruction, coaching, or supervision of learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants are rarely provided opportunities to help facilitate professional development through leading peer instruction, coaching, or supervision of learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants are provided opportunities to help facilitate professional development through leading peer instruction, coaching, or supervision of learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants are provided frequent opportunities to help facilitate professional development through leading peer instruction, coaching, or supervision of learning (NSDC)
Support	<input type="checkbox"/> No evidence that school and state leaders publicly advocate online professional development for teachers, administrators, school boards and community leaders <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational leaders do not participate with staff in online professional development activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited evidence that school and state leaders publicly advocate online professional development <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational leaders rarely participate with staff in online professional development activities	<input type="checkbox"/> School and state leaders publicly advocate online professional development for teachers <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational leaders participate with staff in online professional development activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> School and state leaders publicly advocate online professional development for teachers, administrators, school boards and community leaders. (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational leaders actively participate with staff in online professional development activities. (NSDC)
Distributed	<input type="checkbox"/> A shared vision of change is not communicated <input type="checkbox"/> Participants are not provided with opportunities to provide input about the design of the program	<input type="checkbox"/> A shared vision of change is communicated <input type="checkbox"/> Participants were informed about the design of the program	<input type="checkbox"/> A shared vision of purposeful change is communicated <input type="checkbox"/> Participants were provided with the opportunity to provide feedback on the design process	<input type="checkbox"/> A shared vision of purposeful change is clearly communicated (NETS-A) <input type="checkbox"/> Participants were an integral part to the of the design process. (NSDC)

Resources – Professional development that builds educator effectiveness to increase student achievement requires prioritizing, monitoring, and integrating resources. Schools and states provide adequate resources of time, personnel, incentives and support systems for online professional development as part of the overall professional development plan.				
	Not Present	Limited	Implementing	Exemplary
Prioritizing	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff has not been allocated to support participants' successful use of online PD <input type="checkbox"/> Resources are not available to supplement support for those uncomfortable with online PD <input type="checkbox"/> Provides no incentives for online participants <input type="checkbox"/> No credit for PD is awarded	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited staff has been allocated to support participants' successful use of online PD <input type="checkbox"/> Few resources are available to supplement support for those uncomfortable with online PD <input type="checkbox"/> Provides few incentives to online participants <input type="checkbox"/> Credit is awarded for PD, but is not tied to performance	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff has been allocated to support participants' successful use of online PD, though support may not always be timely <input type="checkbox"/> Resources are available to supplement support for those uncomfortable with online PD <input type="checkbox"/> Incentives for online participants may not be always be equivalent to those offered to traditional PD participants <input type="checkbox"/> Credit for PD is awarded based partially on learner performance	<input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient staff has been allocated to support participants' successful use of online PD in a timely manner(SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> High quality resources are available to supplement support for those uncomfortable with online PD (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides the same incentives for online participants, such as stipends or CEUs, that traditional PD participants would receive (SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> Credit for PD is awarded based on performance rather than time spent (NSDC)
Monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/> Few links, videos, and applications work as intended <input type="checkbox"/> Online PD is not accessible from major browsers and operating systems <input type="checkbox"/> The course shows no indication that online PD is updated	<input type="checkbox"/> Many links, videos, and applications do not work as intended <input type="checkbox"/> Online PD is accessible from few major browsers and operating systems <input type="checkbox"/> Online PD is rarely updated to ensure timeliness	<input type="checkbox"/> Most links, videos, and applications work as intended <input type="checkbox"/> Online PD is accessible from most major browsers and operating systems <input type="checkbox"/> Online PD is updated periodically to ensure timeliness	<input type="checkbox"/> All links, videos, and applications work as intended (iNACOL) <input type="checkbox"/> Online PD is accessible from all major browsers and operating systems. (iNACOL) <input type="checkbox"/> Online PD is regularly updated to ensure timeliness (iNACOL)
Coordinating Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants are not provided with needed technology training to enable their successful participation <input type="checkbox"/> No partnerships with colleges and universities, businesses and other organizations are evident	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants are provided with limited technology training to enable their successful participation <input type="checkbox"/> Few partnerships with colleges and universities, businesses and other organizations are used to meet participants' professional development needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants are provided with some technology training to enable their successful participation <input type="checkbox"/> Occasional partnerships with colleges and universities, businesses and other organizations are used to meet participants' professional development needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants are provided with any needed technology training to enable their successful participation. (SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> Partnerships with colleges and universities, businesses and other organizations are used to meet participants' professional development needs. (SREB)

Process

Data – Professional development that builds educator effectiveness to increase student achievement uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.

	Not Present	Limited	Implementing	Exemplary
Analyzing Data	<input type="checkbox"/> Online PD offerings are not based on current adult learning needs and gaps in student achievement <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment strategies are not consistent with goals, objectives and scope the professional development	<input type="checkbox"/> Few online PD offerings are based on current adult learning needs and gaps in student achievement <input type="checkbox"/> Some assessment strategies are consistent with goals, objectives and scope the professional development	<input type="checkbox"/> Most online PD offerings are based on current adult learning needs and gaps in student achievement <input type="checkbox"/> Most assessment strategies are consistent with goals, objectives and scope the professional development	<input type="checkbox"/> Online PD offerings are based on current adult learning needs and gaps in student achievement (SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> All assessment strategies are consistent with goals, objectives and scope the professional development (iNACOL)
Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> No online assessments are provided <input type="checkbox"/> There is no procedure to assess that mastery of content is adequate and appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment materials do not allow flexibility to assess learning in a variety of ways <input type="checkbox"/> There is no documented use of participants' use of new knowledge and skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Includes online assessments with limited feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Methods and procedures to assess mastery of content may frequently be inadequate or inappropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment materials allow limited flexibility to assess learning in a variety of ways <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment of participant learning includes little documented use of new knowledge and skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides online assessments with feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Methods and procedures to assess mastery of content are usually adequate and appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment materials allow flexibility to assess learning in a variety of ways <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment of participant learning includes documented use of new knowledge and skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Online assessments provide timely feedback in order to evaluate participant learning (SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> Methods and procedures to assess mastery of content are adequate and appropriate (iNACOL) <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment materials allow great flexibility to assess learning in a variety of ways (iNACOL) <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment of participant learning includes documented use of new knowledge and skills through videos and/or e-journals (SREB)

Evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> No opportunities are provided for learners to give feedback on quality and effectiveness of PD <input type="checkbox"/> There is no evidence that the quality and effectiveness of online PD is being evaluated <input type="checkbox"/> The results of evaluations are not available	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited opportunities are provided for learners to give feedback on quality and effectiveness of PD <input type="checkbox"/> A single method is used to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of PD <input type="checkbox"/> The results of evaluations are difficult to access	<input type="checkbox"/> Some opportunities is provided for learners to give feedback on quality and effectiveness of PD <input type="checkbox"/> Few methods are used to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of PD <input type="checkbox"/> The results of evaluations are available	<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities are provided for learners to give feedback on quality and effectiveness of PD (iNACOL) <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple methods are used to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of PD (iNACOL) <input type="checkbox"/> The results of evaluations are readily available (NSDC) and provide sufficient information for participants to understand and learn from them.
Learning Designs – Program uses appropriate technologies to present materials in a variety of ways, addressing a range of learning styles. Program integrates face-to-face professional development with online professional development where appropriate.				
Applying Research	Not Present	Limited	Implementing	Exemplary
	<input type="checkbox"/> No modification to learning activities are provided to accommodate participants learning styles, needs and level of mastery <input type="checkbox"/> Online learning experiences are linked to participants' teaching assignments and curriculum areas <input type="checkbox"/> Does not provide access to appropriate research	<input type="checkbox"/> Learning activities allow minimal adaptation to accommodate participants learning styles, needs and level of mastery <input type="checkbox"/> Online learning experiences are weakly linked to participants' teaching assignments and curriculum areas <input type="checkbox"/> Provides little access to appropriate research to support needs, interests, and multiple perspectives.	<input type="checkbox"/> Modifications to learning activities are occasionally provided to accommodate participants learning styles, needs and level of mastery <input type="checkbox"/> Online learning experiences may be somewhat linked to participants' teaching assignments and curriculum areas <input type="checkbox"/> Provides access to appropriate research to support learner interests and needs (NSDC)	<input type="checkbox"/> Modifications to learning activities are regularly provided to accommodate participants learning styles, needs and level of mastery (SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> Online learning experiences are specifically linked to participants' teaching assignments and curriculum areas (SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides access to appropriate research, including conflicting research to support needs, interests, and multiple perspectives (NSDC)

Learning Designs	<input type="checkbox"/> Teaching strategies - including multimedia technologies and online tools- are not appropriate to intended results of the program <input type="checkbox"/> Use of text, color, visual images, and other media are frequently distracting and serve little purpose <input type="checkbox"/> There is no clear structure provided and navigation is confusing <input type="checkbox"/> Navigation through instructional materials is linear with no options for participants who have different lengths of time to devote to learning <input type="checkbox"/> Does not provide an overview describing the objectives, activities and resources, or a description of the key activities and assignments	<input type="checkbox"/> Teaching strategies - including multimedia technologies and online tools- are seldom appropriate to intended results of the program <input type="checkbox"/> Use of text, color, visual images, and other media are frequently distracting <input type="checkbox"/> Structure and navigation processes are likely to cause confusion and difficulty in learning <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a single path through instructional materials and few options for participants who have different lengths of time to devote to learning <input type="checkbox"/> Overview fails to fully describe the objectives, activities and resources and a the description of the key activities and assignments is limited	<input type="checkbox"/> Teaching strategies - including multimedia technologies and online tools- may not always be appropriate to intended results of the program <input type="checkbox"/> Use of text, color, visual images, and other media do not distract from learning <input type="checkbox"/> Structure and navigation processes are clear, appropriate to the content <input type="checkbox"/> Provides some flexibility for navigating instructional materials and some options for participants who have different lengths of time to devote to learning <input type="checkbox"/> Provides an overview describing the objectives, activities and resources and a description of the key activities and assignments	<input type="checkbox"/> Teaching strategies - including multimedia technologies and online tools- are appropriate to intended results of the program (SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> Use of text, color, visual images, and other media are purposeful and greatly facilitate learning (iNACOL) <input type="checkbox"/> Structure and navigation processes are clear, appropriate to the content and enhance ease of use (SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides logical, varied paths through instructional materials and multiple options for participants who have different lengths of time to devote to learning (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides an overview clearly and concisely describing the objectives, activities and resources and a description of the key activities and assignments (iNACOL)
Active Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides no opportunities to engage in activities that promote higher-order thinking, critical reasoning and group problem-solving (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Does not utilize online tools, such as discussion boards, e-mail and wikis to support mentoring, collaboration, implementation and reflection. <input type="checkbox"/> Learning experiences are repetitive and provide little or no variation	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides few opportunities to engage in activities that promote higher-order thinking, critical reasoning and group problem-solving (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely utilizes online tools, such as discussion boards, e-mail and wikis to support mentoring, collaboration, implementation and reflection <input type="checkbox"/> Includes little variation in learning experiences — such as video, audio, simulations, Web resources and access to subject matter experts	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides occasional opportunities to engage in activities that promote higher-order thinking, critical reasoning and group problem-solving <input type="checkbox"/> Utilizes few online tools, such as discussion boards, e-mail and wikis to support mentoring, collaboration, implementation and reflection. <input type="checkbox"/> Includes variation in learning experiences - such as video, audio, simulations, Web resources and access to subject matter experts – though not always appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides frequent opportunities to engage in activities that promote higher-order thinking, critical reasoning and group problem-solving (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Frequently utilizes online tools, such as discussion boards, e-mail and wikis to support mentoring, collaboration, implementation and reflection. (SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> Includes a variety of learning experiences — such as video, audio, simulations, Web resources and access to subject matter experts— as appropriate. (SREB)

Implementation – Online professional development requires both instructional and technical support in order to be successful. Not all learners are likely to be ready and comfortable with professional development in an online setting. Therefore, to increase learners’ comfort level and likelihood of success, online professional development should provide educators with the support needed to adapt to an online medium and effect long-term changes in practice.				
	Not Present	Limited	Implementing	Exemplary
Sustaining Learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides no means for participants to quickly solve technical and implementation issues, including successfully accessing courses and responding to participant questions <input type="checkbox"/> Provides no orientation to the online platform and navigational tools are provided. <input type="checkbox"/> Does not provide opportunities for ongoing learning, reflection, and sharing of resources and work products beyond the structured professional development	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides limited means for participants to solve technical and implementation issues, including successfully accessing courses and responding to participant questions but difficult to navigate <input type="checkbox"/> Provides insufficient orientation to the online platform and navigational tools. <input type="checkbox"/> Provides few opportunities for ongoing learning, reflection, and sharing of resources and work products beyond the structured professional development	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides means for participants to solve technical and implementation issues, including successfully accessing courses and responding to participant questions <input type="checkbox"/> Orientation to learning environment provides information on program’s platform and navigational tools <input type="checkbox"/> Provides opportunities for ongoing learning, reflection, and sharing of resources and work products beyond the structured professional development	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides means for participants to quickly solve technical and implementation issues, including successfully accessing courses and responding to participant questions (SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> Orientation to learning environment clearly details the program’s platform, navigational tools and technical requirements (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides multiple opportunities for ongoing learning, reflection, and sharing of resources and work products beyond the structured professional development (NSDC)
Change Theory	<input type="checkbox"/> No opportunities are provided for experienced educators to serve as mentors for novice ones <input type="checkbox"/> Does not provide models of effective practice, strategies or resources to support application of new learning in the classroom <input type="checkbox"/> Provides no support for interaction with facilitators and peers to assess learner’s progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Few opportunities are provided for experienced educators to serve as mentors for novice ones. <input type="checkbox"/> Provides few models of effective practice, strategies and resources to support application of new learning in the classroom <input type="checkbox"/> Provides limited support for interaction with facilitators and peers to assess learner’s progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities are provided for experienced educators to serve as mentors for novice ones <input type="checkbox"/> Provides models of effective practice, strategies or resources to support application of new learning in the classroom <input type="checkbox"/> Provides support for interaction with facilitators or peers to assess learner’s progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple opportunities are provided for experienced educators to serve as mentors for novice ones (NSDC 2011) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides frequent models of effective practice, strategies and resources to support application of new learning in the classroom (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides support for interaction with facilitators and peers to assess learner’s progress (NSDC)
Feedback	<input type="checkbox"/> No feedback on participant learning is provided	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides limited constructive feedback on participant learning <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback is rarely specific or clearly aligned with expectations for PD outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides occasional constructive feedback on assignments, though it may not be timely <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback is usually specific and aligned with expectations for PD outcomes, though feedback and alignment may be vague at times	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides constructive feedback on assignments that is both ongoing and timely (SREB, iNACOL) <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback is specific and clearly aligned with expectations for PD outcomes

Content

Outcomes – Professional development that builds educator effectiveness to increase student achievement focuses on outcomes defined educator performance standards and student content standards.

	Not Present	Limited	Implementing	Exemplary
Standards	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not communicate alignment with local, state, and national content standards to assist students in meeting rigorous academic goals <input type="checkbox"/> Program goals are not aligned with local, state or national teacher-quality standards	<input type="checkbox"/> Poorly aligns with local, state, and/or national content standards to assist students in meeting rigorous academic goals <input type="checkbox"/> Program goals are poorly aligned with local, state or national teacher-quality standards	<input type="checkbox"/> Communicates alignment with local, state, and/or national content standards to assist students in meeting rigorous academic goals, but at times vague <input type="checkbox"/> Program goals may be aligned with local, state or national teacher-quality standards, but are not clearly communicated	<input type="checkbox"/> Clearly communicates alignment with local, state, and/or national content standards to assist students in meeting rigorous academic goals (NSDC, SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> Program goals are aligned with local, state or national teacher-quality standards and are clearly communicated (SREB)
Focus	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides no presentations on the application of content into practice <input type="checkbox"/> Provides educators no opportunities to extend content-specific strategies <input type="checkbox"/> No online facilitation	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides occasional presentations on the application of content into practice <input type="checkbox"/> Provides educators with few opportunities to extend content-specific strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Online facilitator demonstrates some content knowledge and the ability to communicate effectively in writing, as evidenced in the course syllabus, learning activities, instructions, threaded discussions and e-mail	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides clear presentations of the application of instructional content into practice <input type="checkbox"/> Provides educators occasional opportunities to extend content-specific strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Online facilitators demonstrates content knowledge and the ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing, as evidenced in the course syllabus, learning activities, instructions, threaded discussions and e-mail	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides clear and multiple presentations of the application of content into practice (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides educators regular opportunities to extend content-specific strategies (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Online facilitator regularly demonstrates deep content knowledge and the ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing, as evidenced in the course syllabus, learning activities, instructions, threaded discussions and e-mail (NSDC)
Coherence	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not develop participants' skills to implement research-based instructional strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Does not provide learners with opportunities to connect with others in similar roles (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides no opportunities to build on other professional development offerings and deepen content-specific knowledge and strategies beyond these offerings (NSDC)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rarely develops participants' skills to implement instructional strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Provides learners with few opportunities to connect with others in similar roles (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides few opportunities to build on other professional development offerings or deepen content-specific knowledge and strategies beyond these offerings (NSDC)	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually develops participants' skills to implement instructional strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Provides learners occasional opportunities to connect with others in similar roles (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides opportunities to build on other professional development offerings or deepen content-specific knowledge and strategies beyond these offerings (NSDC)	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently develops participants' skills to implement research-based instructional strategies (SREB) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides learners with regular opportunities to connect with others in similar roles (NSDC) <input type="checkbox"/> Regularly provides opportunities to build on other professional development offerings and deepen content-specific knowledge and strategies beyond these offerings (NSDC)

Appendix C. RttT Professional Development Observation Protocol

Observer Name:

Observation Partner's Name:

Date of Observation:

Time Start:

Region: City:

Session Type:

- ☐ Content Support Session (Common Core and Essential Standards)
- ☐ Distinguished Leadership in Practice
- ☐ DSW / Technical Assistance Meetings
- ☐ Fidelity Support Sessions
- ☐ IHE Common Core and Essential Standards Trainings
- ☐ Live Webinars
- ☐ Principal Training for Common Core and Essential Standards
- ☐ Principal and Assistant Principal Trainings (ITES Standards)
- ☐ Professional Teaching Standards for Principals and Assistant Principals
- ☐ READY Meeting
- ☐ Summer Institute
- ☐ Teacher Effectiveness Vetting / New Accountability Model Meetings
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

What was the primary focus of the webinar you observed?

- ☐ Common Core State Standards and/or North Carolina Essential Standards
- ☐ North Carolina Educator Evaluation Process
- ☐ Formative and Summative Assessment
- ☐ Data Literacy for Instructional Improvement
- ☐ Instructional Improvement System
- ☐ Technology for Teaching and Learning
- ☐ District/School Turnaround
- ☐ Summer Leadership Institute
- ☐ STEM
- ☐ NCVPS
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

Based on the information provided by the project staff or session organizer/facilitator, indicate the primary focus of the professional development session.(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐ Transition to New Standards (Common Core and Essential Standards)
- ☐ NC's Formative Assessment Learning Community's Online Network (NC FALCON)
- ☐ Formative Assessment strategies, not connected with NCFALCON
- ☐ Balanced Assessments and/or Summative Assessments
- ☐ Data Literacy for Instructional Improvement (Instructional Improvement System (IIS))
- ☐ Technology for Teaching and Learning
- ☐ LEA/School Capacity Building (e.g., Process and Fidelity Support)
- ☐ STEM

- ☐ District/School Turnaround
- ☐ Teacher/Leader Effectiveness, New Accountability Model
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

Facilitator(s):(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐ DPI
- ☐ District-level staff
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

Content Area(s) Targeted in this Observed Session:(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐ Early Childhood Education
- ☐ Elementary/Primary Education
- ☐ English Language Arts
- ☐ Mathematics
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Social Studies
- ☐ Arts Education
- ☐ Career Technical Education
- ☐ English as a Second Language
- ☐ Exceptional Children
- ☐ Guidance
- ☐ Healthful Living
- ☐ Information and Technology Skills
- ☐ World Languages
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____
- ☐ Not Applicable: None Targeted

Grade Level(s) Targeted in this Observed Session: (Note: This is not necessarily the grade level of the attendees, but rather the grade level of the people that the attendees will end up training.)
(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐ K-5/Elementary School
- ☐ 6-8/Middle School
- ☐ 9-12/High School
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____
- ☐ Not Applicable: None Targeted

Total number of participants attending this observed session:

Participants in this observed session were:(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐ Teachers
- ☐ School-level Administration
- ☐ District-level Staff
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

Indicate the major activities of participants in this observed session: (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐ Listened to a presentation by facilitator
- ☐ Listened to a presentation by participant(s)
- ☐ Engaged in whole group discussion initiated by facilitator
- ☐ Engaged in whole group discussion initiated by participant(s)
- ☐ Engaged in small group discussion
- ☐ Engaged in small group activity, distinct from discussion (e.g., game, role play)
- ☐ Engaged in individual activity
- ☐ Watched a video
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

Describe the major activities of participants in this observed session:

Quality of PD

	Did it happen?		IF YES: Quantity			IF YES: Quality		
	No	Yes	Minimal	Moderate	A lot	Poor	Fair	Good
Facilitator encouraged participants to share ideas, experiences, and questions (or sharing was encouraged via the instructional design)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participants shared ideas, experiences, and questions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunity for participants to consider applications to their own professional practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunity for participants to “sense-make” (i.e., facilitator explicitly provides reflection time for processing info or its implicit in the instructional design)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunity for participants to practice new skills and/or apply new knowledge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assessment of participant knowledge and/or practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facilitator provided instructional feedback to participants (helping participants gauge their progress in acquiring knowledge or skills)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connection made to other disciplines and/or other real-world contexts (i.e., outside of their professional context)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Quality, continued

	Poor	Fair	Good
Pacing of the session	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facilitator's strategies for engaging participants (e.g., questioning, wait time)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participant engagement (regardless of whether active or passive)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall session climate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Poor	Fair	Good	Not Applicable
Facilitator's presentation(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Session materials (e.g., PowerPoints, handouts)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Session activities, distinct from discussion (e.g., game, role play)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Was exploring pedagogy/instructional material (at the classroom level) a key purpose of the session?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Exploring Pedagogy/Instructional Material

	Yes	No
Attention was paid to student thinking/learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attention was paid to classroom strategies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attention was paid to instructional materials intended for classroom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Were web-based resources used during your observation?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐

Please select the web-based resources used:(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

	Facilitators	Participants
Blog	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Course Management System (i.e. Moodle)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Document from a website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online discussion forum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Real-time discussion tool (TodaysMeet, Twitter, chat, IM, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Search Engine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Video from a website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Webinar/Conferencing tool	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Website (Please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wiki	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Quality of web tools used

	Poor	Fair	Good
Ease of access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ease of use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Worked as intended	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Integration into session activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Quality of web tools used, continued

	Poor	Fair	Good
Resolution of technical issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Quality of web tools used, continued

	Not at all	Somewhat	A lot
Modeled effective integration of technology into practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helped to deepen knowledge of session content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enhanced the professional learning experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How did the facilitator(s) use the online resources? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐ To access information
- ☐ To share resources, experiences, or information
- ☐ To share constructive feedback
- ☐ To seek assistance or guidance

- ☐ To provide assistance or guidance
- ☐ To demonstrate real-world applications of session content
- ☐ To collaborate with peers on a shared task or goal
- ☐ To connect with educators from other schools or districts
- ☐ To organize or manage information
- ☐ To conduct research
- ☐ To extend the learning experience beyond the structured sessions
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

How did the participants use the online resources? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐ To access information
- ☐ To share resources, experiences, or information
- ☐ To share constructive feedback
- ☐ To seek assistance or guidance
- ☐ To provide assistance or guidance
- ☐ To demonstrate real-world applications of session content
- ☐ To collaborate with peers on a shared task or goal
- ☐ To connect with educators from other schools or districts
- ☐ To organize or manage information
- ☐ To conduct research
- ☐ To extend the learning experience beyond the structured sessions
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

Overall Level of Session Quality

- ☐ Level 1: Ineffective Professional Development (passive learning, activity for activity's sake)
- ☐ Level 2: Elements of Effective Professional Development
- ☐ Level 3: Beginning Stages of Effective Professional Development
- ☐ Level 4: Accomplished, Effective Professional Development
- ☐ Level 5: Exemplary Professional Development

Description of the Quality of the Professional Development Session

In this final rating of the session, consider all available information about the session, its context and purpose, and your own judgment of the relative importance of the ratings you have made. Select the description that best characterizes the session you observed. Keep in mind that this rating is *not* intended to be an average of all the previous ratings, but should encapsulate your overall assessment of the quality and likely impact of the session. In your final write-up, please provide a brief rationale for your description of the session.

– **Level 1: Ineffective Professional Development**

There is little or no evidence of participant thinking or engagement with important ideas relevant to the session focus. Session is *highly unlikely* to enhance the capacity of participants when they return to their district, school or classroom.

– **Level 2: Elements of Effective Professional Development**

Session contains some elements of effective practice in professional development, but there are *serious problems* in the design, content, and/or implementation given the purposes of

the session. For example, the content is presented in a way that would reinforce misconceptions or the pace is clearly too rapid for meaningful participant engagement. Overall, the session is *very limited* in its likelihood to enhance the capacity of most participants to provide high quality professional development, support, or instruction when they return to their district, school or classroom.

– **Level 3: Beginning Stages of Effective Professional Development**

Professional development is purposeful and at times effective, but there are *weaknesses*, ranging from substantial to fairly minor, in the design, content, or implementation of the session. For example, participants' expertise is not well-utilized; or participants are not given sufficient opportunity to reflect on what they are learning. Overall, the session is *somewhat limited* in its likelihood to enhance the capacity of participants to provide high quality professional development, support, or instruction when they return to their district, school or classroom.

– **Level 4: Accomplished, Effective Professional Development**

Facilitation is skillful and participants are engaged in purposeful work (e.g., discussions, presentations, reading) designed to deepen their understanding of important subject matter concepts; enhance their pedagogical skills and knowledge; increase their ability to use the designated instructional materials; or to enhance their leadership skills. The facilitator(s) implement the professional development session well and participants' contributions are valued, but adaptation of content or format in response to participants' needs and interests may be somewhat limited. The session is *quite likely* to enhance the capacity of most participants to provide high quality professional development, support, or instruction when they return to their district, school or classroom.

– **Level 5: Exemplary Professional Development**

Facilitation is skillful, and participants are highly engaged in purposeful work (e.g., discussions, presentations, reading) designed to deepen their understanding of important subject matter concepts; enhance their pedagogical skills and knowledge; increase their ability to use the designated instructional materials; or to enhance their leadership skills. The session is artfully implemented, with flexibility and responsiveness to participant needs/interests. The session is *highly likely* to enhance the capacity of participants to provide high quality professional development, support, or instruction when they return to their district, school or classroom.

Notes:

Time Finish:

Appendix D RttT Professional Development Observation Protocol Responses

Table D-1. Session Focus, Subject Areas, and Major Activities Observed During Webinars

Descriptive Items	<i>n</i>	Occurrences by % of 30-Minute Observations
Session Focus*		
Transition to New Standards (Common Core and Essential Standards)	24	60%
North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Process	11	28%
NC's Formative Assessment Learning Community's Online Network (NC FALCON)	0	0%
Formative Assessment Strategies, not connected with FALCON	1	3%
Balanced Assessments and/or Summative Assessments	1	3%
Data Literacy for Instructional Improvement (Instructional Improvement System (IIS))	0	0%
Technology for Teaching and Learning	0	0%
LEA/School Capacity Building	5	13%
Other	2	5%
Subject Areas Targeted		
English Language Arts	2	5%
Mathematics	2	5%
Science	4	10%
Social Studies	5	13%
World Languages	2	5%
Arts Education	4	10%
Other	21	53%
Major Activities of Participants*		
Listened to a formal presentation by facilitator	38	95%
Listened to a formal presentation by participant(s)	0	0%
Engaged in whole group discussion led by facilitator	4	10%
Engaged in whole group discussion led by participant(s)	0	0%
Engaged in small group discussion	0	0%
Other	9	23%

Note: *n* = 40 thirty-minute observations of Webinars.

* Observers were permitted to select multiple options for this item

Table D-2. Effective Use of Online Tools (Webinars)

Use of Online Tools to Support Professional Development	<i>n</i>	Occurrences by % of 30-Minute Observations
Participants were provided with any needed technology assistance to enable their successful participation.		
Strongly Agree	2	5%
Agree	28	76%
Disagree	3	8%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
N/A	4	11%
Technical and implementation issues, including successfully accessing web-based resources, were resolved quickly and successfully.		
Strongly Agree	4	11%
Agree	20	54%
Disagree	4	11%
Strongly Disagree	1	3%
N/A	8	22%
Instructors effectively utilized online tools to support mentoring, collaboration, and/or reflection.		
Strongly Agree	4	11%
Agree	13	35%
Disagree	14	38%
Strongly Disagree	5	14%
N/A	1	3%
Online links, videos, and applications work as intended.		
Strongly Agree	2	5%
Agree	28	76%
Disagree	2	5%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
N/A	5	14%
Instructional strategies involving the use of multimedia technologies and online tools are appropriate to the content and/or intended results of the PD event.		
Strongly Agree	4	11%
Agree	23	62%
Disagree	8	22%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
N/A	2	5%
The use of web-based resources facilitates rather than impedes the learning environment.		
Strongly Agree	2	5%
Agree	28	76%
Disagree	6	16%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
N/A	1	3%
Web-based resources provide participants opportunities for meaningful collaboration and/or social interaction.		
Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	11	30%
Disagree	13	35%
Strongly Disagree	12	32%
N/A	1	3%

Note: *n* = 37 thirty-minute observations of Webinars.

* Observers were permitted to select multiple options for this item

Appendix E. RttT Online Resources Survey

Please select your school district from the dropdown menu below.

What is your role within your school district or organization?

- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ School Executive (e.g. Principal, Assistant Principal)
- ☐ Central Office Staff (e.g. Superintendents, Tech Director, Curriculum Coordinator)
- ☐ NCDPI Staff
- ☐ College/University Faculty and Staff
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____
- ☐ School Support Staff (e.g. Counselors, Technology Facilitator, Testing Coordinator, Literacy Coach)

Which content area(s) do you specialize in? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐ Elementary Education/Generalist
- ☐ English Language Arts
- ☐ Mathematics
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Social Studies
- ☐ Arts Education
- ☐ Career Technical Education
- ☐ English as a Second Language
- ☐ Exceptional Children
- ☐ Guidance
- ☐ Healthful Living
- ☐ Information and Technology Skills
- ☐ World Languages
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____
- ☐ Not Applicable

Please select the school level(s) you work with.

- ☐ Pre-K
- ☐ Elementary
- ☐ Middle School
- ☐ High School
- ☐ K-12
- ☐ Other, please specify _____
- ☐ Not Applicable

Please indicate the online professional development activity or resources you are reviewing.

- ☐ Online Learning Module (e.g. Call for Change, Understanding the Standards, NC Falcon)
- ☐ Live Webinar
- ☐ Recorded Webinar or Presentation (e.g. Strategic Staffing, Standards and Assessment)
- ☐ Wiki
- ☐ Calendar
- ☐ Summer Institute/RESA PowerPoint Presentations
- ☐ Promotional Video
- ☐ Website, please specify _____
- ☐ Document, please specify (i.e. Facilitator's Guide, Crosswalks, Sample Scope of Work, etc.)

- ☐ Other, please specify _____

What was the primary focus of the webinar you attended?

- ☐ Common Core State Standards and/or North Carolina Essential Standards
- ☐ North Carolina Educator Evaluation Process
- ☐ Formative and Summative Assessment
- ☐ Data Literacy for Instructional Improvement
- ☐ Instructional Improvement System
- ☐ Technology for Teaching and Learning
- ☐ District/School Turnaround
- ☐ Summer Leadership Institute
- ☐ STEM
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____
- ☐ NCVPS

Which primary content area(s) did the webinar address? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐ English Language Arts
- ☐ Mathematics
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Social Studies
- ☐ Arts Education
- ☐ English as a Second Language
- ☐ Healthful Living
- ☐ World Languages
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

Please specify the online learning module you are reviewing.

- ☐ Call for Change
- ☐ Understanding the Standards
- ☐ NC Professional Teaching Standards
- ☐ Revised Bloom's Taxonomy
- ☐ Designing Local Curricula
- ☐ NC Falcon
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____
- ☐ Understanding Student Behavior
- ☐ Understanding PreK-6 Student Behavior in the Classroom
- ☐ Connecting with our 21st Century Learners
- ☐ Digital Literacies in the K-12 Classroom
- ☐ Introduction to Data Literacy
- ☐ NC School Executive Standards
- ☐ Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and the Technical Subjects

Which of the following best describe(s) how you completed any suggested activities (i.e. reflection/discussion questions, assessments, etc.)? Please check any items that apply.

- ☐ Independently: Offline (e.g. hardcopy reflection journal or notebook)
- ☐ Independently: Online (e.g. journal or blog)
- ☐ With Colleagues: In a face-to-face Professional Learning Community (PLC)
- ☐ With Colleagues: In an online Professional Learning Community (PLC)
- ☐ With Colleagues: Other, non-PLC setting (Please specify) _____
- ☐ I did not complete the suggested activities
- ☐ Not Applicable (No activities were suggested)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? This online professional development resource...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
was of high quality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
was easily accessible.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
was well organized.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
was relevant to my professional development needs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
was enhanced by the use of technology.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
was free of technical issues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
provided me with useful resources.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
provided meaningful opportunities to receive constructive feedback.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
provided meaningful opportunities for peer interaction.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
increased my understanding of the material presented.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
will be valuable to my professional practice.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
will likely result in positive changes in my professional practice.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What was the most beneficial/valuable aspect of this online resource?

What recommendations do you have for improving this online resource?

Appendix F. Survey Completion Rates, Demographics, and Response Distributions

Table F.1. Completion Rates of Online Resources Survey by Module and Webinar Focus Area

Online Resource Title	Number of Potential Respondents	Survey Completions	Completion Rate
NC Education Online Learning Module			
Phase I: Call for Change	37,856	1,029	3%
Phase I: Understanding the Standards	16,659	1,428	9%
Phase I: North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards	14,756	1,859	13%
Phase I: Revised Bloom's Taxonomy	23,794	3,118	13%
Phase I: Designing Local Curriculum	13,352	2,753	21%
NC Education Webinar Focus Area			
Instructional Improvement System Webinar Series	235	24	10%
North Carolina Educator Evaluation System Series	647	219	33%
STEM Webinar Series	284	30	10%
Content Area Live Chats—All	2,591	410	15%

Note: Webinar registration data and NC Education analytics revealed that many educators attended more than one webinar and completed more than one module.

Table F-2. Survey Demographics, by Category

	Modules <i>Maximum number of respondents: 10,839</i>		Webinars <i>Maximum number of respondents: 1,217</i>		Total <i>Maximum number of respondents: 12,056</i>	
	Number	Percentage of Total	Number	Percentage of Total	Number	Percentage of Total
Region (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=10,253; Webinars=769; Total=11,022)						
Region 1	239	2%	74	10%	313	3%
Region 2	4,062	40%	108	14%	4,170	38%
Region 3	473	5%	108	14%	581	5%
Region 4	1,591	16%	87	11%	1,678	15%
Region 5	563	5%	118	15%	681	6%
Region 6	294	3%	100	13%	394	4%
Region 7	2,009	20%	106	14%	2,115	19%
Region 8	1,022	10%	68	9%	1,090	10%
Role (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=10,788; Webinars=906; Total=11,688)						
Teacher	9,362	87%	285	31%	9,647	83%
School Executive (e.g. Principal, Assistant Principal)	424	4%	151	17%	575	5%
Central Office Staff (e.g. Superintendents, Tech Director, Curriculum Coordinator)	137	1%	231	26%	368	3%
NCDPI Staff [NO]	105	1%	62	7%	167	1%
College/University Fac./ Staff	9	0%	8	1%	17	0%
Other (please specify)	212	2%	59	7%	271	2%
School Support Staff (eg. Counselors, ...)	533	5%	110	12%	643	6%

	Modules <i>Maximum number of respondents: 10,839</i>		Webinars <i>Maximum number of respondents: 1,217</i>		Total <i>Maximum number of respondents: 12,056</i>	
	Number	Percentage of Total	Number	Percentage of Total	Number	Percentage of Total
Content Area Specialty (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules= 10,759; Webinars=896; Total= 11,655)*						
Elementary Education/Generalist	3,237	30%	250	28%	3,487	30%
English Language Arts	1,972	18%	189	21%	2,161	19%
Mathematics	1,773	16%	243	27%	2,016	17%
Science	1,457	14%	146	16%	1,603	14%
Social Studies	1,432	13%	139	16%	1,571	13%
Arts Education	632	6%	68	8%	700	6%
Career Technical Education	609	6%	42	5%	651	6%
English as a Second Language	124	1%	59	7%	183	2%
Exceptional Children	1,288	12%	60	7%	1,348	12%
Guidance	236	2%	40	4%	276	2%
Healthful Living	559	5%	44	5%	603	5%
Information and Technology Skills	340	3%	65	7%	405	3%
World Languages	172	2%	47	5%	219	2%
Other (Please specify)	474	4%	83	9%	557	5%
Not Applicable	374	3%	143	16%	517	4%
Grade Level (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules= 10,530; Webinars=815; Total= 11,345)*						
Pre-K	991	9%	61	7%	1,052	9%
Elementary	4,852	46%	277	34%	5,129	46%
Middle School	2,660	25%	180	22%	2,840	25%
High School	2,500	24%	204	25%	2,704	24%
K-12	578	5%	204	25%	782	7%
Other (Please specify)	127	1%	25	3%	152	1%
Modules (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=10,688; Webinars=n/a; Total=n/a)						
Call for Change	1,029	10%				
Understanding the Standards	1,428	13%				
NC Professional Teaching Standards	1,859	17%				
Revised Bloom's Taxonomy	3,118	29%				
Designing Local Curriculum	2,753	26%				
Understanding Student Behavior	13	0%				
NC Falcon	410	4%				
Other	78	1%				

	Modules <i>Maximum number of respondents: 10,839</i>		Webinars <i>Maximum number of respondents: 1,217</i>		Total <i>Maximum number of respondents: 12,056</i>	
	Number	Percentage of Total	Number	Percentage of Total	Number	Percentage of Total
Webinars Focus Area (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=n/a; Webinars=844; Total=n/a)						
Common Core State Standards and/or North Carolina Essential Standards			436	52%		
North Carolina Educator Evaluation Process			226	27%		
Formative and Summative Assessment			46	5%		
Data Literacy for Instructional Improvement			2	0%		
Instructional Improvement System			28	3%		
Technology for Teaching and Learning			12	1%		
District/School Turnaround			3	0%		
Summer Leadership Institute			22	3%		
STEM			30	4%		
Other (Please specify)			39	5%		
Method of Completion (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules= 10,597; Webinars=695; Total=11,292)*						
Independently: Reflection journal or notebook	6,407	60%	267	38%	6,674	59%
Independently: Online journal or blog	1,440	14%	95	14%	1,535	14%
With Colleagues: Discussion in a traditional PD setting	2,101	20%	182	26%	2,283	20%
With Colleagues: Discussion with a PLC	2,848	27%	216	31%	3,064	27%
With Colleagues: Discussion board or group wiki online	186	2%	33	5%	219	2%
I did not complete the suggested activities	302	3%	50	7%	352	3%
Other method not listed here	150	1%	60	9%	210	2%

* Survey participants were permitted to select more than one option for this item.

Table F-3. Distribution of Survey Responses across Items by Modules and Webinars

	Modules <i>Maximum number of respondents: 10,839</i>		Webinars <i>Maximum number of respondents: 1,217</i>		Total <i>Maximum number of respondents: 12,056</i>	
	Number	Percentage of Total	Number	Percentage of Total	Number	Percentage of Total
This online experience . . .						
was of high quality. (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=10,618; Webinars=763; Total =11,381)						
Strongly Agree	1,898	18%	177	23%	2075	18%
Agree	6,346	60%	418	55%	6,764	59%
Neutral	1,771	17%	110	14%	1,881	17%
Disagree	452	4%	51	7%	503	4%
Strongly Disagree	151	1%	7	1%	158	1%
was of easily accessible. (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=10,611; Webinars=760; Total=11,371)						
Strongly Agree	2,020	19%	268	35%	2288	20%
Agree	6,010	57%	428	56%	6,438	57%
Neutral	1,421	13%	39	5%	1,460	13%
Disagree	870	8%	21	3%	891	8%
Strongly Disagree	290	3%	4	1%	294	3%
was well organized. (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=10,612; Webinars=761; Total=11,373)						
Strongly Agree	2,221	21%	233	31%	2454	22%
Agree	6,547	62%	433	57%	6,980	61%
Neutral	1,396	13%	74	10%	1,470	13%
Disagree	316	3%	17	2%	333	3%
Strongly Disagree	132	1%	4	1%	136	1%
was relevant to my needs. (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=10,612; Webinars=762; Total=11,374)						
Strongly Agree	2,080	20%	234	31%	2,314	20%
Agree	6,105	58%	398	52%	6,503	57%
Neutral	1,691	16%	75	10%	1,766	16%
Disagree	511	5%	46	6%	557	5%
Strongly Disagree	225	2%	9	1%	234	2%
was enhanced by the use of technology. (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=10,617; Webinars=762 ; Total=11,379)						
Strongly Agree	2,107	20%	218	29%	2325	20%
Agree	5,928	56%	339	44%	6,267	55%
Neutral	1,828	17%	148	19%	1,976	17%
Disagree	534	5%	51	7%	585	5%
Strongly Disagree	220	2%	6	1%	226	2%

	Modules <i>Maximum number of respondents: 10,839</i>		Webinars <i>Maximum number of respondents: 1,217</i>		Total <i>Maximum number of respondents: 12,056</i>	
	Number	Percentage of Total	Number	Percentage of Total	Number	Percentage of Total
This online experience . . .						
was free of technical issues. (n=M=10,609; W=762 ; A=11,371)						
Strongly Agree	1,890	18%	216	28%	2106	19%
Agree	5,349	50%	366	48%	5,715	50%
Neutral	1,579	15%	93	12%	1,672	15%
Disagree	1,373	13%	73	10%	1,446	13%
Strongly Disagree	418	4%	14	2%	432	4%
provided me with useful resources. (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=10,608; Webinars=762 ; Total=11,370)						
Strongly Agree	1,930	18%	186	24%	2116	19%
Agree	6,153	58%	381	50%	6,534	57%
Neutral	1,866	18%	122	16%	1,988	17%
Disagree	456	4%	63	8%	519	5%
Strongly Disagree	203	2%	10	1%	213	2%
increased my understanding of the material presented. (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=10,614; Webinars=761 ; Total=11,375)						
Strongly Agree	2,049	19%	200	26%	2249	20%
Agree	6,412	60%	410	54%	6,822	60%
Neutral	1,568	15%	85	11%	1,653	15%
Disagree	408	4%	53	7%	461	4%
Strongly Disagree	177	2%	13	2%	190	2%
provided opportunities for meaningful collaboration and/or social interaction. (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=10,610; Webinars=762 ; Total= 10,699)						
Strongly Agree	1,532	15%	127	17%	1659	16%
Agree	5,509	56%	316	41%	5,825	55%
Neutral	2,037	21%	198	26%	2,235	21%
Disagree	652	7%	100	13%	752	7%
Strongly Disagree	177	2%	21	3%	198	2%
provided meaningful opportunities for constructive feedback. (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=10,607; Webinars=762 ; Total=10,671)						
Strongly Agree	1,461	15%	146	19%	1607	15%
Agree	5,461	55%	336	44%	5,797	54%
Neutral	2,185	22%	195	26%	2,380	22%
Disagree	645	7%	74	10%	719	7%
Strongly Disagree	157	2%	11	1%	168	2%

	Modules <i>Maximum number of respondents: 10,839</i>		Webinars <i>Maximum number of respondents: 1,217</i>		Total <i>Maximum number of respondents: 12,056</i>	
	Number	Percentage of Total	Number	Percentage of Total	Number	Percentage of Total
This online experience . . .						
will be valuable to my teaching/leadership practice. (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=9,909; Webinars=761; Total=11,371)						
Strongly Agree	2,021	19%	205	27%	2226	20%
Agree	6,034	57%	372	49%	6,406	56%
Neutral	1,854	17%	113	15%	1,967	17%
Disagree	478	5%	55	7%	533	5%
Strongly Disagree	223	2%	16	2%	239	2%
will likely result in positive changes in my professional practice. (Actual Number of Respondents: Modules=9,907; Webinars= 760; Total=11,367)						
Strongly Agree	1,965	19%	167	22%	2132	19%
Agree	6,028	57%	365	48%	6,393	56%
Neutral	1,946	18%	155	20%	2,101	18%
Disagree	462	4%	58	8%	520	5%
Strongly Disagree	206	2%	15	2%	221	2%

Appendix G. NC FALCON Pre-K through 12 Formative Assessment Post-Survey and Completion Rates

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory.

Please complete the following post-survey, which will take approximately 15 minutes. The information collected will help us better understand formative assessment practices. The information you provide is confidential.

Responses to the survey will be summarized by a team of independent evaluators-your individual responses will not be seen by people outside the evaluation team. Information collected from the surveys will be displayed in reports as group averages to provide a "picture" of the impact of this newly developed professional development on formative assessment. Thank you for providing us with complete and thoughtful information.

Part I-Demographics & Background

- 1 * In which district, charter school, or educational organization do you work?

- 2 * What is your current position? (Check all that apply for 2010-2011)

- ☐ Teacher (PreK-2)
- ☐ Teacher (3-5)
- ☐ Teacher (6-8)
- ☐ Teacher (9-12)
- ☐ Teacher Assistant
- ☐ School Support Staff
- ☐ Principal (PreK-5 or K-5)
- ☐ Principal (6-8)
- ☐ Principal (9-12)
- ☐ Other School Administrator
- ☐ Curriculum/Program Coordinator
- ☐ Media Coordinator
- ☐ Testing Coordinator
- ☐ Other Central Office Administrator
- ☐ Other, please specify

3 * What do you teach? (Check all that apply for 2010-2011)

- ☐ Not in teaching role
- ☐ Art
- ☐ Career Technical Education
- ☐ Dance
- ☐ English/Language Arts
- ☐ ESL
- ☐ Health
- ☐ Math
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Physical Education
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Social Studies
- ☐ Special Education
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Theatre Arts
- ☐ World Language
- ☐ Other, please specify

4 * How many years of teaching/educational experience do you have, including 2010-2011?

- ☐ 1-3 years
- ☐ 4-6 years
- ☐ 7-10 years
- ☐ 11-20 years
- ☐ 21 years or more

5 * What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

6 * What is your ethnicity?

- ☐ American Indian (including Alaskan native)
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black (non-Hispanic)
- ☐ Hispanic/Latino
- ☐ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander
- ☐ White (non-Hispanic)
- ☐ Other, please specify

Part II-Philosophy & Practice

Please answer the questions in this section based on your classroom or school.

- 8 * Please read the following statements and indicate whether they are True or False.

2 True	1 False
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I use classroom assessment information to guide and revise teaching.	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know about what students learn in my class from quizzes and tests.	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To be useful, a classroom assessment must be graded.	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Statements such as "good job," "excellent," or "way to go" are useful in providing feedback to students regarding their mastery of class concepts.	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Statements such as "try harder," "concentrate more," or "apply yourself" are useful in providing feedback to students regarding their mastery of class concepts.	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students should be allowed to assess their own mastery of class concepts.	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students should not be involved in the assessment process.	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Classroom discussion and discourse will provide teachers with feedback on how well they are conveying ideas to students.	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Frequent testing (e.g. daily graded quizzes) helps motivate students to learn.	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The purpose of formative assessment is to make ongoing judgments about the quality of work students produce.	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Formative assessment is just another thing to do and I do not have time for it.	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- 9 * Please read the following statements and indicate your agreement or disagreement with each one using the scale given.

5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Not sure	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
I have received adequate training on how to assess my students during instruction.				
5	4	3	2	1
My students can describe what learning targets they are to achieve.				
5	4	3	2	1
I check for student understanding daily on a minute-by-minute basis.				
5	4	3	2	1
In a parent teacher conference, I communicate how well a student is doing by sharing the grades in my grade book.				
5	4	3	2	1
In a parent teacher conference, I communicate how well a student is doing by sharing evidence of learning that does not involve a grade.				
5	4	3	2	1

- 10 * Please indicate how often you do the following:

5 Daily	4 Weekly	3 Monthly	2 Quarterly	1 Rarely/Never
I use checklists when gathering information about student learning.				
5	4	3	2	1
I use rubrics for assessing my students.				
5	4	3	2	1
I write learning targets on the board and go over them with my students.				
5	4	3	2	1
I provide students specific information (without using grades or rubrics) about where they are in meeting the learning targets.				
5	4	3	2	1
I plan or modify classroom instruction based on the information I receive from classroom assessment.				
5	4	3	2	1
I give students opportunities to self-assess and set goals for future learning.				
5	4	3	2	1
I give students opportunities to reflect on and share their learning progress with others.				
5	4	3	2	1
I give students opportunities to formatively assess their peers.				
5	4	3	2	1
I give students opportunities to summatively assess their peers.				
5	4	3	2	1
I give students opportunities to provide input on assessment design.				
5	4	3	2	1

- 11 * Please rate how beneficial each module was for you using the scale given.

4 Very Beneficial	3 Beneficial	2 Not Sure	1 Not Beneficial	N/A
Module 1: The Importance of Formative Assessment				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Briefly explain your rating for this module				
<input type="text"/>				
Module 2: Clear Learning Targets and Criteria for Success				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Briefly explain your rating for this module				
<input type="text"/>				
Module 3: Collecting and Documenting Evidence of Learning				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Briefly explain your rating for this module				
<input type="text"/>				
Module 4: Analyzing Data and Descriptive Feedback				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Briefly explain your rating for this module				
<input type="text"/>				
Module 5: The Role of the Administrator				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Briefly explain your rating for this module				
<input type="text"/>				

- 12 What advice would you offer the group evaluating the pilot and modules as they plan the next steps with the formative assessment initiative?

- 13 What does your school and/or district do to support teachers in implementing the use of formative assessment in the classroom?

- 14 Please share any additional comments here:

Table G.1. Completion Rates of NC Falcon Survey by Modules

Online Resource Title	Number of Potential Respondents	Survey Completions	Completion Rate
NC FALCON: Importance of Formative Assessment	25,067	6,741	27%
NC FALCON: Learning Targets and Criteria for Success	25,599	6,732	26%
NC FALCON: Collecting and Documenting Evidence	25,538	6,733	26%
NC FALCON: Analyzing Evidence and Descriptive Feedback	25,542	6,726	26%
NC FALCON: Administrator's Role in Formative Assessment	9,090	4,290	47%

Appendix H. Longitudinal Descriptive Study: Purpose and Design – Except from First Annual RttT Professional Development Report (January 2012)

The purpose of the longitudinal descriptive study is to provide detailed information concerning implementation of both state and local RttT professional development initiatives. NC RttT professional development introduces several new supports in the form of regional Professional Development Leads, institutes, online support systems, and increased coordination with local education agencies (LEAs) on their local professional development action plans. This study will focus on the implementation and impact of those initiatives in diverse school settings across the state over the four years of the NC RttT initiative.

A mixed methods approach (Creswell, 2003) is used to provide in-depth information and a more complete picture of the impact of RttT professional development efforts on local RttT professional development initiatives over time. Site visits to the same schools every fall and spring semester will provide opportunities for longitudinal collection and analyses of data over time to measure changes in the awareness, attitudes, knowledge/skills, and practices of educators at these schools.

Selecting and Recruiting the Sample of Schools

The Evaluation Team identified a *purposeful sample* of schools to participate in the longitudinal descriptive study. The process for the selection of schools began by designating a sample size of 27 schools and determining which factors were important in the selection process. The team determined that the schools' grade levels, professional development ratings from the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions survey, and student achievement should influence selection. Once the number of schools was specified, the team ranked all schools in the state by type (elementary, middle, or high school), tercile (high, medium, or low) of professional development quality (as indicated by results from the 2010 TWC survey), and tercile (high, medium, or low) of student performance composite. This sampling resulted in 27 groups of schools from which the team selected one school from each to be included in the sample. In addition to the grouping variables already designated, the team agreed to select only one school per LEA and strove to distribute schools evenly in terms of urbanicity and geographic areas of the state.

The specific Teacher Working Conditions Survey questions used in the calculation of the professional development ratings were:

Teacher Working Conditions Survey Question 8.1 Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about professional development in your school.

- a. Sufficient resources are available for professional development in my school.*
- b. An appropriate amount of time is provided for professional development.*
- e. Professional development is differentiated to meet the needs of individual teachers.*
- i. In this school, follow-up is provided from professional development.*
- j. Professional development provides ongoing opportunities for teachers to work with colleagues to refine teaching practices.*
- m. Professional development enhances teachers' abilities to improve student learning.*

After the 27 schools were identified, they were each contacted and asked to participate in the study. Both the schools and their respective LEAs were e-mailed a letter from State Board of Education Chairman Dr. William Harrison describing the overall RttT evaluation and encouraging them to participate. Schools also were sent a one-page summary describing the RttT professional development evaluation questions and data collection schedule. Toward the latter part of summer, a PowerPoint presentation was created for principals to share with their staff. Since only half of the schools agreed to participate after the original solicitation, a second round of participation requests was needed to increase the number of schools. By September 15, 2011, the desired 27 sites were confirmed and two backup sites were in place.

Description of the Sample of Schools

The selection process identified a diverse set of schools reflecting the variation that occurs across the state. The Evaluation Team considers it essential that these schools are not identified to those outside of the team, so that they do not receive attention that is in any way different from that given to other schools across the state. Therefore, we will only describe the set of schools in general terms, without providing specifics that could identify individual schools.

There are nine traditional elementary schools, eight traditional middle schools, seven traditional high schools, and three schools with grade combinations more common in small schools (one with grades K through 8, one with grades 6 through 10, and one with grades 6 through 12) in the sample, each from a different LEA. Three schools at each level fall into each of the low, medium, and high professional development categories. Between thirty-one percent and 100% of Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) goals were met in these schools, and the list includes schools that represent a full range of ABCs labels, from *priority school* to *honor school of excellence*. The sample includes schools from rural, suburban, and urban locations.

The school sizes range from less than 30 teachers to more than 100; from under 200 students to more than 1,500. The proportion of teachers who are National Board Certified ranges from 0% to 30%; the proportion with less than four years of experience ranges from about 5% to almost 40%; and the proportion who are fully licensed ranges from 70% to 100% across the sample schools. The proportion of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch ranges from 3% to 100%; the proportion of White students ranges from less than 5% to more than 90%; Black students from less than 5% to more than 70%; and Hispanic students from less than 5% to more than 30%.

Data Sources

Administrative Data

Data about the schools were obtained from a database assembled and managed by one of the CERE–NC partners, the Carolina Institute for Public Policy (CIPP). Teacher, student, and school-level data at CIPP were obtained from NCDPI, UNC–GA, and several other sources. CIPP houses an immense amount of linked student, teacher, classroom, school, and LEA data from the 2004–05 school year through the present for all data sets. A unique feature of this data set is that student and teacher data have been linked using actual class rosters, with a match rate of approximately 93% across the past several school years.

Leader and Teacher Surveys

Central office staff, school leaders, and teachers from participating schools will complete annual surveys. To construct these surveys, Evaluation Team members used the approved professional development evaluation questions, the RttT proposal, and both state and national standards for teaching and learning to guide question identification and development. Based on these documents, survey protocols were designed to systematically collect information about local professional development, state-level supports, use of available RttT professional development resources, and organizational and classroom practices in the school, which will serve as a baseline to assess changes over the period of the North Carolina RttT initiatives. The LEA Leader Survey consists of 77 Likert-scale items and addresses the following areas: quality and alignment of professional development, leadership, and LEA capacity to support professional development. In addition to these areas, the Teacher Surveys also will address the impact that professional development has had on their knowledge of and skills associated with the Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards, as well as how instructional time is spent within the content areas. Data from these surveys will be analyzed to examine patterns in responses by role, event type, and region.

LEA Leader Interviews and Teacher Focus Groups

Interviews and focus groups will be conducted with Central Office staff, school leaders, and teachers in the 27-school sample. The purpose of the interviews and focus groups is to elicit more detailed information regarding RttT professional development activities and supports than is provided by the LEA Leader and Teacher Surveys alone. To develop the interview protocol, Evaluation Team members revisited the RttT evaluation questions, the RttT proposal, and the Learning Forward standards of professional learning. Based on these documents, an interview protocol was created to systematically collect information about current professional development processes in the schools, which will serve as a baseline to assess changes over the period of the North Carolina RttT initiative.

As an initial step in collecting data for this descriptive longitudinal study, the Evaluation Team conducted interviews with the principals of the 27 schools in the sample. These interviews were conducted between June and September 2011. Twelve of the 27 interviews were conducted after school teams attended the Summer Leadership Institutes, but most likely before LEAs had changed their professional development plans based upon attending those institutes. The purpose of the interviews was to gather information from principals about local professional development efforts at their schools and in their LEAs. The interviewers indicated that there would be several interviews over the course of the grant so that the team could learn more about the quality and impact of professional development supported by RttT funds. The structured interviews were conducted either in person or by telephone; interviews either were audiotaped and then transcribed or were recorded via detailed note-taking.

Initial themes emerged from the interviews, and random transcripts were selected and hand-coded, giving the researchers the ability to refine the coding process and determine the efficacy of the initial codes (see Seidman, 1998, for a description of this process of analyzing and interpreting qualitative data). The final round of coding was conducted using Atlas.ti, a qualitative software program that assists in organizing data. Two Evaluation Team members

collaboratively reviewed the transcripts and notes to ensure that all of the questions were answered sufficiently.

Classroom Observations

Classroom observations of core content teachers will be conducted using the CLASS Observation Protocol. Research has shown CLASS to be both valid and reliable, and it can be used in a wide range of classroom situations. In addition, the tool's depth offers several advantages over similar tools. CLASS offers different versions for multiple grade levels, and its 7-point rating scale offers more rating flexibility and refinement than do scales found in other tools under consideration. All RttT evaluators who will conduct the classroom observations will have completed a certification process that consists of two days of training and successful completion of a CLASS Reliability Test.

Appendix I. RttT Professional Development LEA Professional Development Coordinator Survey

Please select your school district or organization from the following menu:

Lea or Charter School number:

My role is:

I have been in my current role for ____ years. (Please enter the closest whole number, e.g. 8 or 23.)

What is your highest level of education completed relevant to education?

Quality of Professional Development

To what degree do you agree with the following statements about the professional development experiences provided in your district this year?

Response Options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree, Not Applicable

1. Been sustained, rather than short-term
2. Been coherently focused, rather than unrelated
3. Included enough time to think carefully about, try, and evaluate new ideas
4. Helped teachers implement the state Standard Course of Study
5. Helped teachers integrate computers and technology into lessons
6. Helped teachers develop warm relationships with students
7. Helped teachers implement good behavior management
8. Helped teachers use data to tailor instruction to students' needs
9. Teachers have applied what they learned in professional development in their classroom
10. Helped teachers improve the way they teach
11. Has been differentiated to meet teacher participants' needs
12. Been closely connected to the district's improvement plan

Alignment of Professional Development

To what degree do you agree with the following statements about the professional development experiences provided in your district this year?

Response Options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree, Not Applicable

13. Teachers are provided opportunities to work productively with colleagues in their school
14. Teachers are provided opportunities to work productively with teachers from other schools
15. of what teachers learn in professional development addresses the needs of the students in their classroom

District Capacity

In my district, leaders...

Response Options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree, Not Applicable

16. Have knowledge about high quality professional development defined by research and national and state standards
17. Have the skills to plan and design high quality professional development
18. Have the skills to implement high quality professional development
19. Have the skills to select high quality professional development
20. Have positive attitudes about high quality professional development
21. Have a district-wide commitment to high quality professional development
22. Support Communities of Practice around high quality professional development
23. Provide opportunities for networking and support in high quality professional development
24. Have a district-level strategic plan for professional development in place
25. Align school-level professional development plans to district plans
26. Distribute responsibilities for leadership for professional development among multiple school and district administrators
27. Use data from teacher performance evaluations to create individual professional development plans for teachers
28. Aggregate data from teacher performance evaluations and use data to identify school/district professional development needs
29. Use survey data to select, plan, and design professional development
30. Use summative student data to select, plan, and design professional development
31. Use formative student data to select, plan, and design professional development

My district provides...

Response Options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree, Not Applicable

32. Support to make sure all staff have NC Education login capabilities.
33. Online resources related to the revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards
34. An online community sharing space related to our revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards professional development.
35. Key personnel responsible for monitoring PLCs related to the revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards
36. A plan for how to use the DPI Professional Development Leads in each region for support

Professional Development Coverage

To what extent do you feel that teacher knowledge and skills have been enhanced in each of the following areas as a result of your LEA's/School's participation in professional development?

Response Options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree, Not Applicable

- 37. Revised state standards
- 38. Instructional materials
- 39. Approaches to formative assessment
- 40. Use of technology
- 41. Strategies for teaching diverse student populations
- 42. Deepening content knowledge
- 43. Leadership development
- 44. Revised state assessments
- 45. Revised NC Teacher Evaluation Process

Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Response Options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree, Not Applicable

- 46. Our district has a process in place for how we will communicate revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards professional development opportunities to all district staff.
- 47. Our district has specific strategies for collaboration as we roll out revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards professional development
- 48. Our district has specific strategies for integrating AIG into revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards professional development.
- 49. Our district has specific strategies for integrating EC into revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards professional development.
- 50. Our district has specific strategies for integrating ELD standards into revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards professional development.
- 51. Our district has specific strategies for integrating Information and Technology standards into revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards professional development.
- 52. Our district has specific strategies for integrating 21st century skills into revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards professional development.
- 53. Our district has a specific plan for using the Crosswalk documents during revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards professional development.
- 54. Our district has a specific plan for using the Unpacking documents during revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards professional development.

District Capacity to support Race to the Top Professional Development

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Response Options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree, Not Applicable

55. Our district has a strategic plan for the deployment of Race to the Top professional development
56. Our district's Race to the Top professional development goals are aligned with state initiatives.
57. Our district has an implementation timeline in place for *Race to the Top* professional development.
58. Our Race to the Top professional development is aligned with and builds on existing professional development initiatives in the district.
59. Our district has a process in place for how we will communicate Race to the Top professional development initiatives and opportunities to all district staff.
60. Our district has ensured that Race to the Top professional development activities are supported with up-to-date board-approved policies and procedures.
61. Our district has designated key personnel who are responsible for various components of our Race to the Top professional development plan.
62. Our district's/charter's professional development team can articulate their role in our Race to the Top professional development plan.
63. Our district has a system for monitoring and evaluating our Race to the Top professional development plan.
64. Our district has a specific plan for implementing the online modules as part of the blended Race to the Top professional development.
65. Our district has communicated with our local testing coordinator to ensure all staff has NC Education login capabilities.
66. Our district has utilized data on staff's technology proficiency when planning Race to the Top professional development.
67. Our district has ensured all staff has equitable access to technology for accessing Race to the Top professional development resources.
68. Our district has determined that all online resources related to the Race to the Top are accessible in the LEA.
69. Our district has specific strategies for collaboration as we roll out Race to the Top professional development.
70. Our district has provided an online community sharing space (e.g. wiki or learning management system) related to our Race to the Top professional development.
71. Our district has collaborated with district technology staff to determine if online PLCs, digital journals, etc. are an option.
72. Our district has developed a plan for implementing PLCs (online and/or face-to-face) related to the Race to the Top
73. Our district has designated key personnel responsible for scheduling and monitoring PLCs related to the Race to the Top.

74. Our district has designated key personnel to be responsible for monitoring and recording the progress of staff in completing online and face-to-face Race to the Top professional development.
75. Our district has a plan for how to use the DPI Professional Development Leads in each region for support in our Race to the Top professional development.
76. Our district has a long-range plan in place for Race to the Top professional development for the next three years.
77. Our district's Race to the Top professional development differentiates to meet participants' needs with additional resources and training.

Appendix J. RttT Professional Development Teacher Survey

Quality of Professional Development

To what degree do you agree with the following statements about the professional development experiences provided in your district this year?

Response Options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree, Not Applicable

1. I have applied what I learned in professional development to my classroom
2. Helped me improve the way I teach
3. Has been differentiated to meet teacher participants' needs
4. Been closely connected to my school's improvement plan

District Capacity

In my district, leaders...

Response Options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree, Not Applicable

5. Have knowledge about high quality professional development defined by research and national and state standards
6. Have the skills to plan and design high quality professional development
7. Have the skills to implement high quality professional development
8. Have the skills to select high quality professional development
9. Have positive attitudes about high quality professional development
10. Have a district-wide commitment to high quality professional development
11. Support Communities of Practice around high quality professional development
12. Provide opportunities for networking and support in high quality professional development
13. Have a district-level strategic plan for professional development in place
14. Align school-level professional development plans to district plans
15. Distribute responsibilities for leadership for professional development among multiple school and district administrators
16. Use data from teacher performance evaluations to create individual professional development plans for teachers
17. Aggregate data from teacher performance evaluations and use data to identify school/district professional development needs
18. Use survey data to select, plan, and design professional development
19. Use summative student data to select, plan, and design professional development
20. Use formative student data to select, plan, and design professional development
21. Provide access to high-quality online professional development opportunities
22. Extend and enhance on-site professional development through the use online communication and resources

23. Support professional learning communities by providing access to web 2.0 tools such as blogs, wikis, and social networking tools
24. Support professional learning communities by providing an online space to share ideas and resources
25. Model effective use of web-based communication and collaboration tools to support professional development
26. Provide support for users uncomfortable with online professional development opportunities

Professional Development Coverage

To what extent do you feel that teacher knowledge and skills have been enhanced in each of the following areas as a result of your participation in professional development?

Response Options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree, Not Applicable

27. Revised state standards
28. Instructional materials
29. Approaches to formative assessment
30. Use of technology
31. Strategies for teaching diverse student populations
32. Deepening content knowledge
33. Leadership development
34. Revised state assessments
35. Revised NC Teacher Evaluation Process

Common Core and Essential Standards

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Response Options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree, Not Applicable

36. I am aware of professional development opportunities on the revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards.
37. I know what students are expected to know, understand, and do in regards to the revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards.
38. Administrators in my school know what students are expected to know, understand, and do in regards to the revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards.
39. I know how teaching the revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards will differ from the current North Carolina Standard Course of Study.
40. Administrators in my school know how teaching the revised (Common Core and Essential Standards) State Standards will differ from the current North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

Math

How much of the mathematics instructional time do students use to engage in the following tasks?

Response Options: Never, A Few Times a Year, Once or Twice a Month, Once or Twice a Week, Almost Daily

- 41. Make sense of problems
- 42. Persevere in solving problems
- 43. Reason abstractly
- 44. Reason quantitatively
- 45. Construct viable arguments
- 46. Critique the reasoning of others
- 47. Model with mathematics
- 48. Use appropriate tools strategically
- 49. Attend to precision

English Language Arts

How much of the ELA instructional time do students use to engage in the following tasks?

Response Options: Never, A Few Times a Year, Once or Twice a Month, Once or Twice a Week, Almost Daily

- 50. Read increasingly complex texts with increasing independence
- 51. Analyze and synthesize sources
- 52. Present careful analysis, well-defended claims, and clear information
- 53. Gain listening skills
- 54. Respond to and challenge their peers with relevant follow-up questions and evidence
- 55. Acquire knowledge of general academic vocabulary
- 56. Draw evidence from texts to support their response
- 57. Read deeply to gain knowledge from texts

Science

How much of the science instructional time do students use to engage in the following tasks?

Response Options: Never, A Few Times a Year, Once or Twice a Month, Once or Twice a Week, Almost Daily

- 58. Develop problem-solving skills through investigations
- 59. Work in small groups
- 60. Make predictions that can be tested
- 61. Make careful observations
- 62. Use tools to gather data (e.g. calculators, computers, graduated cylinders, scales and meter sticks)
- 63. Measure with accuracy

64. Conduct multiple trials of an investigation to test a prediction
65. Keep accurate records of investigation trials
66. Recognize patterns in data
67. Create reasonable explanations of results of an experiment or investigation
68. Choose the most appropriate mechanism to express results (e.g. scientific language, drawings, models, charts or graphs)
69. Utilize appropriate safety procedures when conducting scientific investigations
70. Participate in hands-on-activities
71. Complete activities with a real-world context
72. Engage in technological design investigations
73. Conduct scientific investigations

Social Studies

How much of the Social Studies/History instructional time do students use to engage in the following tasks?

Response Options: Never, A Few Times a Year, Once or Twice a Month, Once or Twice a Week, Almost Daily

74. Demonstrate chronological thinking
75. Ask questions that historians ask
76. Explore changes in communities and regions over time
77. Recognize and appreciate the contributions of diverse cultural groups
78. Explain why people can describe the same event differently
79. Draw connections between contemporary issues and their historical origins
80. Transfer understanding from the state to the national level
81. Articulate the implications of increased global interactions
82. Recognize and interpret the “lessons of history”
83. Identify pivotal moments in world history that shaped the development of contemporary societies
84. Use geography to understand current global conditions
85. Identify patterns of continuity and change
86. Articulate the roles of the government
87. Learn to make responsible financial choices in spending and saving
88. Use maps, charts, and graphs, and other geographic tools
89. Compare multiple perspectives and interpretations of the same issue, time period, etc.
90. Analyze primary documents and other artifacts
91. Actively participate as a citizen
92. Construct historical narratives
93. Analyze cause and effect relationships

Appendix K. RttT Professional Development Teacher Focus Group & LEA RttT Professional Development Coordinator Interview Questions

Target Participants: School-Level: Classroom Teachers, Faculty/ Staff

Introduction

First, thank you all for taking time out of your very busy schedules to be speak with us today. We value your effort and promise not to go over the allotted time. My name is (XXX), and I work for the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at NCSU/SERVE Center at UNCG. I will be the focus group moderator today, and my colleague, (XXX), is here to take careful notes of the discussion.

As you may already know, we have been asked by NCDPI to conduct the evaluation examining NCs statewide RttT professional development effort across the state. Your school/LEA is among a sample of 27 schools chosen to be representative of those across the State and we are so pleased to have your participation. Over the course of this grant, we will be visiting [Name of School/LEA] to learn more about the quality and impact of professional development supported by RttT funds.

Our purpose today is to discuss your general experiences with the professional development efforts at your school and district in order to better understand professional development before, during, and after RttT funds. We will report on general patterns of professional development strategies, impacts, and policies across all schools and districts selected for the representative sample. Our report will go to the Governor's Education Transformation (GET) Commission, NCDPI, the State Board of Education, LEAs and the U.S. Department of Education. It's important to note that in the reports, individuals and specific districts and schools will not be identified.

Your school's and district's experiences are invaluable, and we ask your colleagues to take advantage of this opportunity to make their voices heard by North Carolina's education policy makers.

Now, I would like to briefly discuss some basic features of the focus group, and some ground rules.

Disclosures

- Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to be a part of this study, to choose not to participate, or to stop participating at any time.
- As you heard, my colleague, XXX, will be taking careful notes of the discussion. However, we should let you know that we will be recording in order to have a complete record. The discussion will be kept completely confidential. We will use pseudonyms and code numbers in the management/analysis of the focus group data and your name will not be associated with any discussion results. Audio recordings will be destroyed or erased at the completion of the study.

- I will begin the discussion by asking the group a question. Anyone may respond to the question. We would like to hear from everyone. You may ask clarifying questions any time.
- We expect our discussion to last no longer than 45-60minutes.

Do you have any questions about the study or the disclosures?

Again, thank you so much for your time today. Your responses will provide an invaluable service to assist the research team in identifying the key components necessary for effective implementation of effective professional development to make a difference in student learning.

Overall Professional Development

[very important to read this upfront] When we say “professional development,” in addition to the traditional face-to-face workshop, we also want you to think of less traditional supports like blended and online webinars, technical assistance, collaboration, coaching, and PLCs. Also, while we know that the Common Core and Essential Standards do not officially roll out until next year, we would like to get an idea of any steps that you are taking at your school/district to prepare for that process.

Teacher Focus Group Questions

- **Note to Facilitator: Be sure that participants complete the sign-in sheet.**
- 1. What professional development resources have been provided from your school/district in preparation for the roll-out of Common Core/Essential Standards?
 - What do you anticipate will be the biggest challenges in transitioning to the new standards?
 - What do you anticipate will be the greatest benefit in transitioning to the new standards?
- 2. In what way does collaboration with other educators play a role in professional development training around Common Core/Essential Standards at your school/district?
- 3. How are updates/trainings around Common Core/Essential Standards communicated between the teachers, school administrators, and district staff?
- 4. How is technology being integrated into the professional development training efforts for the new state standards?
 - Are you aware of the online professional development opportunities being offered by NCDPI? (e.g., NC Education Modules)

If yes...
 - Which, if any, NC Education Modules or webinars have you used?
 - How would you describe your experience with these modules?
 - Did you find them useful?

- In what ways have they impacted your practice?
 - Which, if any, additional online professional development opportunities are being offered by your school or district?
 - Describe your experiences with these local online professional development opportunities.
 - In what ways has your experience with local online professional development opportunities been useful? Challenging?
- 5. The NC RttT grant has several priority areas. What effort or support has been provided to your school to inform staff about:
 - Successful transition to new standards (Essential Standards and Common Core)
 - Formative and summative assessment
 - Use of data to improve instruction
 - Effective utilization of the revised North Carolina teacher evaluation process (NCTEP)
 - Effective use of technology for teaching and learning

LEA RttT Professional Development Coordinator Interview Questions

1. In what way does collaboration play a role in preparing your school/district for the roll-out of Common Core/Essential Standards?
 - Who in your district helps you to coordinate professional development training around the Common Core/Essential Standards?
2. How have the professional development strategies at your school/district been affected by the new Common Core/Essential Standards?
 - How has professional development changed as a result of NCDPI's statewide plan for professional development?
 - Do you feel that the suggested professional development is appropriate for your school/district?
 - Describe how the standards are being integrated into professional development strategies at the district level.
 - What policies or procedures are in place to support ongoing professional development around the Common Core/Essential Standards?
3. How is technology being integrated into the professional development training efforts in your district?
 - What webinars or NC Education online learning modules have you participated in?
 - Describe your experience using these modules or webinars.
 - In what ways do you anticipate the learning modules will be useful for teachers? Challenging?
 - Do you think they will impact teaching practices?
 - How do you plan on integrating these NCDPI online professional development resources into your district professional development plan?

- How will your district monitor progress and completions?
 - How will you assess their effectiveness/learner mastery?
 - Will you offer specific incentives for completion of the modules such as CEUs or certificates of completion?
 - Have you provided your teachers with any additional online resources to support RttT-related professional development?
 - Would you say that their experience with online training material has been useful?
4. The NC RttT grant has several priority areas. What effort or support has been provided to your district to inform staff about:
- Successful transition to new standards (Essential Standards and Common Core)
 - Formative and summative assessment
 - Use data to improve instruction
 - Effective utilization of the NCTEP
 - Effective use of technology for teaching and learning

Appendix L. Recommendations from North Carolina e-Learning Expert Panel and North Carolina eLearning Commission

NC Race to the Top (NC RtT) Professional Development Initiative (Professional Development) Recommendations and Minutes from Oct. 29, 2010 Meeting

Top 10 Recommendations for the RtT Professional Development Initiative

This list summarizes the major recommendations from the Oct 29 meeting, along with recommendations from the eLearning Commission's Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning. It can be used as a checklist to verify that the emerging NC RtT Professional Development Initiative (PDI) plan addresses the most important issues raised by both groups.

1. Research on effective professional development should be carefully considered throughout the planning and implementation process. The most critical and relevant research-based findings include the following¹²:
 - Effective professional development (*i. e.*, professional development that can be linked to student achievement gains) is intensive, ongoing, and connected to practice; focuses on the teaching and learning of specific academic content; is connected to other school initiatives; and builds strong working relationships among teachers.
 - Teachers typically need substantial professional development in a given area (close to 50 hours) to improve their skills and their students' learning in that area. Most professional development opportunities in the U.S. are much shorter. U.S. teachers participate in workshops and short-term professional development events as often as do teachers in other nations, but the United States is far behind in providing public school teachers with opportunities to participate in extended learning opportunities and productive collaborative communities. Other nations that outperform the United States on international assessments invest heavily in professional learning and build time for ongoing, sustained teacher development and collaboration into teachers' work hours.
 - American teachers say that much of the professional development available to them is not useful. Teachers give relatively high marks to content-related learning opportunities, but fewer than half find the professional development they received in other areas to be of much value.

¹² A more complete summary of the relevant research is provided in *Professional Learning in the Learning Profession* (<http://www.learningforward.org/news/NSDCstudy2009.pdf>).

- Recent research¹³ has established that a sequence of online workshops, using a cohort-based, facilitated, learning community approach, can lead to increases in teachers' content knowledge, changes in their teaching practices, and increases in student achievement.
2. The RttT Professional Development should move each LEA toward ensuring that ongoing, job-embedded professional development becomes a standard part of what it means to be an educational professional, as is the case in other professions. Fostering this cultural change in schools should be an important goal for the Professional Development.
 3. The Professional Development should take advantage of economies of scale to develop resources centrally, while recognizing that implementation should be as localized as possible.
 4. Local and regional capacity building is essential for the Professional Development to be both successful and sustainable. To build capacity, the Professional Development should focus on (a) recruiting and supporting LEA- and regionally-based professional development leaders; and (b) working with these leaders to implement locally effective models of professional development that not only reflect the research-based practices described above, but also address needs related to each LEA's specific circumstances.
 5. The PDI should make available a continuum of professional development offerings to ensure the availability of differentiated Professional Development that can meet the needs of different teachers, topics, and contexts. This continuum should include cohort-based and individualized learning opportunities; structured introductions to new practices along with on-demand support to teachers in using those practices; and learning community, coaching, and mentoring approaches.
 6. Online and blended approaches should be a major component of the Professional Development, using the expertise, resources, and multi-state collaborative access available from the NC e-Learning for Educators Collaborative. The Professional Development should use a range of approaches and technologies to suit different learning styles and preferences, such as face-to-face programs with e-learning extensions, formal courses via video conferencing, structured online workshops, web-conferences and webinars, social networks, Twitter feeds, and others. The Professional Development should make use of the potential advantages of e-learning to:
 - Provide opportunities for educators who would not otherwise have them available locally;
 - Enable educators to engage in ongoing collaborations that can extend beyond school walls, including virtual professional learning communities, remote coaching and mentoring relationships, and online social networks of educators interested in furthering their own learning in specific areas;
 - Allow educators to experience the potential of e-learning to enhance their own learning, which can inform how they use technology to enhance their students' learning. The Professional Development should use the same types of pedagogy and tools that teachers will be encouraged to use with their students;

¹³ This research was conducted by Mike Russell and his colleagues at Boston College, as part of the national eLearning for Educators program (<http://www.bc.edu/research/intasc/researchprojects/eLearning/efe.shtml>).

- Provide cost-effective professional development that can be scaled to reach large numbers of educators; and
 - Continuously evolve new ways to support Professional Development. For example, the emergence of mobile devices (smart phones, tablets, e-book readers) provides new opportunities for supporting ongoing Professional Development. The Professional Development should include resources to explore emerging possibilities for new forms of Professional Development.
7. While NC has many professional development opportunities for educators that receive high ratings on participant surveys, we have almost no information about whether these programs result in improved teaching practices and student achievement. The Professional Development should include plans for well-designed formative and summative evaluation of all of its components.
 8. NC should partner with other States to make efficient use of resources, especially with respect to the development and dissemination of professional development about the Common Core standards and the student assessments to be developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessments project.
 9. The RttT Professional Development should set priorities and schedules to ensure that effective professional development is provided on critical-need topics first, with sufficient time available for teachers and administrators to benefit from that professional development. Trying to do too much too quickly may result in a return to legacy professional development practices that are ineffective and often overload educators, both of which would be counter-productive.
 10. The Professional Development should be designed from the start for sustainability after the RttT grant. Developing a research-based approach that builds local and regional capacity, engages NC-based organizations in developing and delivering Professional Development, makes strong and cost-effective use of e-learning, and is validated by ongoing evaluations will ensure sustainability.

Minutes from Oct 29 Meeting

Goals of Meeting:

1. Develop an action plan for the online professional development (OPD) component of the NC Race to the Top (RttT) plan. This plan builds upon prior work done by LEARN NC, the eLearning Commission Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning, and the e-Learning for Educators collaborative.
2. Provide recommendations for the overall NC RttT professional development plan, in light of the online professional development plan.

Participants:

NC Department of Public Instruction:

Elizabeth Colbert, Educator Recruitment & Development

Rebecca Garland, Chief Academic Officer, NCDPI

Lynne Johnson, Director, Educator Recruitment & Development (co-chair)

Yvette Stewart, Educator Recruitment & Development (recorder)

Friday Institute for Educational Innovation, NC State University College of Education
Emmy Coleman, Project Director
Glenn Kleiman, Executive Director, Friday Institute, and Professor of Education (co-chair)
Verna Lalbeharie, Project Director
Paola Stzajn, Professor, Elementary Education
Erin Swanson, Res Assist. Also Director, Teach for America, Northeast NC region (recorder)

Other North Carolina Representatives

Ralph Evans, Director, The Collaborative for Northeastern North Carolina
Denise Watts, Central Secondary Zone Superintendent, Charlotte Mecklenburg School District
Ross White, Associate Director, LEARN NC, UNC-CH College of Education
Jan Webster, Executive Director, Western Region Education Service Alliance
Martez Hill, Executive Director, NC State Board of Education
Ren Bryan, NC Teaching Academy

National Consultants

Michael Golden, former Deputy Secretary, PA Dept of Ed and Vice President, Microsoft
Barbara Treacy, EDC, Director of National e-Learning for Educators project
Mary Ann Wolf, former Exec Director, State EdTech Directors Association (facilitator)

Summary of Proceedings of Oct 29 meeting

Setting the Context: Brief Overviews

1. Glenn Kleiman: Race to the Top proposal. Summary of the plans for the four required “assurances” and the addition in the NC proposal of the K-12 Cloud Computing Initiative and the Evaluation Plans. A major emphasis was that almost everything in the NC RttT proposal depends upon effective professional development. The RttT initiative summary table and other relevant materials from the NC RttT proposal were distributed (attached).
2. Lynne Johnson: Current Status of NC RttT Professional Development Plan. DPI has been working with school districts to support their developing the detailed scopes of work for their RttT funding, which includes identifying local professional development leaders. DPI is also developing its plan for central staff and for staff based in each of the eight regions of the State. It is also identifying possible partners to develop professional development resources and deliver professional development programs. The implementation of the Common Core standards, data literacy and use, and the educator evaluation process will be high priority areas for RttT Professional Development. DPI recognizes that the PDI must build capacity for sustainability, and that we need to show that professional development impacts student learning.
3. Ross White: NC e-Learning for Educators program. Partnership of LEARN NC, NCDPI, NCVPS, UNC-TV, Friday Institute, and NCPAPA has been operating for two years and has been successfully expanding the use of online professional development in NC. A summary document distributed at the meeting is attached. This program uses the LEARN NC's *Quality Standards for Online Professional Development* (<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/2747?ref=search>), which are consistent with the

national standards developed by iNACOL and SREB. In addition, recommendations for OPD within the RttT plan have been provided by the NC eLearning Commission subcommittee on Teaching and Learning. Discussion of these was integrated as appropriate during the meeting, and the summary of these recommendations is attached.

4. Barbara Treacy and Michael: Examples of OPD programs in other states from which NC can use lessons learned. These include, for example: the Louisiana Algebra I online professional development program for state add-on certification; the Virtual Virginia to prepare teachers to teach students online; the South Carolina professional development program for school leaders about Web 2.0 uses and policies; the Pennsylvania Keystones program to develop school-based teacher leaders to support Professional Development; and the multi-state e-Learning for Educators program to develop scalable, statewide online professional development programs align to state goals.

Discussion: Hopes and Concerns about the NC RttT Professional Development Initiative

Participants discussed hopes and concerns for OPD system after four years of Race to the Top, including:

- Hopes: The participants expressed hope that the OPD system would provide meaningful and ongoing professional development for teachers, principals, and district leaders to change teaching and learning and improve outcomes in NC. They also emphasized the importance of capacity building and connecting with teachers and principals to build professional learning communities across the state. Participants see this as a tremendous opportunity and challenge and hope to build a system that can provide equity of professional development and education across the state.
- Concerns: The participants see the biggest challenge as building capacity for OPD beyond RttT. They expressed fear about making only small changes or tweaking the system, and thereby failing to take advantage of the opportunity provided by the RttT funding. They fear that trying to do so many things at one time could hinder ultimate sustainability, so emphasize the importance of careful planning and milestone setting.

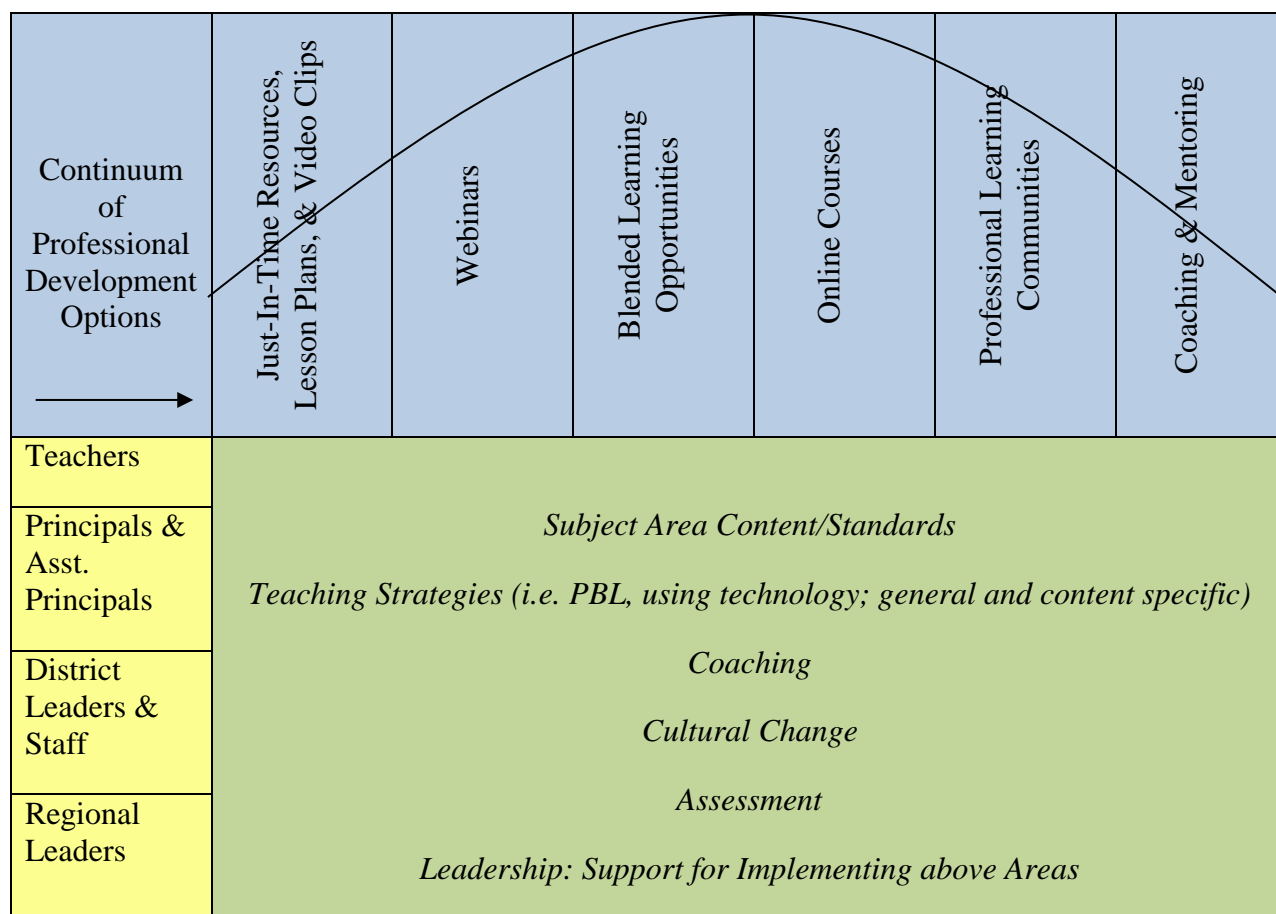
Developing an Effective OPD System

The participants discussed at length the requirements for an effective OPD system and agreed to the following:

- The system should offer a continuum of professional development options (described further below)
- The system would build capacity by training coaches and online facilitators (teachers and principals) to expand capacity and reach.
- The continuum of professional development options would address content, teaching strategies, changing culture, and connection to current strategies.
- The continuum of offerings will include, for example:
 - Just-in-time resources, video clips, and lesson plans
 - Webinars
 - Blended learning opportunities
 - Online courses

- Professional learning communities
- Coaching/Mentoring

The participants summarized the ideal OPD system as follows:



Developing an Action Plan for OPD: Specific Components (all participants)

Note: We started with a focus on professional development related to the Common Core Standards but the group then concluded that the same components would be relevant to other areas.

- 1. Conduct a needs assessment to determine the professional development needs of teachers, principals, and other school and district staff.**
 - a) Modify teacher and principal working conditions surveys to include additional information data and gathering about professional development needs
 - b) Develop "use cases" and a feedback loop to ensure teachers have ownership in OPD resources, courses, and professional learning communities
 - c) Consider the balance of different types of online interactions that will be useful. For example, use cohort-based facilitated workshops to engage educators in learning content

- and teaching strategies; and on-demand professional development accessible by individuals as needed to support day-to-day teaching and learning.
 - d) Consider differentiating OPD options by type of school (i.e. elementary, middle, high school or Title I/high poverty or high achieving)
 - e) Consider each constituent group for most appropriate professional development options and delivery methods
 - f) Develop feasible plan and timetable with milestones for each constituent group, including use cases, analysis of resources, with the understanding that balance of professional development options along the continuum may vary by constituent group (teacher, principal, district or regional leader)
 - g) Develop a monitoring system for use and user evaluations of resources to inform continuous improvement
- 2. Develop a vetting process for currently available resources.**
- a) Engage content specialists, adult learning specialists, and instructional design specialists in the vetting process
 - b) Apply the LEARN NC standards for OPD and the NSDC standards for effective professional development as part of the vetting process
- 3. Develop a Cadre of Leaders/Instructors**
- a) Develop cadre of online instructors and leaders
 - b) Draw upon current cadre of facilitators, professional development leaders (minimum of one per district) identified in each district via RtT, and Regional and DPI professional development leaders
 - c) Collaborate with National Board Certified teachers, Keenan Fellows program, Teachers' Academy, NCCAT, LEARN NC, Colleges of Education, and other professional development providers to identify and prepare professional development leaders.
 - d) Develop system to analyze strengths/abilities for facilitation in various content areas and share or collaborate across district lines to ensure needs can be met statewide
- 4. Build upon the Technology Infrastructure**
- a) Coordinate with educational cloud initiative
 - b) Build upon current state-wide technology infrastructure, hardware, and platform
- 5. Develop Professional Development Resources**
- a) Develop content for continuum of resources:
 - i) Create teams of content specialists to define essential Professional Development context for different audiences.
 - ii) use content that already exists (in NC or through other developers/courses)
 - iii) access content available elsewhere
 - iv) investigate opportunity to align and co-develop/purchase OPD with multi-state consortium for Common Core standards and other similar interests
 - b) Create teams, including instructional designers, videographers, writers/editors, and others to work with content experts to develop high quality professional development and OPD materials.
 - c) Build upon DPIs current content, including short courses on:
 - i) Common Core
 - ii) Learning progressions
 - iii) Data literacy
 - iv) Bloom's Taxonomy

- d) When feasible (e.g., for the Common Core Standards), collaborate with other States on the development of high quality professional development resources
- e) Provide a continuum of professional development opportunities to different learners, needs and contexts, including face-to-face, blended, and online workshops; online on-demand resources; self-paced professional development opportunities; video case-based professional development; conferences; webinars; professional learning communities; and coaching and mentoring programs.
- f) Design online resources so they can be easily updated, revised, repurposed, moved to different technologies, etc. Design in modular, modifiable forms, consistency with technical and design standards, so materials can be adapted for other purposes, delivery methods, and technologies.
- g) Develop processes for ongoing updating of content
- h) Develop innovation pilots, using rapid prototyping methods, to test new approaches and technologies, working in collaboration with the eLearning Commission

6. Develop Communication, Dissemination, and Coordination Plans

- a) Develop a standard model for information dissemination and communication, building upon DPIs current efforts on RttT FAQs and toolkits for teachers and administrators
- b) Principals are critical gatekeepers for professional development and must be invested in the process, so focus early communications and engagement on principals
- c) Keep LEAs, teachers, parents, and students informed about professional development
- d) Coordinate and align OPD, Professional Development, and communication across departments within DPI
- e) Coordinate with Colleges of Education to engage them in using the professional development resources in preservice and professional development programs, as well as contributing to the development of the resources and support of professional development leaders.
- f) Coordinate with the NC K-12 Education Cloud development team
- g) Coordinate with the eLearning Commission around policy issues, such as credits and incentives for participation in OPD and issues of intellectual property for content developers.

7. Develop an Evaluation Plan

- a) Develop evaluation plan to track usage and use ratings—feedback from participants is essential to inform continuous improvement of professional development offerings.
- b) Evaluate the impact of professional development on teacher's content knowledge, classroom practices, and student learning. Self-report surveys from participants do not provide sufficient evidence that professional development programs are effective.
- c) Articulate policy issues for eLearning Commission to address.

8. Ensure Capacity Built through Cadre of Leaders, Technology Infrastructure, and Continuum of OPD Options that are Sustainable beyond RttT

- a) Ensure that principal and assistant principal Professional Development/OPD begins early in the process to allow principals and assistant principals to be prepared to support

teachers in implementing content, Common Core standards, strategies, assessments, and other Professional Development/OPD topics.

- b) Analyze rate of capacity building, short-term investments for long-term benefit, and leadership developed through development of OPD system
- c) Ensure capacity building is within districts and state-wide

Recommended References and Resources Read and Incorporated into Discussions

- *NC RttT Application*; selected sections relevant to professional development (attached). Pages 1-13 provide general information about the proposal and our approach to strengthening the education workforce overall. Section D5, pp. 14-27 in the attached document, is the professional development section of the proposal. If you would like more information about NC RttT, the full proposal is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/phase2-applications/north-carolina.pdf>
- *Professional Learning in the Learning Profession: A Status Report on Teacher Development in the United States and Aboard*, Linda Darling-Hammond et.al. This provides an excellent summary of the relevant research. A copy is attached and it is available online at: <http://www.learningforward.org/news/NSDCstudy2009.pdf>
- *Common Core Standards*: <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/mathematics>, <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards>, We will use professional development required for implementing the Common Core standards as a design example during the meeting, so some general familiarity would be helpful.

Optional background about online professional development:

- *Meeting the Need for High Quality Teachers: e-Learning Solutions*. USED White Paper, (2004). Attached and available at: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/os/technology/plan/2004/site/documents/Kleiman-MeetingtheNeed.pdf>
- *e-Learning for Educators: Effects of Online Professional Development on Teachers and Students: Executive Summary of Four Randomized Trials*. Technology and Assessment Study Collaborative, Boston College, 2010. Executive Summary is attached; full report available at: <http://www.bc.edu/research/intasc/researchprojects/eLearning/efe.shtml>
- *Quality Standards for Online Professional Development*, LEARN NC. <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/2747?ref=search>

**Draft Recommendations from the Teaching & Learning
Subcommittee of the eLearning Commission
Dec 2, 2010**

**Draft Recommendation #1
Online Professional Development Recommendations for the Race to the Top Professional
Development Initiative**

The guidelines for online professional development developed by this subcommittee should be incorporated into the Race to the Top (RttT) professional development plan for K-12 educators.

The committee has conveyed to Lynne Johnson, who directs the RttT professional development planning at DPI, the plan it previously developed for a Center for Online Professional Development, along with a summary of the e-Learning for Educators initiative. It has also recommended that the RttT online professional development initiative use the LEARN NC quality standards for online professional development (<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/2747>), which are based on the iNACOL and SREB standards previously recommended by this subcommittee. In addition, the subcommittee has conveyed the following specific recommendations for the RttT plan:

Overall strategy

- Build resources centrally; build human capacity throughout the state, and implement professional development locally and regionally.
- Take full advantage of economies of scale, by centralizing what can be centralized well, while planning to support local, regional, and central capacity building for sustainability.
- Consider the needs of different types of districts, ranging from large urban to small rural.
- Provide specific information about OPD to LEAs in time to inform their RttT Detailed Scopes of Work and budgets, due Nov 8.
- While much of the professional development will use established models that have been shown to be effective, include resources to test new and emerging approaches, with evaluations of their effectiveness. Don't lock in on one single model—different users, different content, different contexts call for different approaches.
- Leverage the expertise, resources, and connections to a multi-state collaborative available through the e-Learning for Educators Collaborative.
- Leverage the expertise and resources of the multiple groups within NC that already provide professional development in STEM areas, to help address the defined needs in NC and the STEM focus of the RttT proposal and

Developing OPD resources

- Design in modular, modifiable forms, consistency with technical and design standards, so materials can be adapted for other purposes.
- Coordinate with Colleges of Education so that the OPD resources are used there also, and that resources from the CEDs are adapted for professional development in the LEAs.

- Use the pedagogy and the tools you want participants to learn as part of the online experience. Remember teachers teach how they have been taught, not how they have been told to teach.
- Provide for use of mobile devices, tablets, and other technologies that are becoming more common and allow for increased access and flexibility for participants.
- Consider the balance of different types of online interactions. For example, use cohort-based facilitated workshops to engage educators in learning content and teaching strategies; and on-demand professional development accessible by individuals as needed to support day-to-day teaching and learning.
- Design online resources so they can be easily updated, revised, repurposed, moved to different technologies, etc. We need to figure out how to design for ongoing changes.
- Build upon the research about effective design of OPD, such as that described by Mike Russell (a researcher from Boston College who joined the Oct eLC meeting).

Implementation Strategies

- Support the deployment of digital resources in face-to-face settings and in blended learning programs. When feasible, blended learning tends to be more effective than either f2f and online used separately.
- For administrators, ensure OPD makes very effective use of time and engages administrators in tasks directly relevant to their work.
- The OPD plan needs to be integrated into the overall professional development system.
- Plan for the effective use of webinars, video conferencing, online conferences, synchronous exchanges and other modes of exchange, emphasizing two-way exchanges (not just delivery of information).
- Use online technologies to support professional learning communities, coaching, and mentoring.

Policy Issues

- Address issues/policies about credits and incentives (e.g., only counting professional development that occurs during schools hours).
- Address intellectual property issues and provide incentives for content specialists to contribute to the development of online resources.

Draft Recommendation #2 **Subcommittee Review of Race to the Top Online Professional Development Plans**

Given the expertise of its members and the prior work it has done regarding online professional development, the subcommittee recommends that it be provided an opportunity to review the RttT plan for incorporating e-learning for professional development and that it submit its response to that plan to the RttT planning committee and the relevant subcommittee of the Governor's Educational Transformation Commission, which provides oversight to the RttT initiatives.

Contact Information:
Please direct all inquiries to Dr. Jeni Corn
jocorn@ncsu.edu

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