

# NCDPI Regional Support System

**April 3, 2024 State Board of Education Meeting**

Dr. Jeremy Gibbs, Deputy State Superintendent

Ronald Dixon, Assistant State Superintendent

Dr. Beth Metcalf, Southeast Regional Director and Team Lead

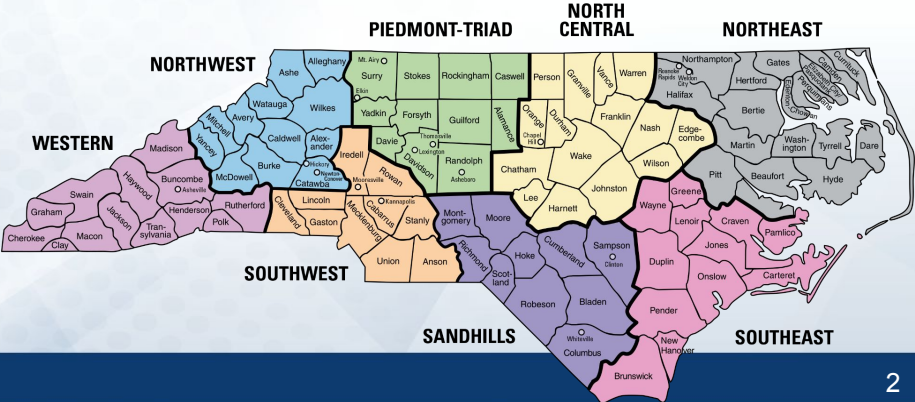
Stephanie Dischiavi, Northwest Regional Director

Dr. Dana Ayers, Superintendent, Jackson County Public Schools

Dr. Charles Foust, Superintendent, New Hanover County Schools



# Introduction & Context



# Vision and Purpose

## **NCDPI Strategic Plan Vision**

To diagnose, customize, and activate departmental resources to support district work resulting in sustainable and positive educational outcomes for all students with a prioritization on support for low-performing schools and districts.

## **The Purpose of the Regional Support Structure**

To implement the statewide system of support through levels of service that foster continuous improvement. This team partners with schools and districts to develop and implement effective needs-based, data-driven services, practices, and processes.

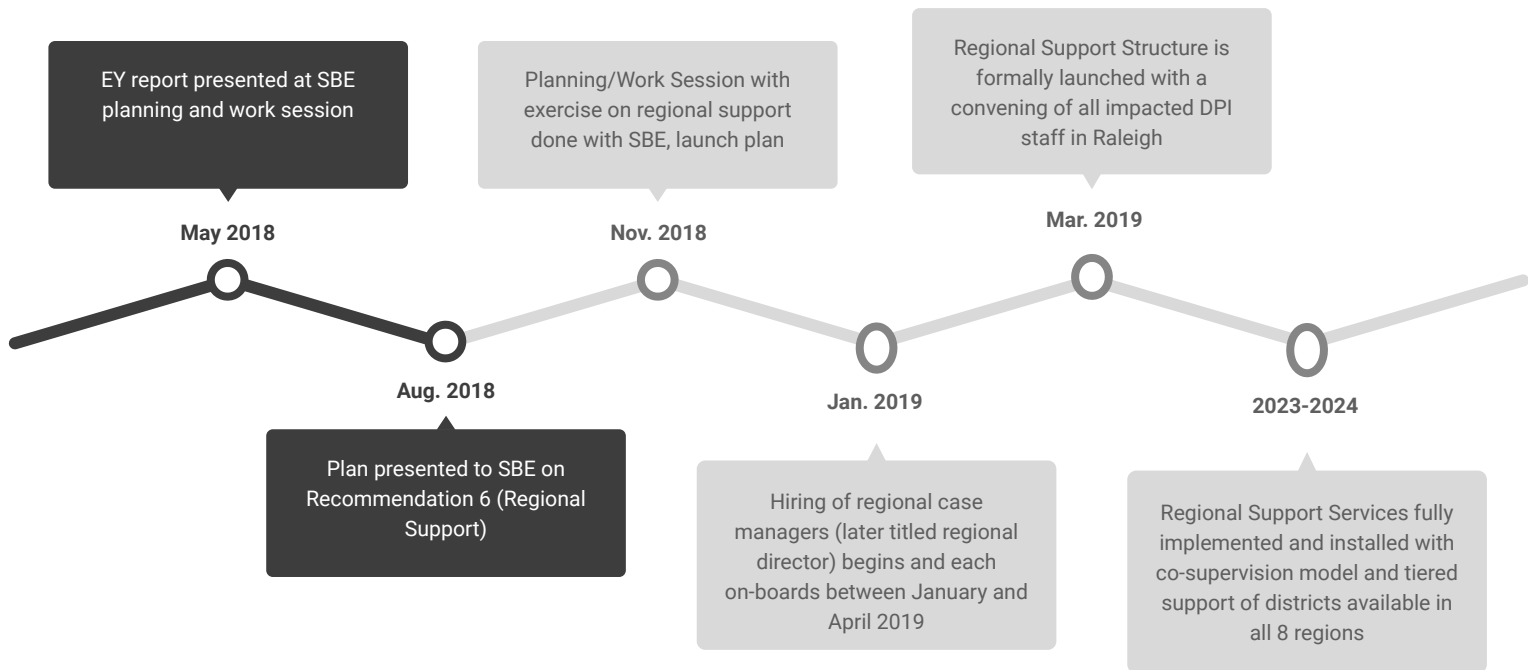
## **Regional Director Theory of Action**

As Regional Directors and Regional Support Teams, if we foster meaningful relationships and provide support through focused communication and aligned continuous improvement practices, then we promote access, advocacy, and achievement for ALL students, educators, schools, and districts.

# Regional Support Background

Regional Support Teams are a product of the North Carolina State Board of Education's commissioned **Ernst and Young** efficiency study of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). The final report was presented in 2018 and included eighteen specific (18) recommendations.

**“Recommendation 6”** suggested a redesign of the regional support structure to better coordinate and differentiate identified supports to local school districts. As a result of “Recommendation 6” the State Board of Education authorized the creation of eight Regional Case Manager/Regional Director positions.





# Cross-Agency Teams

RSTs are comprised of individuals who provide direct regional support and represent the following divisions:

| Permanent Membership-NCVIP/Employee Evaluation 20%  | Itinerant Membership-5%   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Early Literacy Consultant</li><li>-Regional Accountability Coordinator</li><li>-Federal Program Regional Program Administrator</li><li>-Integrated Academic and Behavior Systems Regional Consultant</li><li>-EC Regional Coordinator</li><li>-Digital Teaching and Learning Regional Consultant</li><li>-Career and Technical Education Regional Coordinator</li><li>-Virtual Instruction Regional Consultant (Rethink Grant)</li><li>-Regional Education Facilitator</li><li>-<i>Regional Director</i></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-School Leadership Coaches</li><li>-OEL-Literacy PD Facilitator</li><li>-Regional Safety Specialist</li><li>-EC Program Improvement and Professional Development Consultant</li></ul> <p><i>Other regionally based staff from across the agency under consideration for itinerant membership or can be included as needed based on needs.</i></p> |

# Unique Co-Supervision Model

## **Full Team Member** (up to 20%)

20% is defined by employee time and equates to roughly four days per month for regional needs. Regional Support Team members that are permanent members will be formally evaluated by the appropriate Regional Director.

## **Itinerant Member** (up to 5%)

5% is defined by employee time and equates to roughly one day per month for regionally driven/RD determined needs (typically attendance at the monthly Regional Support Team meetings).

## **Common Goal** (Included in each RST member's formal evaluation)

Provide meaningful and timely support to the school districts in my region through full participation in the Regional Support Team (RST) and by committing to purposeful and intentional collaboration that nurtures interdependence and continuous growth of the team to achieve together the mission, vision, and the goals of the State Board of Education and Superintendent.





# Regional Directors

The Regional Director team develops and aligns systems, processes, and procedures to provide a unified system of statewide support to North Carolina Local School Administrative Units (LEAs). The regional support structure organizes services to schools and districts through an efficient geographically based model. The Regional Director leads the support and services provided in each region. The director facilitates and participates in the design, implementation, and evaluation of all services and school improvement practices for North Carolina districts and schools. Other key duties include:

- Providing a communication loop to all superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and teachers about the knowledge and skills needed to facilitate policies, processes, and practices that focus on improving student achievement;
- Providing oversight, management, and supervision to align work process with other key Agency and district staff;
- Leading cross-agency regional teams and leading all internal and external communication regarding the regional team's work and support.

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| Piedmont-Triad Region<br>Dr. Tosha Diggs | Northwest Region<br>Stephanie Dischiavi | Southwest Region<br>Dr. Heather Mullins | Northeast Region<br>Dr. Catherine Stickney |
| North Central Region<br>Dr. Kendra King  | Western Region<br>Dr. Brandon Sutton    | Southeast Region<br>Dr. Beth Metcalf    | Sandhills Region<br>Dr. Kelly Batts        |

# Range and Flexibility of Regional Support

Regional Directors and Regional Support Team members live and work in the regions they serve. Teams broker and provide direct and indirect support to public school units. Regional Directors serve as the direct day to day liaison to district superintendents and their executive leadership teams. While all areas of the agency provide a variety of professional learning opportunities and communication briefs, RSTs provide a very individualized and differentiated approach to district and regional support. Within the model there are three (3) basic entry points that trigger support from the regional team:

- Low-performing designation (federal or state)
- District initiated requests (ie: customized support)
- Regional support team initiated offerings (based on regional needs)

# Sample Regional Support Services

Regional Directors work in concert with district leaders to design support services that are sustained, intensive, collaborative, job embedded, data driven, and classroom focused. This support is achieved by aligning regional support initiatives with both agency and district improvement goals. For example:

- Accountability and MTSS/IABS co-supervised RST staff have impacted 31,000 middle schoolers in the southeast through a multi-year, multi-cohort regional PLC leadership initiative.
- OEL, IABS, and EC co-supervised staff have worked together to support science of reading and early literacy implementation leaders through multiple regional support networks for the past two years.
- The North Central is implementing learning walks with district and school leadership teams in Granville, Warren (LP district), and Vance (LP district).



# Northwest Principal Ready

- ❖ Professional Development & Networking for School Administrators
  - Cohort model
  - Principals serving in their first three years of school administration
    - Year 1: 42 NW principals & 17 NE principals / aspiring principals
    - Year 2: 57 NW principals (Cohort 1 & 2)
  
- ❖ Superintendents' Request for Principal Support
  - Extend local principal professional growth opportunities
  - Continuing the conversation
  - Customized support
  
- ❖ Collective Outcomes
  - Strive for continuous school improvement
  - Create systems of support
  - Explore effective practices
  - Take action through practical and sustainable implementation

*“Leadership is the art of giving people a platform for spreading ideas that work.”  
– Seth Godin*

# The Principalsip | Leveraging Existing Resources

## District & Regional Support IABS

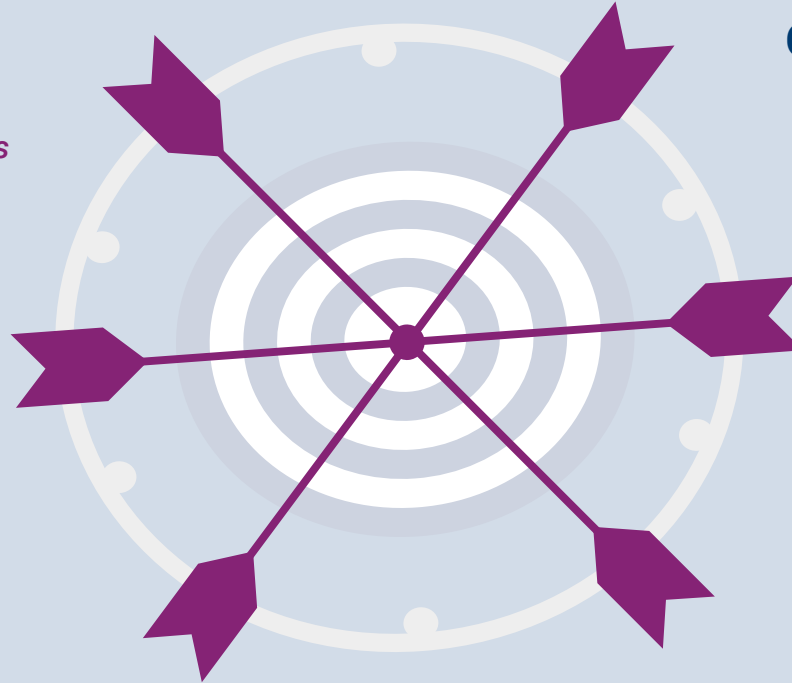
*NC Instructional Leadership Academy  
Systems of Support / Teaming Structures*

## Accountability

*Data Literacy / Data Protocols*

## Academic Standards

*Standards Revision  
Literacy Instruction Standards*



## Exceptional Children Office of Early Learning Federal Programs

*Root Cause Analysis*

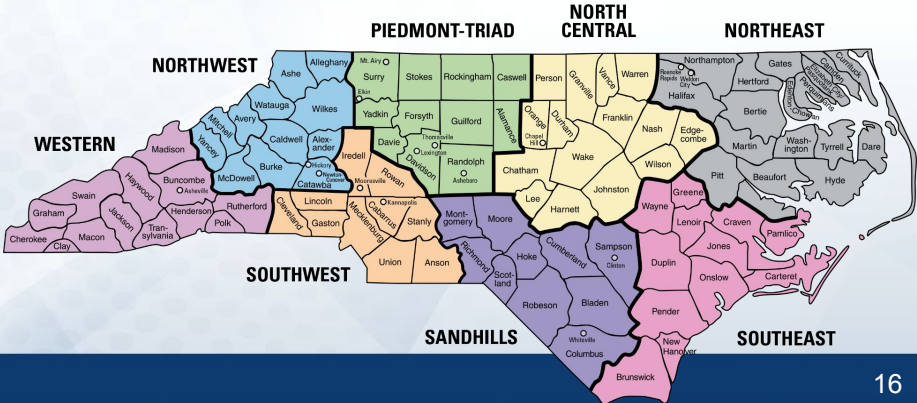
## Digital Teaching and Learning

*DTL Pedagogy & Resources*

## Regional Education Facilitator

*Educator Systems of Support*

# Regional Support: Partnerships





# Jackson County Public Schools

Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

## Why Regional DPI support?

- 4 JCPS schools labeled low-performing in 2023
- Collaboration with Dr. Jeremy Gibbs:
  - Met during the summer of 2023 to formulate plan
  - The Regional team has experienced principals and curriculum knowledge
  - Regional team also brought experience of seeing successful schools in our region

# Jackson County Public Schools

Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Purpose:

- Identify areas of weakness and create plans for improvement that were attainable in a short period of time
- Visit each of the low-performing schools quarterly

\*An additional JCPS school (not low-performing) requested Dr. Gibbs feedback

# Jackson County Public Schools

## Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

**Fairview, Principal Eleanor Macaulay** “Dr. Gibbs was very specific in his feedback about instruction. This jump started our admin team to continue walk-throughs weekly. We get in every class, every week and then meet to discuss what we saw. After the admin discussion we provide specific feedback to each teacher, either face-to-face or through an instructional snapshot form created at the district level. We are looking at pacing, rigor and student engagement (are students working harder than the teacher?”

- Julie Higdon visits monthly. Conversations are focused on where we are (what we have been working on) and where we are going. With Julie, we have also talked about what assessment data we use to inform instruction. Our school already does a good job looking at check-in data and making solid instructional plans moving forward. These meetings include grade level teachers plus EC, MLL and AIG teachers, instructional coaches and admin. Our next step is to have our grade level teachers create interim assessments. The conversations with Dr. Gibbs and Julie have launched other instructional work. Some examples include:
  - Using the most effective Hattie strategies.
  - Our student support team is leading work around the morning meeting.

# Jackson County Public Schools

## Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

**Scotts Creek, Principal April Bryson** “At first our teachers didn't understand how a five-ten minute classroom visit could show areas of need. They asked, ‘how can anyone possibly tell how I'm teaching in that short amount of time?’ The shift began once teachers understood that it was more about student learning than their teaching. The key has been assessing and restructuring how our students are learning. The visits from regional staff have helped our school truly embrace the idea that we are all learners-students and teachers alike.

In 2023, our school was the number one elementary school for growth in the western region, but still we struggle with proficiency. With guidance from DPI staff, we have increased student confidence and independence with a focus on reframing Essential Questions around the standards.”

**Blue Ridge School, Principal Kheri Cowan** “Having a third party of educators to come in to give critical and quality feedback helps shape a better education for our students. Every leader needs to hear the 'hard truth' about their school, without judgment or correction. We are collectively a team whose sole purpose is to improve student academic growth. In the end, our students are affected by the quality of instruction. Leaders must not be afraid to hear hard truths that ultimately create a better learning environment for teachers and students.”

# Jackson County Public Schools

Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Next steps:

- Continue Regional team quarterly visits
- Principals report out at monthly meetings

Data:

- Analyze EOY data and correlate any commonalities between schools with Regional team visits and those without
- Share EOY data with Regional team

# New Hanover County Schools

## Dr. Charles Foust, Superintendent

### Proven Principals of Low-Performing Schools Supporting Principals in Low Performing Schools

Proposal to NCDPI from New Hanover County Schools, May 2023

Proven current principals of low performing schools (or recently low performing schools) have much to offer to other colleagues who lead low performing schools. Peer to peer collaboration among principals increases retention and allows their leadership to be elevated in a way that sustains them in a challenging setting and capitalizes on their commitment to student excellence. Unlike a full-time principal coach or a retiree, the proposal highlights the inherent value of utilizing the talents of strong principals while they are directly serving in that capacity and can positively impact the real time needs of a colleague also serving in the same leadership role.

# New Hanover County Schools

## Dr. Charles Foust, Superintendent

### Feedback Samples from Principal Participants:

- “The pairing of my mentor is phenomenal”
- “There is a lot of pressure at a failing school and how people are treated. This type of mentor is very important.”

### Feedback Samples from Mentor Participants:

- “Our pairing is not my happenstance because I also endured some of the same things in my first year as principal. Supporting this principal in changing the dynamics, we are operating in the same path of focus, goals, building a team that is about the vision and mission of the school.”
- “I am learning as much if not more from him than he is from me.”

# New Hanover County Schools

Dr. Charles Foust, Superintendent

## Other Customized Regional Support Examples

### District-wide Literacy Program Review

- Conducted from January-February, 2021
- Delivered March, 2021
- 263 Staff Surveys Collected
- 85 Staff Interviewed
- 98 Number of Classroom Observations
- 24 Students Interviewed

### Day to Day Consultation With Senior Staff on NCDPI Related Matters

- Phone
- Text
- Email







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