

**NC DPI
School & District Spotlight 11/12/15**

Andrews: **Sandra Andrews, NCTIES Panelist**

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Andrews: So I'm Sandra Andrews. I'm with Lincoln County Schools. And I'm going to tell you my title because it's sort of the basis of what I'm going to talk about. And I'm the Director of Instructional Technology and Media services, and I'm the public information officer. So in my district we have a very small central office. So we have an elementary director, a middle school director, a high school director and that's basically it for curriculum.

So that makes it imperative that we do this as a shared activity. And it makes it important that we pull teachers in to make this work for us. So last year we introduced PowerSchool, of course [ph], and got all the teachers using the grading, and doing those kinds of things that we're required to do. And then we also introduced Schoolnet, and used a train-the-trainer model to do that.

This year we did not have money for the folks that we used as trainers last year. So we couldn't take that route. So what we ended up doing was focusing on benchmarking and reporting. And we had teachers coming in to create [ph] our benchmark test; so for every benchmark that we did, we did reading, we did writing and we did science. We had a group of content area [ph] teachers come in, create the test with us. The curriculum director oversaw them for that grade level. And then we set the role [ph] as a district person for that day.

At the end of the day, we reverted their roles back to the teacher so they didn't have access to the test afterwards. We went whole hog. We did all our benchmark tests in Schoolnet. We did them for every subject. We did them for every grade. And we did them across the district. So all of our students did those benchmarking tests. The first time we did this, I really thought they were going to lynch me [ph]. They—it was a bad, bad experience.

And the calls that I got, it was just atrocious. At the end of it we turned around and we said to all our teachers, “We're so sorry. We're going to do it again.” And you know, we have great staff, and they said, “Okay!” And luckily for us, the second time went much more smoothly. What's been really great about this is it can also be implemented across the district, and we've implemented with every grade level.

We have data that is just as significant. So we've been bringing our teachers in, and we've been looking at that data. We brought the principals in, we did training on the reporting, as well as training on how those benchmarks were created and implemented. And we took those reports with those principals, and had them do a data dive on those reports, and sent them back into their schools to talk one-on-one with their teachers.

So that recording element has been really important. And their seeing the impact that those benchmark tests can have. So they've been very excited the second time around, and we were starting our third round of re-testing [ph]. And they're very excited about having that data. And we're seeing a lot of good results in the classrooms because they're using the data at the grade levels to really do

some formative assessment with their kids, and change their instructional delivery.

And we've tied that into digital learning. And we we've talked about how do you engage kids in these standards that you're not really having good results in. So it's been just a frantic sort of training, and the implementation schedule. But right now we have everybody sort of on board with that. And we have them trained sort of, you know, but they've all had their hands in it. So while it's been a messy training period, it's something that everybody has a common vocabulary, and they can talk about it. And they're actually moving towards doing their own classroom assessments at this point because they see the benefits.

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