

NC DPI
School & District Spotlight 10-15-15 – Dan Plyler

Plyler: **Dan Plyler, Nash-Rocky Mount Schools**

[MUSIC]

Plyler: I'm Dan Plyler. I'm the Director of Instructional Technology with Nash-Rocky Mount Public Schools. Our move to Schoolnet happened at the end of the 2013-14 school year. We piloted it [ph] in an elementary school, a middle school and a high school. And it really bore out [ph] from the need to find a better assessment tool than what we were using for benchmarks. And other programs [ph] that we used before, we didn't get the data as readily as we'd like to, and in formats that we would like to use more of [ph]. And so, Schoolnet was a cost-effective move for us at that point. I'll [ph] just be honest, that's why we chose it.

And then once the decision was made into the '13/'14 school year, we took [ph] it to those teachers that were using it in the classroom, already piloting it and used that to begin our training model. We have an end of the year, two-day, we call this the transformation [ph] meeting session in the district. And each principal chose members of their staff to be a part of the lead [ph] training _____. So, our teachers that had piloted before, [INDISCERNIBLE] mentioned before, created their own materials to match what we were doing. And it made it very much more personal to them. They could see it from their own colleagues as opposed to hearing to us.

One of the biggest things that I think for us, Ms. _____ mentioned as well [ph] is a team effort. I know one of the things, Mr. Eddie Hicks [ph], he wasn't

able to be here today. He's our Executive Director for curriculum support. He and I have worked together to try to get the implementation process started. I had more experience with district _____ to start using it in classroom. He is more focused on the data analysis piece. And so, between the two of us working together, I think that team effort has a big deal for us. As well as using our ed specialists to create our benchmark assessment.

And then from those, now that we've got through the first round, I'll say it, there [ph] were some bumps in the road. Not only from a connectivity. And just be honest, connectivity was an issue with it [ph] as well. We tried to roll out with the teachers using an early-release day early in the year. That was where we train them with [ph] their school level. As case may be, you don't get the whole [ph] buy-in from every teaching using it. Our group was able to begin _____ common assessments prior to the first benchmark in October. _____ you can see that wasn't going [ph] to happen all the way around.

So, the first session was a little more difficult. We got some decent data, but it wasn't exact; what we really wanted just because of, just connectivity issues, and them not being comfortable with it. But the second round in February, has been much better. Teachers are more comfortable with what they were doing. They've been using it more often. I heard specialists after the first round were in DLCs [ph] across the district in schools helping teachers look at the data.

I mentioned before, the data there has been so much better for us to use. Instructionally, we can aggregate the way we wanted to. The company we had before basically gave us what they thought we wanted, and it [ph] didn't work,

were not very [ph] helpful to get what we wanted out of it, so Schoolnet gives us much more freedom to pick and choose how we want the data. Both the DPI [ph] have been fantastic help; I email Dan [ph] quite often. And so, they're doing [ph] a fantastic job with that.

So, our second round has been very much more successful. Our principals are emailing daily, "How can I get this report?" And our ed specialists, again, there's a myriad of people across the district who are looking at different pieces of it. And if we find something, we're sharing it with each other for any area [ph], you know, need where [ph] the teachers need it, we find it, and make it happen.

And again, I guess that would be just the biggest thing with our success, is just making sure that everybody's involved in what's going on. And moving forward, the teachers are enjoying it now.

[MUSIC]

[END RECORDING]