

NCDPI
Teacher Spotlight 11/12/15

Bowles: Donna Bowles, Croatan High School

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Bowles: Hi, I'm Donna Bowles. I teach at Croatan High School in Carteret County, and I am a sophomore English teacher and the department chair.

So Schoolnet certainly improves all areas of instruction for a teacher and make teaching easier because I can find just about any type of test I need for my students, different reading levels. I can align text and questions to standards. It makes the job a lot easier for me. In fact, I don't even need a textbook in my classroom; I can find all the materials, everything I need, in Schoolnet. So from the teacher's standpoint it's much easier. The assessments can be graded in Schoolnet, the online assessments. And those grades are transferred automatically into my—our [ph] school grade book. I mean, it just can't get any easier than that.

For the students, they enjoy getting the results of their assessments immediately. They get immediate feedback. We can then use the online assessments, or I can print them out as PDFs or Word documents. And we can go into the tests [ph], break it down, annotate, discuss the questions and answer choices. And, again, as I said, I do this weekly. So the students are having an opportunity to close read material that is quality, and texts [ph] that are geared towards their reading level, and at the same time prepare them for their English II EOC. If they were juniors or seniors or even if freshman it would prepare them for their NC final exam.

Well, last year I was fortunate to be a participant in the Governor's Teachers Network, and so I was tasked with creating units. So I created two all-inclusive instructional units for English II with all of the materials and resources and assessments necessary to teach 12th four weeks [ph]. So I used those lessons in my classroom and really enjoy the fact that everything is in Schoolnet for me. I can go right in and click on my lesson; all of my resources and materials are attached to that. I can click on the assessments, the rubrics. And that's pretty much the way it is for all lessons in there. So I use—Schoolnet Classroom [ph] a lot to search for various materials and lessons, even just to get ideas for some of my lessons in my classes.

There's some other really great components in Schoolnet Classroom. There is a lesson planner that teachers can use. I don't use that at the moment because I already have an online lesson plan book that I use, but it is another resource that teachers can access and use. Also there are ways to assign resources. That's new this year in Schoolnet. You can find a handout that you want your students to complete. And through Classroom you can assign that to your students, give them the date just like with assessments, and it will then, of course, process that for you. So I really love using Schoolnet Classroom.

Along with that I also use the Schoolnet assessment component. That I've been using since Schoolnet was first published, when there was just about 300 or 400 assessments for English II [ph]. Now there are thousands of assessments and different texts [ph]. What I do is I usually go into the Express Test [ph]. I create an assessment using one passage with questions that I have designated to align

with certain standards. And then every week my students take this assessment. And then I either use it as a graded assessment or we use it as a learning tool where we'll go over it afterwards and talk about the skills, the standards, the close reading that was necessary. Or I can use it to collect data on my students, to see their strengths and weaknesses because that's another component of Schoolnet that is really helpful to a teacher, to be able to access information concerning the strengths and weaknesses of students and how they're doing on a particular test and standards.

So I have found a lot of uses for Schoolnet.

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