



FYI FROM DPI

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DPI Leads Struggling Schools to Success



Fairgrove Middle School is located in rural Robeson County and home to 25 teachers and 300 students in 4th through 8th grade. Four years ago, the middle school was ranked in the bottom 5 percent of all schools in North Carolina. The school struggled with low student attendance, multiple discipline problems, high staff turnover and low morale that slowed student learning.

Fast forward to today and you will find a school with improving student achievement and a teacher retention rate of 100 percent. Discipline problems have decreased and the school is no longer in the bottom 5 percent. The school's motto, "The race for success has

no finish line," now clearly rings true for all of its teachers and students. And Fairgrove Middle School Principal Charles Locklear (pictured above, left) said his school would not have been able to make this incredible progress without the services provided by the Department of Public Instruction.

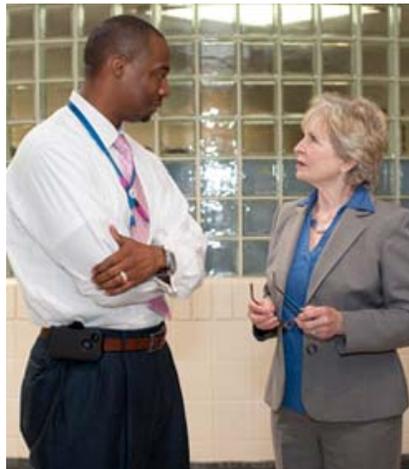
"Thanks to the District and School Transformation (DST) team from DPI, students and faculty feel supported. We celebrate every success together and create plans constantly to tackle any areas of weakness," he said. "The DPI team has helped us focus on all aspects of the school improvement process. The information and guidance they provided on the state's new *Standard Course of Study* was critical. Our teachers now have a deep understanding of and appreciation for the standards and feel that students are better prepared for high school rigor. It also has been a true blessing to be able to learn from experienced educators who have been in the trenches and are willing to share their expertise with us on a daily basis."



Locklear added that the day-to-day interaction with DST coaches at the school was an integral component to his school's success. His staff members benefitted from the [Comprehensive Needs Assessment \(CNA\)](#) process that offered objective feedback about what the school was doing well and what it could do to improve - all with a focus on improving student learning.

"Although we had a lot of technology, kids weren't really using it for authentic learning activities," Locklear said. "Once we identified this as a problem, the DPI team of DST coaches helped us to create a professional development plan that focused on providing teachers more targeted training. This has helped many teachers to turn the corner and become completely comfortable using technology with students in the classroom."

Read more about Fairgrove Middle's success story [here](#).



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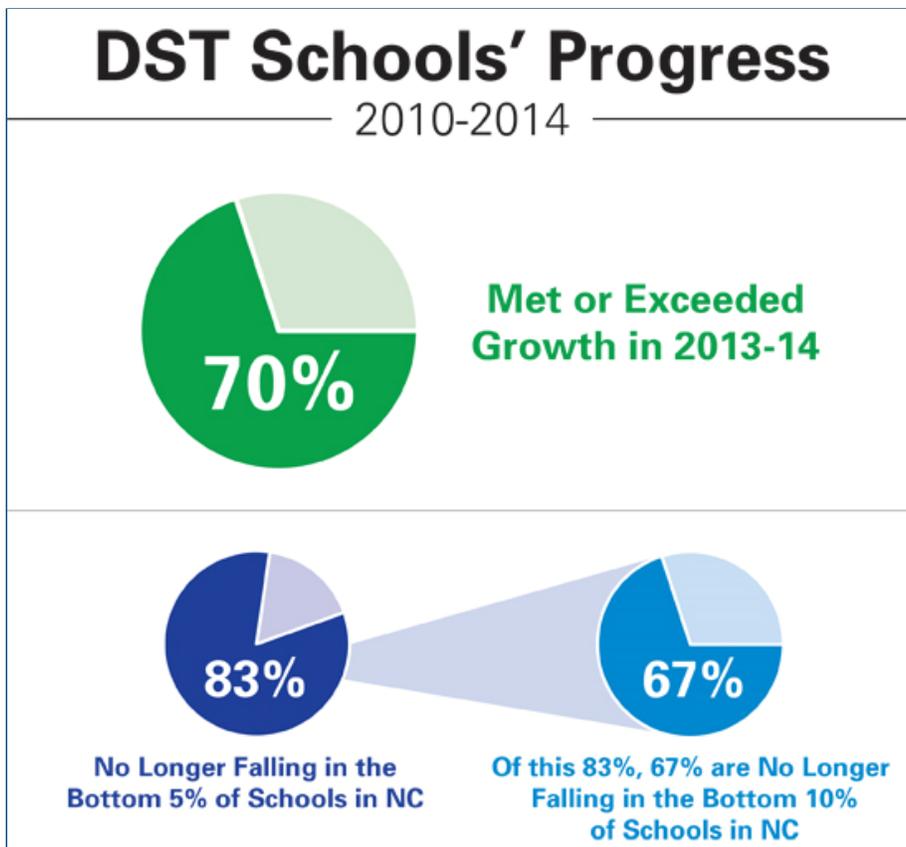


(Above are photos from Glenn Elementary School (Durham County Schools). Glenn is among the 118 schools that have received support from DST since 2010. View the complete list of DST schools and districts [here](#).)

District and School Transformation Division staff members increase student achievement and sustain continuous improvement by providing support to districts and schools.

Thanks in part to DPI's work:

Approximately 50 percent of the low-performing high schools supported by DST work now have graduation rates above the state average of 83.9 percent.
All 12 school districts identified in 2010 as part of the lowest performing 10 percent of high schools in North Carolina have increased their graduation rates over the last four years. Two of these school districts exceeded the state average of 83.9 percent in 2013-14.
Of the 118 total low-performing schools that received services through DST work, 70 percent met or exceeded growth in 2013-14.
Of the original 118 schools ranked in the bottom 5 percent of all elementary, middle and high schools in the state, 83 percent have improved their overall performance and no longer fall in the bottom 5 percent. Additionally, 67 percent of these same schools are no longer in the bottom 10 percent statewide based on the 2013-14 accountability results.
Halifax County Schools has reduced its number of low-performing schools from 7 (64 percent) in 2010-11 to 2 (18 percent) in 2013-14.
To learn more, visit [DPI's District and School Transformation website](#).



(**Note: The first two charts represent the 118 schools that have received support from DPI through the Turning Around Lowest Achieving Schools (TALAS) efforts. These schools have been receiving services from DPI's DST Division since 2010.**)