

Needs Assessment Plan

District Professional Development Needs Analysis

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General Overview

With a vision to better prepare students for the 21st century, North Carolina State Superintendent June St. Claire Atkinson and the North Carolina State Board of Education have developed a revised State Strategic Plan based on the Partnership for 21st Century Skills' vision. The plan, entitled "Future-Ready Students for the 21st Century," replaces the previous "ABC's of Public Education" and outlines a guiding mission, goals, and objectives for North Carolina school districts to align their own strategic plans. The new goals are:

- NC Public Schools will produce globally competitive students.
- NC Public Schools will be led by 21st Century Professionals.
- NC Public School students will be healthy and responsible.
- Leadership will guide innovation in NC Public Schools.
- NC Public Schools will be governed and supported by 21st Century Systems.

The State Board of Education adopted this new plan in 2006 and districts are currently implementing the realignment process. Each school system is required to revise a number of strategic documents used for district planning in order to align with the new State Strategic Goals.

Since 2000, school districts have been required to design, develop, implement and evaluate a five-year Strategic Technology Plan, aligned to state goals and describing strategies, based on district needs. A team at the district level, with the approval of the local Board of Education and the State Board of Education, develops the Technology Plan. It is the responsibility of the Technology program director and Instructional Technology personnel at the district level to implement, monitor and evaluate the school and district progress as outlined in the Technology Plan.

The state provides school systems guidance, professional development and personnel resources using a standard template, a variety of workshops to discuss best practices and regional consultants to assist in the writing, revision and monitoring of the plans. The goal of the plan is to hold school systems fiscally accountable for the strategies they outline in the plan. It is the intention that all district technology initiatives and programs align with the current Technology Plan.

The most current Technology Plan was adopted in 2005 and was intended to guide districts through 2009, a five-year list of initiatives. Since the adoption of the new State Strategic Goals in 2006, all district Technology Plans are currently out of alignment and out-of-date. The state has mandated that all school systems revise and re-align current Technology Plans by Fall 2008 to reflect the current "Future-Ready Students for the 21st Century" Strategic Plan. This re-alignment will result in a 4-year plan (2008-2012) designed to drive planning, spending and improving district technology programs.

Administrative System – Pender County Schools

Pender County Schools (PCS) is a school district in southeastern North Carolina that serves roughly 7,900 students. 500 professional employees (teachers, instructional coordinators and administrators) serve the student population in 14 traditional schools, one alternative school and one early college high school. A number of administrative units guide the mission and goals of Pender County Schools.

The Board of Education consists of a group of leaders elected by the county voters. They set the course for the district by approving and implementing policies, monitoring district initiatives and hiring the Superintendent. This year, Pender County Schools has undergone a major leadership change with the installation of a new Superintendent.

The Superintendent serves as the district leader and sets an overall vision for the entire system, including the areas of curriculum and instruction, assessment, student services, transportation, finances, maintenance and new school construction. She is the “figurehead” for the system and ultimately accountable to the Board of Education. The Superintendent gathers input from a team of advisors including the Director of Human Resources, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Information Officer, Director of Transportation and the Director of Maintenance.

The Instructional Team is responsible for implementation of the Superintendent and Board of Education’s vision for the school system through program and curriculum design, professional development and teacher support and communication with state curriculum officials. This team consists of system instructional leaders including the Director of Elementary Schools, Director of Secondary Schools, Director of Accountability and Testing, Director of Career and Technical Education, Director of Federal Programs, Director of Student Services and the Instructional Technology Coordinator – who also answers to the Chief Information Officer.

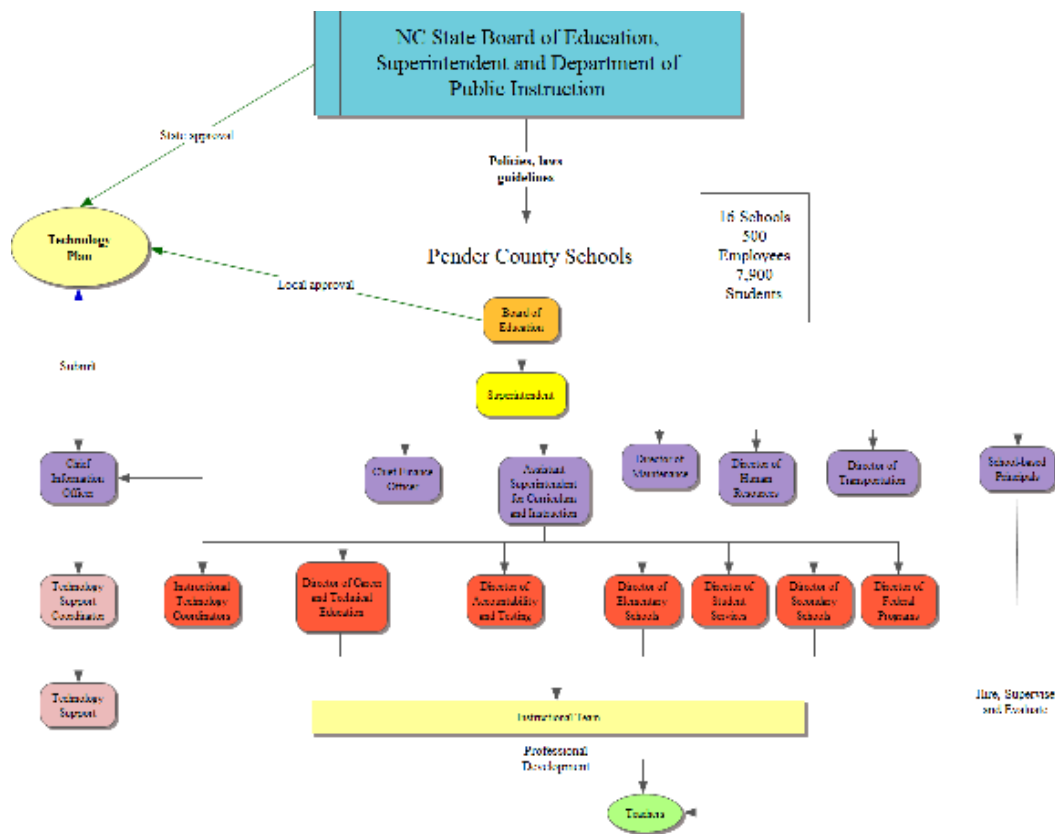
Instructional Technology Program - Pender County Schools

The structure of the PCS Technology Department begins with the Chief Information Officer and branches off into two tiers, instructional and technical support. On the support side, PCS currently employs one Technology Support Coordinator and three technicians whose responsibilities are maintaining network connectivity, security, and updates to hardware. The system has struggled to increase the number of these positions, but, due to lack of funding, have had to decrease them as years have passed. The district has implemented a number of remote network management solutions to compensate for the lack of personnel. Currently PCS employs two Technology Coordinators, whose responsibilities include the implementation and evaluation of the technology plan strategies, planning of professional development opportunities, and coordinating all instructional technology initiatives throughout the county. Prior to this year, only one such position was identified and one coordinator is currently on leave of absence.

“The mission of Pender County Schools Instructional Technology Department is to create the capacity for the development of a content-based classroom infused with appropriate technological innovations to develop students and teachers who are globally competitive and future-ready.” The primary focus of the Instructional Technology program is teacher professional development. To this end, the Instructional Technology Department struggles in the delivery of professional development. The Instructional Technology Coordinators identify technological leaders in each school and utilize the Title IID Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) budget in offering a variety of staff development opportunities, systems training, and teacher support by compensating these teachers for teaching Technology Workshops four times each year, held after the work day has ended.

Each school has two technology representatives, one for technology support and the other for technology training. These are teachers or media coordinators. The Tech Trainers receive a stipend to deliver four mandatory technology workshops each year, coordinated and planned by the county Technology Coordinator. These workshops are delivered after school hours and are an opportunity for teachers to learn and explore the newest technology initiatives the district has taken. Pender County Schools recommends that each teacher receive thirty hours of technology staff development each renewal cycle. The district has also added a technology addendum to the Teacher Performance Appraisal Instrument (TPAI) to help teachers and administrators assess their level of competence and comfort with technology and technology integration.

System Map



Project Purpose

The purpose of this needs assessment project is to align with the newly adopted “Future-Ready Students for the 21st Century” Strategic Plan to be included in the Pender County Schools Technology Plan. For this project, we will focus on goal two of the State Strategic Plan:

NC Public Schools will be led by 21st Century Professionals.

- Every teacher will have the skills to deliver 21st Century content in a 21st Century context with 21st Century tools and technology that guarantees student learning.
 - All teachers will utilize relevant technology tools to deliver lessons that exemplify curricular integration.
 - All teachers will collaborate with colleagues district-wide in learning communities using communicative and collaborative tools.
 - All teachers will plan lessons that include the use of communicative and collaborative tools.
- Every teacher and administrator will use a 21st Century assessment system to inform instruction and measure 21st Century knowledge, skills, performance and dispositions.
 - All teachers will utilize technology to assess student performance.
 - All principals will utilize technology to assess teacher performance.
 - Teachers and administrators will utilize the Pender County Schools Teacher Performance Appraisal Instrument Technology Addendum in order to assess teacher technology competency.
- Every education professional will receive preparation in the interconnectedness of the world with knowledge and skills, including language study.
 - All teachers will use technology to communicate with colleagues and professionals at the district, state, national and global level.
 - All teachers will use technology to participate in professional learning communities to facilitate active collaboration.
- Every education professional will have 21st Century preparation and access to ongoing, high quality professional development aligned with State Board of Education priorities.
 - All "21st Century" professional development programs will include the use of relevant, appropriate and innovative technologies.
 - All technology professional development will be integrated into core (Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies) content areas in order to establish effective instructional strategies for teachers in their classrooms.
- Every educational professional uses data to inform decisions.
 - All teachers will utilize NCWise data reporting tools to analyze data and make instructional decisions in their schools and classrooms.

This goal was chosen since it most closely relates to the Technology Coordinators’ responsibility of designing, developing and implementing district professional development. The strategies identified for this goal also affect fund allocation from the EETT budget, described in the previous section.

Strategies will be aligned to the objectives listed under the goal and will outline optimal performance based needs identified by the district administrative unit, district instructional team, district technology leaders and school teams including administrators and teachers. Allison Rossett’s model outlined in Training Needs Assessment (1987) will be used to guide our assessment.

Needs Assessment Planning

Context			
Resources		Constraints	
People	Superintendent Assistant Superintendent Chief Information Officer Instructional Team Technology Trainers Principals Teachers Regional Instructional Technology Consultant	People	Teachers must be contacted/interviewed at their convenience (before/after school, planning periods)
Financial	EETT Budget can be used to finance Professional Development initiatives	Financial	EETT Budget has decreased over past 3 years and will not likely exceed \$14,000 for entire district.
Equipment/Tools	SurveyMonkey - used for online survey SPSS - for data analysis	Equipment/Tools	
Materials	Previous Technology Plan State Documents State Strategic Goals School Technology Needs Assessment (STNA)	Materials	

Purposes		
Description	Status	Sources
Optimals	Need more specific optimals More specific optimals developed (2/29)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent Interview • Assistant Superintendent Interview • Technology Coordinator Interview
Actuals	Need progress actuals Need teacher skills actuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Technology Plan Evaluation • Teacher survey • Instructional Technology Assistance Team Focus Group • Principal Focus Group
Feelings	Need stakeholder attitudes/feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher survey • Instructional Technology Assistance Team Focus Group • Principal Focus Group
Causes	State strategic goals have changed making Technology Plan out of alignment - known	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Strategic Plan • Needs assessment
Solutions	How must Technology Plan Strategies change to align with new state goals? How will professional development strategies to meet the new strategies? How will these initiatives be funded?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs Assessment Results • State Strategic Plan

Stage Planning

Stage	Stages/Techniques	Tools and Sources
1	Extant Data Analysis	State Board of Education Biennial Report 2006 District Profile 2005-2009 PCS Technology Plan
2	Extant Data Analysis	Professional Development System (Previous Trainings)
3	Needs Assessment	Interview with Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent to determine professional development optimals.
4	Subject Matter Analysis	Instructional Technology Coordinator Regional Instructional Technology Consultant
5	Needs Assessment	District Administration Interview Focus Group – Instructional Technology Assistance Team Focus Group – District Instructional Team
6	Needs Assessment	Teacher Survey

Data Collection Plan and Timeline

Stage/Task	Begin Date	End Date
Needs Assessment Collection	2/7/2008	3/15/2008
Stage I - Extant Data Analysis	2/7/2008	2/14/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Profile Analysis 	2/7/2008	2/14/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous Technology Plan Analysis 	2/7/2008	2/14/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Biennial Report Analysis 	2/7/2008	2/14/2008
Stage II - Extant Data Analysis	2/26/2008	2/27/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development Actuals 	2/26/2008	2/27/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Needs Assessment Plan 	2/11/2008	2/14/2008
Submit Needs Assessment Plan	2/14/2008	2/15/2008
Stage III - Needs Assessment - District Administrative Unit	2/19/2008	3/14/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with Superintendent 	2/19/2008	2/23/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop Agenda 	2/19/2008	2/20/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct Interview 	2/19/2008	2/20/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Report Findings 	2/21/2008	2/23/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with Assistant Superintendent 	2/19/2008	2/23/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop Agenda 	2/19/2008	2/23/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct Interview 	2/19/2008	2/20/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Report Findings 	2/21/2008	2/23/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Technology Assistance Team Focus Group 	2/28/2008	3/6/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop Agenda 	2/29/2008	2/29/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Invite to Virtual Meeting 	2/28/2008	2/29/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct Focus Group Meeting 	3/4/2008	3/5/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Report Focus Group Findings 	3/5/2008	3/6/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Group – District Instructional Team 	3/12/2008	3/14/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop Focus Group Agenda 	3/12/2008	3/14/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct Focus Group 	3/12/2008	3/13/2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Report Findings 	3/13/2008	3/14/2008
Stage IV – Subject Matter Analysis - Instructional Technology	2/28/2008	2/29/2008

Coordinator/Regional Consultant		
Stage V - Needs Assessment - School-based	2/18/2008	3/15/2008
• Teacher Survey	2/18/2008	3/15/2008
○ Develop Teacher Survey	2/29/2008	3/5/2008
▪ Enter Teacher Survey into Surveymonkey Delivery System	3/6/2008	3/6/2008
▪ Distribute Teacher Survey	3/6/2008	3/6/2008
○ Collect Teacher Survey Data	3/10/2008	3/11/2008
○ Analyze Teacher Survey Data	3/12/2008	3/15/2008
Stage VI - Interviews - Pincipals	2/27/2008	3/12/2008
• Develop Agenda	3/5/2008	3/12/2008
• Conduct Interviews	3/6/2008	3/12/2008
• Report Findings	3/12/2008	3/14/2008
Needs Assessment Report	3/17/2008	3/27/2008

References

Box, J. (2007). The Partnership for 21st Century Skills. Retrieved February 28, 2008, from The Partnership for 21st Century Skills Web site: <http://www.21stcenturyskills.org>

Education, N. C. (2007). *State Superintendent's Biennial Report*. Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.