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## High Honors for Reading Research to Classroom Practice



The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI) Exceptional Children Division (ECD), through the application submitted by the staff of the North Carolina State Improvement Project (NC SIP), has received Accreditation from the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) for the Reading Research to Classroom Practice (RRtCP) 40-hour course on the Science of Reading (SoR). This course currently has approximately 300 certified instructors located regionally across the state.

NC DPI is the first state education agency to be accredited by IDA. As part of IDA Accreditation requirements, the NC SIP regional Literacy Consultants have all taken and passed the Knowledge and Practice Exam for Effective Reading Instruction (KPEERI) which measures an educator's knowledge of the principles and practices of Structured Literacy™. IDA accredits the NC SIP RRtCP course for a period of five years due to its strong alignment with the IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards (KPS) for Teachers of Reading and recognized the thought and planning that went into its development.

From the IDA Accreditation Review Team - “Your course(s) serves as a role model for other states’ Department of Education offices to follow in order to provide educators throughout the United States the knowledge and practice standards required for expert literacy instruction. The team found that collectively the Reading Research to Classroom Practice course met all of the requirements for Accreditation through the International Dyslexia Association.”





## A Celebration and Farewell



We are pleased to announce that the **NC SIP has been successfully funded for the fifth time since 2000** by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs. Stay tuned for more details about plans for the next five years!

The Program Improvement and Professional Development section would like to congratulate Dr. Paula Crawford on her retirement August 1st! She has been instrumental in leading the work of the NC SIP grant to support administrators, educators, and students across the state for over 11 years - first as the personnel development and statewide math consultant, then as the Section Chief and NC SIP Project Director. During this time, she excelled, receiving awards including the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning Gordon R. Alley Partnership Award addressing adolescent literacy in NC, and leading many successful initiatives including the International Dyslexia Association Accreditation, and two successfully funded State Personnel Development Grants.

Dr. Crawford thank you for your service and leadership to support students with disabilities in North Carolina.

### Biennial Recruitment and Retention Summit

The biennial Recruitment and Retention Special Educators Summit was held virtually on March 26, 2021. The planning committee for the summit was comprised of DPI EC Division staff: Dr. Paula Crawford, Carol Moffitt, Kim Balcerek- Hash, Regi Bolen, Glendora Hagins, Bethany Mayo, Virginia Madorin, Maureen Kaniuka, Traci Royal, Ginger Starling, Alexis Utz and professors from IHE's that prepare special education teachers in the state: Dr. Natasha Veale, Greensboro College; Dr. Charmion Rush, Western Carolina University; Dr. Tammy Barron, Western Carolina University; Dr. Nancy Gryder, Lees-McRae College; Dr. Pam Vesley, Lees-McRae College; Dr. Jennifer Diliberto, UNC Chapel Hill; Dr. Kimberly Fitchett-Bazemore, Elizabeth City State University; Dr. Morghan Bosch, Barton College and Dr. Donna Sacco from American Institute for Research.

There were 280 participants registered for the one-day event with a target audience of HR Directors, EC Directors, principals selected by the district, as well as NC Institutions of Higher Education (IHE).

The opening session included a welcome by Dr. Paula Crawford, EC Division Section Chief and Sherry H. Thomas, EC Division Director. Noted morning speakers included Dr. Anthony Jackson, former Superintendent, Vance County Schools; Maureen Stover, North Carolina 2020 Burroughs Wellcome Fund Teacher of the Year; and Serena Current, Second Year Exceptional Children Teacher at Washington High School in Beaufort County Schools.

The morning keynote speaker, Dr. Mary Brownell, Director of the CEEDAR Center, delivered a presentation titled "Attract, Prepare, and Retain: A Three-Part Strategy for Addressing Shortages". Dr. Brownell discussed research-based strategies that underlie and evidence-based approach to ensuring that every student with a disability has an effective teacher.

The afternoon keynote speaker, Dr. Cathy Kea, Professor of Special Education at NC A&T University, presented "Leavers, Movers or Stayers: It's Not About Recruitment, but Retention!" Dr. Kea shared a sense of urgency remains in the retention of early career special educators and that highly effective induction and mentoring programs are necessary to retain a diverse teaching pool.

In addition to the notable keynote and opening speakers, the summit featured three different breakout session opportunities for a total of 35 breakout sessions. Breakout session presenters were from across the country and many from within our great state. Topics were varied so that participants could select the ones that met the needs of their districts, schools or IHE's. All of our sessions were recorded to allow participants to view and provide resources for stakeholders who were not able to attend. Please address any questions about the summit to Carol Moffitt, [Carol.Moffitt@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:Carol.Moffitt@dpi.nc.gov).

## Spring Network Conference 2021

The 2021 NC SIP Spring Network Conference was a success this year as our first ever virtual conference. Superintendent Catherine Truitt, Deputy Superintendent Dr. Catherine Edmonds, and Exceptional Children Director Sherry H. Thomas provided welcome messages to kick off the event. We were also thrilled to have researchers from the field present our keynote sessions. Dr. John Almarode, Dr. Caryn Ward, Dr. Marci Rock, and Dr. Louisa Moats provided us such engaging and informative sessions. We also had the pleasure to hear from our NC SIP Regional Coaches in the afternoons with their Content Knowledge Development Sessions. These sessions are all available to view by accessing each day's agenda on the [SNC event site](#). On our Leadership Day, we had a Town Hall event where Dr. Paula Crawford, Arlene Russell, and Jen Averitt discussed data and polled partners regarding data collection and other NC SIP critical components. To see the poll results. [view the link below](#).

### Going the Distance

- Honoring our Past
- Celebrating our Present
- Embracing our Future



[SNC EVENT SITE](#)

[TOWN HALL POLL RESULTS](#)

## INTERESTED IN BECOMING A CERTIFIED STRUCTURED LITERACY TEACHER?

The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) and the [Center for Effective Reading Instruction](#) (CERI) have joined together and created a process for individuals to become certified as Structured Literacy Classroom Teachers. The purpose of this endeavor is to encourage “preparation and designation of highly knowledgeable and skilled teachers”.

IDA wrote [The Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading](#) which reflect what strong reading teachers should know and teach to their students. These are the standards of which Reading Research to Classroom Practice had to demonstrate in order to receive accreditation from IDA.

An additional step that the PIPD consultants had to complete for the course accreditation, was to become a certified structured literacy teacher by demonstrating their strong knowledge for teaching reading. To receive this certified title, candidates must apply to take, and successfully pass the KPEERI, Knowledge and Practice Exam Effective Reading Instruction.

The KPEERI it is a comprehensive assessment that measures an educator's knowledge of the principles and practices of Structured Literacy™. General information related to the exam can be found in the [KPEERI Handbook](#).

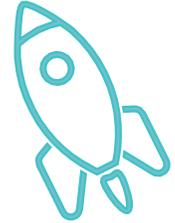
Individuals interested in the Classroom Teacher certification can submit an [online application form](#). A copy of a diploma or transcript documenting that the applicant holds a bachelor's degree or higher is required.

A discount code has been configured to properly adjust the cost of the exam for our NC SIP applicants. Enter the code “*NCAROLINA2021*” when checking out and that will adjust the cost of the exam to \$83.00. NC SIP funds may be used to pay the exam fee at this reduced rate.

NC SIP highly encourages instructors of RRtCP to seek out this certification. These instructors are well prepared to pass this exam.

## FOM and RRtCP Offering Launched During Covid-19 Pandemic

Making strides for equity of access to quality professional development, the Program Improvement and Professional Development section undertook the arduous task of moving Reading Research to Classroom Practice (RRtCP) and Foundations of Mathematics (FoM) to a blended course model. Course planning and construction began in 2019 pre-pandemic. This forethought allowed for the rollout of the blended model in 2020 to provide an opportunity for those that began the RRtCP or FoM in a PSU (Public School Units) pre-pandemic to complete days three through five of the traditional courses. This offering served 105 RRtCP and 24 FoM participants from around the state. Feedback from course participants indicated a strong agreement that the Canvas module instruction was clear and easy to follow. One participant noted, *“I thought the online format was setup in a very user-friendly manner and the lessons progressed in a good flow.”* Additionally, participants strongly agree the live sessions provided enough interactive opportunities to maintain engagement. One participant shared, *“the instructors did a great job with segmenting the different topics/portions of the training. It was nice to have different presenters throughout.”*



Based on the course feedback and total number of participants that completed this learning opportunity, the offerings were a success! This opportunity allowed the PIPD team to construct a full blended model utilizing Canvas, an online learning platform, and virtual face-to-face sessions through WebEx (an online meeting platform). Spring of 2021 we celebrated our first cohorts that completed the full blended courses with virtual live sessions. Future offerings of the blended live virtual and blended in-person face-to-face are planned for the summer and fall of 2021.

For more information on the blended RRtCP and FoM, please visit the following link:

### Blended FoM and RRtCP Overview

#### ANNOUNCING THREE FORMATS OF FoM AND RRtCP

Announcing three formats of delivery of the Exceptional Children Division’s Program Improvement and Professional Development courses International Dyslexia Association (IDA) accredited - *Reading Research to Classroom Practice* (RRtCP), which covers the Science of Reading with practical classroom application of content, and *Foundations of Mathematics* (FoM), covering research informed mathematics instruction with practical applications of the content in the classroom. It is with immense pleasure to announce a blended model using Canvas, an online learning platform, for asynchronous learning with live virtual or live face-to-face facilitated learning. The traditional five-day face-to-face offering remains available. Please visit the [NCSIP.org/events](https://NCSIP.org/events) calendar for session offerings taking place across the state.

- RRtCP and FoM 5 day face-to-face
- RRtCP and FoM Canvas modules blended with 3 Live face-to-face days
- RRtCP and FoM Canvas modules blended with 3 Virtual Live days through an online meeting platform



## Spotlighting our Best Practice Site



This past year in Pitt County Schools we worked diligently to continue to support our teachers and develop best practices for our schools. As a result of this we moved to become a “Best Practice Site” and continue to support our regional area.

We are excited to offer a state level “Foundations of Math” training this summer as well as a session for “Reading Research to Classroom Practice”. Our teachers and trainers are thrilled to have face to face training however it does not stop there. We know that follow up and coaching are essential to teachers actually implementing the strategies and knowledge they learn from these intensive sessions. Our continued focus on providing routine coaching and support for our focus site teachers is critical in our development on higher student outcomes. Currently our coaching is scaffolded to meet the needs of our teachers, this is not stagnant and varies based on the teacher. This ensures that we are consistently evaluating what our teachers need in order to continue to implement all of our NC SIP initiatives. At our NC SIP middle school, we are sending a teacher this summer to become a “Keys to Literacy” trainer which will help continue to develop our Adolescent Literacy Team at that school. We are also looking forward to adding two new “RRtCP” trainers to our district team soon!



Additionally, we were honored to be asked to present at this year’s statewide NC SIP Conference, held virtually in April, on our “Virtual Developmental Review” notebook. This was created by Mary Peele and Amanda Wiggs in September 2020 as an alternate way to present the artifacts and data for our developmental review meeting. During this meeting we were asked to share this at the conference in April. We received very positive feedback on this in April and many other districts were interested in creating their own digital notebook. We were able to share our creative process as well as the free resources we utilized in creating our digital notebook.

This has been a challenging year trying to navigate all of the twists and turns that we’ve encountered from going virtual, then hybrid, to finally mostly “face to face” with some hybrid still occurring. Our school wide and district implementation teams have continued to provide routine support for our teachers and students to continue to push for the best

student outcomes possible. We look forward to continuing this in the coming school year!



## Math Regional Coach

**Melissa  
Miller**

1. **What PSU do you serve?** I work in Watauga County Schools as well as serving as regional coach, RC, for the northwest, NW, region.
2. **What is your role in your PSU?** I am a math specialist at Green Valley School and serve students in grades k-8. I most often define my role as helping students explore and unlock the world of numbers. I work with small groups of students as well as coaching and supporting teachers as they learn to conceptually teach foundational math concepts to their students.
3. **Are you a reading or math RC?** I am a Math RC for the NW Region and specifically serve Ashe and Burke counties through this role
4. **How many years have you been involved with NC SIP?** I first became involved with NC SIP as a participant in Foundations of Math, FoM, in 2014 and have continued that involvement over the last seven years
5. **What is something in your professional development in coaching that has influenced you and how has it impacted your interactions with the support you provide to the NC SIP grant work?** I had the pleasure of completing a book study for “The eCoaching Continuum for Educators” by Marcia Rock with my teammates in the NW Region. During our discussion of the book, I was reminded about the importance of relationships when coaching teachers. As I continue to practice and coach my colleagues, I always start with building mutual trust and respect so that the teacher is willing to listen and consider the help I am offering to him or her. I started joining the 5th grade at my school during their PLC time and just listening. Over time I earned their trust, and I was proud of the team when they were willing to trust me and invited me into their classrooms to model how using “The Bean Party” from FoM could help build a true understanding of fraction division with their students. These teachers saw the benefit of using this strategy and now model the bean party every year for their students. It is rewarding to see how my coaching has impacted their teaching and continues to impact student learning year after year.
6. **What made you want to become an RC?** My role model and former principal, Phil Norman, encouraged me to become a FoM instructor then an RC. He helped me to embrace my role as a leader and to see how coaching and my roles in NC SIP support not only the students in my own classroom but students throughout the state. I want to help teachers grow in their foundational understanding of important math topics so that they can provide the best mathematics education possible to our students. I enjoy coaching and providing support to teachers as they teach concepts conceptually and build a true understanding of numbers and operations with their students.
7. **Can you provide us with a fun fact about you, a tidbit, or a hobby that is interesting?** I am a first-generation college student and was able to graduate debt-free from UNC-Chapel Hill through a program that enables students from low-income families to pursue a secondary education without placing an enormous financial burden on the student and/or their families. I am a Tar Heel born and bred and when I die, I’m a Tar Heel dead! Go Heels Go!



## Math Regional Coach

**Raye Lynn  
Weaver**

1. **What PSU do you serve?** Lincoln County Schools
2. **What is your role in your PSU?** Instructional Facilitator
3. **Are you a reading or math regional coach?** Math
4. **How many years have you been involved with NC SIP?** four years
5. **What is something in your professional development in coaching that has influenced you and how has it impacted your interactions with the support you provide to the NC SIP grant work?** Participating in this grant has taught me how to slow down and really listen to those who I am leading. Building relationships is a top priority when giving feedback to career teachers about their profession.
6. **What made you want to become a regional coach?** I have always wanted to help my peers grow and get stronger in their pedagogy. Being a regional coach has given me the chance to help others prosper in our wonderful profession.
7. **Can you provide us with a fun fact about you, a tidbit, or a hobby that is interesting?** I did not begin to really fall in love with math until I started teaching sixth grade twelve years ago. Now, I see math in everything!

### A Shout Out to Dr. Rush!

Dr. Charmion Rush, Assistant Professor at Western Carolina University, recently received an email from her student sharing her experience with the Pearson: Foundations of Reading test.

*Good afternoon!*

*I wanted to reach out and let you know that today I took my Pearson: Foundations of Reading test. I would also like to inform you that I knew every single question on that test because of you and your amazing class! I felt thoroughly prepared and know that without your classes I would not have done as well. I cannot wait to be in the classroom in the fall and take with me the spirit of teaching the way that you do.*

*Hope you're doing well  
Rebekah*

Thank you, Dr. Rush, and to our IHE partners as you continue to prepare preservice educators in the science of reading!



## TOOL TIME TUESDAY

Every Tuesday at noon ECAC hosts Tool Time Tuesday. The Tool Time segments are 30 minutes or less and feature a resource or a tool that families can add to their toolbox to help support their child's learning. During the Summer, Tool Time Tuesday will focus on topics and activities that would be of particular interest to families during the summer.

Tool Time can also be a way for schools to share tools that help families participate in their child's learning particularly in math and reading. If you are interested in sharing and modeling a math or reading activity that families can do at home email Beverly Roberts at [Broberts@ecacmail.org](mailto:Broberts@ecacmail.org).



Tool Time Tuesdays can be accessed via Zoom or [Facebook Live](#). Families can register for Tool Time Tuesday at the [ECAC website](#). Please share with families and colleagues.

### YADKIN COUNTY SCHOOLS PARTNERS WITH ECAC Le'Don Bedsaul



Yadkin County Schools is located in the Piedmont-Triad Region and is an NC SIP Best Practice Site. Over the years, Yadkin County Schools has partnered with the Exceptional Children's Assistance Center to plan parent nights that provide pertinent information to help students with disabilities become more successful. We have tried different avenues and ideas but have seen a steady decline in attendance. This year, the pandemic seemed to present a roadblock that would prevent us from hosting a parent night at all, but with the help of the team at ECAC, our district and school EC staff including related service providers were able to create a virtual parent night using a website where parents could attend on demand three times during the 2020-2021 school year. We knew that most parents were only able to meet their children's teachers through emails or phone calls this school year, so we provided them an opportunity to meet their students' EC teachers and other staff through short video segments. We provided information about what the NC SIP Project is and what a typical lesson looks like for our current reading and math instruction programs. ECAC provided a video tour of ECAC, an overview of what they offer, and a focus on Autism resources. We also included a guest book where we were able to document attendance (which was the highest number in 3 years) and gather parent input for our next year's parent night. We do hope that we are able to return to an in-person parent night in the new upcoming school year, but we also hope to be able to continue to provide some on demand sessions that meet our parents' needs. Want to see for yourself?

On Demand Sessions

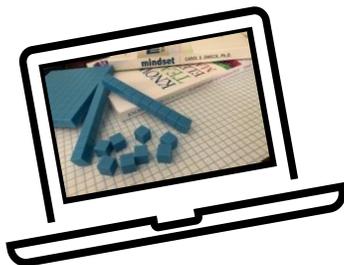
# Updates & Reminders

## Instructor Candidates and Certified Instructor Fidelity Observation Pause Has Been Lifted

Prior to the March 2020 closure of schools across the state, there were many individuals completing the instructor process for Reading Research to Classroom Practice (RRtCP) or Foundations of Mathematics (FoM). In early June, a memo went out to inform the field that the instructor process pause has been lifted for all as a result of the re-opening of many school districts. As districts resume activities which may include providing RRtCP or FoM courses with safety measures in place, contact the literacy or math consultant for your region if guidance is needed regarding resuming completion of candidate activities. While the two-year timeline has been extended for current instructor candidates, we encourage those candidates to take advantage of opportunities (such as the instructor assessment) as soon as possible.

The memo also includes recertification requirements for currently certified instructors of the courses. Instructors fulfilling recertification requirements are encouraged to schedule fidelity observations with their regional literacy or math consultant or assigned NC SIP regional coach as soon as courses are scheduled. To view the full memo, select the link below:

[Pause Lifted Memo](#)



## Training of Instructors for Blended Foundations of Math & Reading Research to Classroom Practice



Coming this fall we will be offering a Training of Instructors for the blended courses. Currently certified instructors of each course employed in North Carolina public school units are eligible to complete the process. An interest survey was shared in May by your regional literacy and math consultants. If you completed the survey and are interested, look for more information about the process in August. More training of instructors for the blended courses will be offered in the spring of 2022 as well.

**NC SIP Coordinators**  
**Information for Coordinators -**

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**1) Draft Developmental Review**  
**2) Student Progress Data**  
**3) Family Engagement Quality Indicators**  
June 30

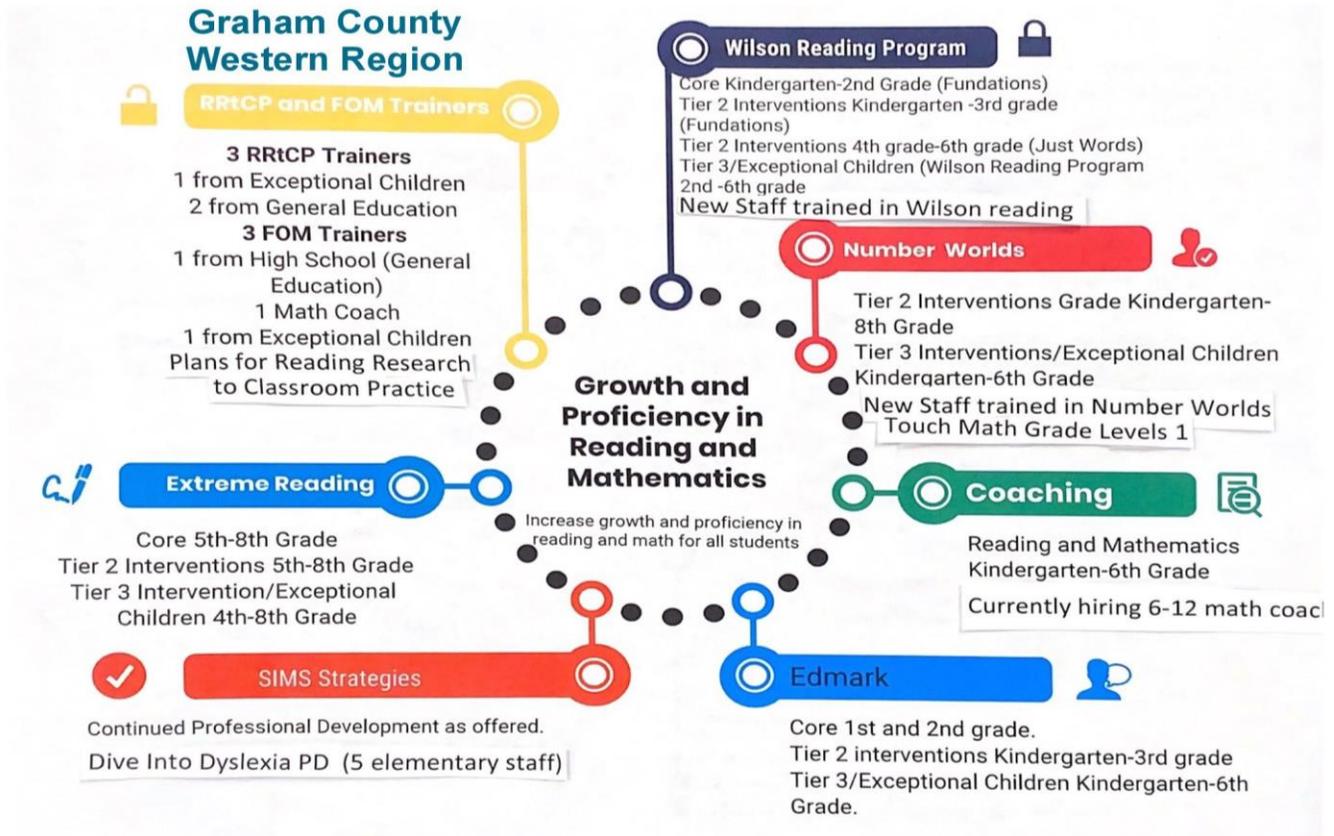
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**Parent Surveys**  
August 30

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**NC SIP 2022**  
**Spring Network Conference**  
April 26 – 28, 2022

# NC SIP Sites' 2021 Infographics!



## Pamlico County Schools

Network Site 2020-2021



### NC SIP Goals

- 1 — Increase capacity of participants of co-teaching model at the high school level
- 2—Increase capacity of Foundations of Math and Reading Research to Classroom Practice trainers
- 3—Increase parent participation



**RRtCP session: 83% of participants scored at least 80% on post-survey!**

### Learning at a Distance: HillRAP (EBP)



During virtual learning, students were able to continue instruction in our evidence based program, HillRAP.



### Special Focus for 2020-2021 at the High School Level

#### UDL—A Framework for Addressing Learning Variability: Theory into Practice

This online course through CAST professional learning consists of seven introductory modules that provide an introduction to Universal Design for Learning. This framework addresses learner variability and supports for all learners to gain the knowledge and skills needed to become strategic, self-motivated, and goal-directed expert learners.

Participants: 8 General Ed teachers, 4 EC Teachers, 1 Assistant Principal, 1 MTSS/Student Services Coordinator, & 1 EC Director

