



North Carolina School Superintendents' Association

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State Superintendent Maurice "Mo" Green
N.C. Department of Public Instruction
6301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699

Chairman Eric Davis
N.C. State Board of Education
6301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699

Dear Superintendent Green and Chairman Davis,

The North Carolina School Superintendent's Association executive board, on behalf of all superintendents, strongly supports the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina State Board of Education's five-year strategic plan "Achieving Educational Excellence". The five-year plan aims to position North Carolina's public schools as the best in the nation by 2030. We welcome this comprehensive plan which supports all educators and students in the pursuit of excellence.

The North Carolina School Superintendents' Association (NCSSA), in partnership with FranklinCovey Education, brought a national foundation to the table to support this important leadership work across North Carolina. FranklinCovey Education and the national partner provided a generous grant to make this work possible. Over the next two school years, fifteen districts with first- and second-year superintendents, their district leadership team, and principals will take part in two professional development workshops chosen from FranklinCovey's most widely recognized leadership programs:

- *The Speed of Trust*
- *The 4 Essential Roles of Leadership*
- *The 6 Critical Practices for Leading a Team*

This opportunity will help the districts:

- Build stronger trust and collaboration across our schools.
- Support and uplift our educators.
- Provide safe and supportive learning environments for all students.
- Execute our goals with greater clarity and accountability.
- Celebrate the excellence happening in our classrooms, schools, and community every day.

This initiative is fully aligned to North Carolina's new Achieving Educational Excellence Strategic Plan 2025-2030 and represents a powerful investment in leadership capacity, ensuring we are well-positioned to help every student succeed today and prepare for their future.

Advancing North Carolina's Strategic Plan Through Leadership Development

The Speed of Trust

Builds cultures of credibility, collaboration, and accelerated results through 13 high-trust behaviors and 4 cores of credibility.

Alignment to Pillars:

- **Pillar 1 (Students)** → Students thrive when educators operate in high-trust environments where communication and expectations are clear.
- **Pillar 2 (Educators)** → Teachers stay and perform better in high-trust schools; morale and retention rise.
- **Pillar 3 (Families & Communities)** → Trust behaviors create transparent, respectful parent-school partnerships.
- **Pillar 4 (Safe Environments)** → High trust establishes psychological safety, reducing conflict and fostering belonging.
- **Pillar 5 (Operational Excellence)** → Trust reduces duplication and bureaucracy, driving efficiency.
- **Pillar 6 (Transformative Change)** → Trust accelerates change adoption, lowering resistance.
- **Pillar 7 (Celebrate Excellence)** → Credibility makes success stories authentic and believable.
- **Pillar 8 (Galvanize Champions)** → Community and business partners invest when they trust school leadership.

Strategic Impact: Superintendents and principals equipped with *The Speed of Trust* can quickly build credibility with educators, families, boards, and business partners — multiplying the speed and impact of every other strategic initiative.

The 4 Essential Roles of Leadership

Equips leaders to build trust, create vision, execute with discipline, and coach potential.

Alignment to Pillars:

- **Pillar 1 (Students)** → Leaders model vision and execution, aligning schools around preparing students for postsecondary success.
- **Pillar 2 (Educators)** → Coaching potential inspires and develops teachers, building professional pride and retention.
- **Pillar 3 (Families & Communities)** → Vision-driven leaders unify families and community partners behind clear student outcomes.
- **Pillar 4 (Safe Environments)** → Leaders of character establish positive culture where students and teachers feel secure.
- **Pillar 5 (Operational Excellence)** → Execution discipline ensures strategies and resources align to measurable results.
- **Pillar 6 (Transformative Change)** → This is the core transformation playbook: model, align, execute, and coach across systems.
- **Pillar 7 (Celebrate Excellence)** → Leaders who coach potential elevate wins across classrooms, schools, and districts.
- **Pillar 8 (Galvanize Champions)** → Vision and credibility inspire business, philanthropic, and civic investment in schools.

Strategic Impact: Superintendents and principals who master the *4 Essential Roles* create alignment from their district to schools to classrooms, ensuring the state's strategic plan becomes a reality at every level.

The 6 Critical Practices for Leading a Team

Practical, tactical leadership practices.

Alignment to Pillars:

- **Pillar 1 (Students)** → Team practices ensure instruction, interventions, and student supports are aligned and executed with fidelity.
- **Pillar 2 (Educators)** → Teachers feel valued when leaders manage time, meetings, and feedback well — improving morale.
- **Pillar 3 (Families & Communities)** → Practices of clarifying goals and celebrating wins strengthen family confidence in schools.
- **Pillar 4 (Safe Environments)** → Teams with clear norms and strong communication reduce stress and conflict, creating safe environments.
- **Pillar 5 (Operational Excellence)** → Clear priorities, effective meetings, and accountability directly strengthen operational discipline.
- **Pillar 6 (Transformative Change)** → Gives leaders the tactical skills to actually implement system-wide shifts.
- **Pillar 7 (Celebrate Excellence)** → Celebrating contributions is built into the practices — reinforcing recognition and pride.
- **Pillar 8 (Galvanize Champions)** → Teams that operate with clarity and accountability are more attractive to external partners and funders.

Strategic Impact: By strengthening the daily practice of leadership at the district and school level, *6 Critical Practices* operationalizes the NC strategic plan in the real, messy work of leading teams.

The North Carolina School Superintendent's Association has provided these three programs to 80 plus superintendents over the past three years.

We are excited to partner with you to support these well-focused goals and strategies to champion all public schools, and their students and staff, across North Carolina. Please let us know how we may assist in the next steps for this plan.

Sincerely,



Dr. Don Phipps, President
North Carolina School Superintendents' Association



Jack Hoke, Executive Director
North Carolina School Superintendents' Association