

# 2021 **ILLAB**

**NORTH CAROLINA  
EDUCATION  
INNOVATION**

# Forward Stride:

**North Carolina's Next Steps in Teacher Recruitment**

**Tuesday, December 7, 2021  
9 AM - 3 PM**



## WELCOME EVERYONE!

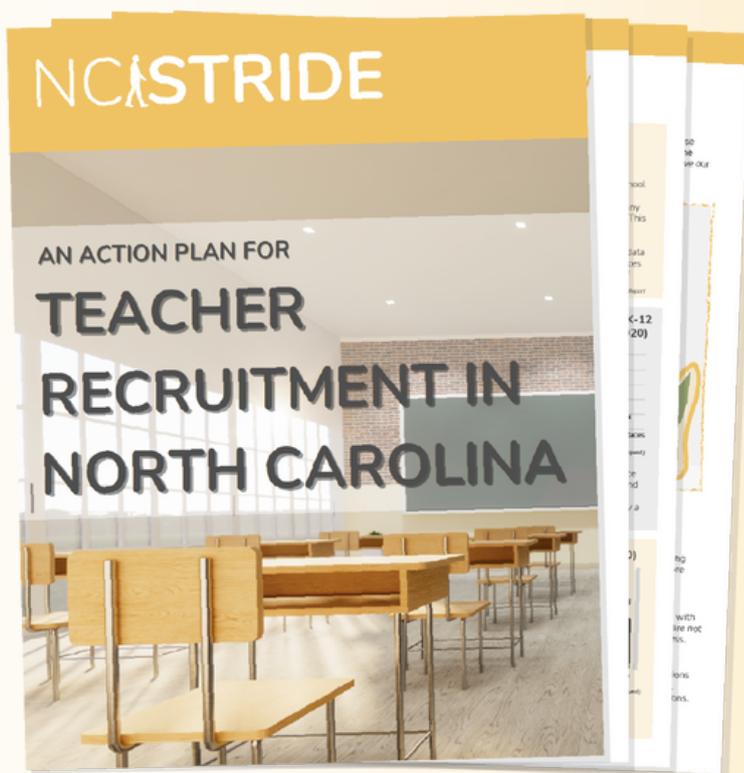


Each year, BEST NC's North Carolina Education Innovation Lab brings together a wide-ranging group of stakeholders to explore emerging and transformative solutions to our state's greatest educational challenges. These Innovation Lab conversations have helped promote and advance policies and initiatives that are making an impact in North Carolina.

Teachers have the greatest influence on student outcomes of all in-school factors. However, school districts have reported for decades that they struggle to fill persistent teaching vacancies in subject areas like math, science, and special education, and in our rural and high-poverty schools. Similarly, data show that students' access to effective educators is limited, with disadvantaged students being much less likely to have a highly effective teacher than their more affluent peers.

As a result, one of the highest-leverage investments we can make is recruiting the next generation of teachers to North Carolina public schools. In service of that goal, BEST NC and the NC STRIDE Planning Team convened more than 100 stakeholders and experts over 18 months to analyze the teacher recruitment landscape in our state and develop a set of recommendations to move our state forward with a coordinated and impactful teacher recruitment strategy.

Building off the important and actionable work of previous Innovation Labs and, specifically, the teacher recruitment focus of 2020, this year's Innovation Lab will explore key strategies within the **NC STRIDE Teacher Recruitment Action Plan**.



## Turning Conversation into Action

When possible, the Innovation Lab topics build on each other, creating a multi-year pathway for innovation. For example, the 2018 Innovation Lab highlighted the work of the FIT (First in Teaching) Leaders, a diverse group of educators who came together to identify ways to improve the educator experience and make North Carolina First in Teaching.

During and following the 2018 Lab, FIT Leaders developed the First in Teaching Roadmap. This document identified rigorous teacher recruitment as one of the key solutions needed to help elevate the teaching profession in North Carolina, leading to the creation of a statewide teacher recruitment initiative called TeachNC, and eventually, the NC STRIDE Teacher Recruitment Action Plan. Scan the QR code above to access the FIT Roadmap digitally.



# NC STRIDE'S Key Strategic Priorities



# NC STRIDE

*/strīd/ (n): a step or a stage in direction toward an aim.*

The NC STRIDE working group met regularly over 18 months to help align existing teacher recruitment efforts and to identify data, policies, and practices that can help elevate and leverage that work. The resulting NC STRIDE Teacher Recruitment Action Plan frames the process through which the plan came together; shares the recommendations, strategies, and actions; and highlights areas of alignment with other education initiatives under way in North Carolina.

The NC STRIDE Action Plan includes eight primary recommendations with 20 strategies, and over 150 specific actions that can move our state forward with a coordinated and impactful teacher recruitment strategy. Each of these are cross-mapped by key stakeholders and other related initiatives (see appendices).

Of these recommendations, strategies, and actions, the NC STRIDE working group identified five key strategic priorities that can be advanced in the near term and serve as a catalyst for other strategies and actions. These strategic priorities are the focus of our **2021 Education Innovation Lab: Forward Stride**.

## Teacher Recruitment Entity

- The recruitment efforts of 54 EPPs, 115 LEAs, Charter Schools, and the TeachNC initiative are largely disconnected.
- Establish an entity, situated and staffed at DPI with a statewide advisory board, that can collect and report data and best practices.

## Teacher Pipeline Data

- Current teacher vacancy and supply data are very limited, making it difficult to recommend policies or programs that will effectively address specific staffing needs.
- Implement consistent vacancy and applicant tracking systems that will accurately identify the most critical needs in the teacher supply pipeline.

## Fill Critical Vacancies

- Districts report persistent vacancies in secondary math and science, which are critical skills for college and career readiness.
- Consider sustained compensation for high-skill/high-demand careers, like the military does with their critical positions.

## Reimagine Licensure

- The current licensure system creates entry barriers and is not aligned with professional priorities.
- Reimagine the licensure and professional pathway system based on teacher effectiveness, embedded professional development, and paid career opportunities for effective teachers.

## Paid Teacher Apprenticeship

- While pre-service experience is critical for success, it is a financial barrier.
- Offer a paid experience for candidates before becoming the teacher of record (EPP student teacher and residency paths, etc.). Consider compensation for effective teachers as mentors.



# 2021 Education Innovation Lab Agenda

8:45 - 9:00 am	<b>Log-On &amp; Conversation Starter/Activity</b>
9:00 - 9:15 am	<b>Opening Remarks &amp; Overview of NC STRIDE</b> <b>Walter McDowell</b> , Chairman, BEST NC <b>Brenda Berg</b> , President & CEO, BEST NC
9:15 - 10:00 am	<b>Teacher Vacancy Data &amp; the Need for a Statewide Teacher Recruitment Entity</b> <b>Shawnda Cherry</b> , Executive Director of Human Resources, Hertford County Schools; Chair, Northeast Region of the Personnel Administrators of North Carolina <b>Dr. Tom Tomberlin</b> , Director of Educator Recruitment & Support, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction <b>Tom West</b> , Vice President for Government Relations and General Counsel, North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities
10:00 - 10:15 am	<b>Spotlight on TeachNC</b> <b>Glasher Robinson</b> , Assistant Principal, Guilford County Schools; Former TeachNC Coach <b>Brenda Berg</b> , BEST NC
10:15 - 10:30 am	<b>Snack &amp; Stretch Break</b>
10:30 - 11:15 am	<b>Strategies to Fill Critical Vacancies</b> <b>Dr. Alvera Lesane</b> , Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, Durham Public Schools <b>Jessica Sanders</b> , Director of Government Relations, Alabama State Department of Education <b>Thomas Toch</b> , Director of FutureEd, Georgetown University
11:15 am - 12:00 pm	<b>Strengthening the Teacher Pipeline through Paid Apprenticeships</b> <b>Kathryn Castellones</b> , Apprenticeship NC Director, NC Community College System <b>Stephanie Dean</b> , Senior Vice President for Opportunity Culture Policy and Outreach, Public Impact <b>Olivia Rice</b> , Education Research Analyst, RTI International
12:00 - 12:45 pm	<b>Lunch Break</b>
12:45 - 1:15 pm	<b>A State Vision for Teacher Recruitment</b> <b>State Superintendent Catherine Truitt</b> , North Carolina Department of Public Instruction <b>Brenda Berg</b> , BEST NC
1:15 - 1:30 pm	<b>Spotlight on Grow-Your-Own Strategies: Charlotte Teacher Early College</b> <b>Neal Kapur</b> , Alumnus, Charlotte Teacher Early College; Student, UNC Chapel Hill <b>Matthew Bristow-Smith</b> , Principal, Edgecombe Early College High School; 2019 Wells Fargo North Carolina Principal of the Year
1:30 - 2:45 pm	<b>Breakout Discussions: Reimagining Licensure &amp; Pathways to Excellence for Teaching Professionals</b> <b>Dr. Patrick Miller</b> , Superintendent, Greene County Schools; Chair, Professional Educator Preparation and Standards Commission (PEPSC) <b>Dr. Van Dempsey</b> , Dean, Watson College of Education at UNC Wilmington; PEPSC Subcommittee Chair <b>Dr. Anthony Graham</b> , Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Winston-Salem State University; PEPSC Subcommittee Chair <b>Maureen Stover</b> , 2020 Burroughs-Wellcome Fund North Carolina Teacher of the Year and 2021 Finalist for National Teacher of the Year; PEPSC Subcommittee Chair <b>Dr. Westley Wood</b> , Assistant Superintendent of Personnel and Human Resources, Wilkes County Schools; PEPSC Subcommittee Chair
2:45 - 3:00 pm	<b>Closing Remarks &amp; Next Steps</b> <b>Brenda Berg</b> , BEST NC



**A Note about Social Media:** We encourage you to share positive Innovation Lab learnings and takeaways using the hashtags **#NCEDLAB2021** and **#NCSTRIDE** while also asking you to keep participant conversations in confidence to create a safe space for dialogue.

# Teacher Vacancy Data & the Need for a Statewide Teacher Recruitment Entity



## How can North Carolina improve the use of teacher vacancy data and expand best practices for state and local recruitment?

North Carolina's current teacher vacancy and supply data are inadequate for establishing effective policies, practices, or programs that address schools' specific staffing needs. This session will examine the current state of vacancy data and discuss the need to establish a statewide teacher recruitment entity, housed at DPI, to collect and report data, share best practices, and better align and leverage existing recruitment efforts across the state.

## Panelists for Teacher Vacancy Data and the Need for a Statewide Teacher Recruitment Entity

**Shawnda Cherry**, Executive Director of Human Resources, Hertford County Schools; Chair, Northeast Region of the Personnel Administrators of North Carolina

**Dr. Tom Tomberlin**, Director of Educator Recruitment & Support, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

**Tom West**, Vice President for Government Relations and General Counsel, North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities

# ! 1,646 Teacher Vacancies

**We need better data!** The 1,646 teaching vacancies that were officially reported during the 2019–20 school year translates to over 24,000 students without a full-time, licensed teacher in one or more of their classes (using North Carolina's average of about 15 students per teacher). While this is an alarming number – and concerning that any student would go without access to a licensed teacher – these data also indicate just a 1.7% vacancy rate statewide. This vacancy rate would be entirely reasonable by the standards of other industries. And yet, students and administrators alike report widespread and persistent vacancies across the state, particularly in certain subject areas. This conflict between the reported data and the student/administrator experience makes it clear that we need more accurate and specific data in order to focus programs, policies, and resources to target recruitment to our highest-need schools and subjects, and to tailor recruitment efforts based on the needs of individual regions across North Carolina.

Source: 2020 State of the Teaching Profession Report



More data are available on pages 6–8 of the NC STRIDE Teacher Recruitment Action Plan.



For more information on this topic, see **Recommendations 1 and 2** in your copy of the NC STRIDE Teacher Recruitment Action Plan.





# Spotlight on TeachNC



Launched in 2019, the TeachNC initiative was created to elevate the image of the teaching profession and to increase the quantity, quality, and diversity of candidates entering the teacher pipeline in North Carolina. In service of this mission, TeachNC includes a full suite of strategic recruitment activities in partnership with BEST NC, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 54 educator preparation programs (EPPs), and all North Carolina public school units. TeachNC strives to create a trusted, safe, and user-friendly one-stop resource for anyone considering a career in teaching in North Carolina, including a robust ad campaign, comprehensive website, and 1-on-1 supports for teacher candidates. This session will spotlight the ways TeachNC is supporting candidates on their journey to becoming a teacher.

## Panelists for the Spotlight on TeachNC

**Glasher Robinson**, Assistant Principal, Guilford County Schools; Former TeachNC Coach

**Brenda Berg**, BEST NC



For more information on this topic, see **Recommendation 7** in your copy of the NC STRIDE Teacher Recruitment Action Plan.

# Strategies to Fill Critical Vacancies



How can North Carolina leverage best practices from other states and industries to incentivize teacher candidates into hard-to-staff schools and subjects?

For decades, districts have reported persistent vacancies in subject areas like secondary math and science. Additionally, North Carolina students have inequitable access to educators, with low-income students and students of color less likely to be taught by an effective teacher than their more affluent or white peers. This session will explore promising practices utilized by districts and states to recruit effective educators to our most hard-to-staff positions.

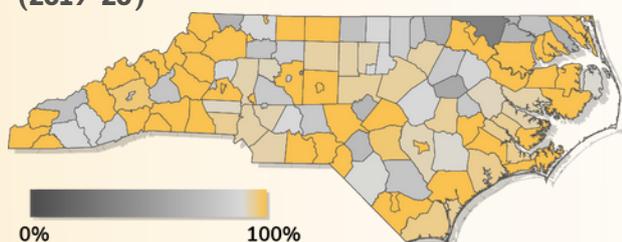
## Panelists for Strategies to Fill Critical Vacancies

**Dr. Alvera Lesane**, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, Durham Public Schools

**Jessica Sanders**, Director of Government Relations, Alabama State Dept. of Education

**Thomas Toch**, Director of FutureEd, Georgetown University

Percentage of 7th-Grade Math Students with a Teacher Licensed in that Subject Area, by District (2019-20)



Source: NC DPI (Data Request)



For more information on this topic, see **Recommendation 5a** in your copy of the NC STRIDE Teacher Recruitment Action Plan.



# Strengthening the Teacher Pipeline through Paid Apprenticeships



**How can we make pre-service teaching experiences more accessible, like residency experiences in the medical and other professions?**

While research is clear that pre-service experience as a student teacher is important for success as an educator, it can also be a financial barrier for candidates coming through the traditional educator preparation pathway. Similarly, an increasing number of teaching candidates are entering the profession through the residency (formerly lateral entry) pathway and are employed as a teacher without any opportunity for pre-service teaching. This session will explore the idea of a paid apprenticeship experience for candidates before they become the teacher of record.

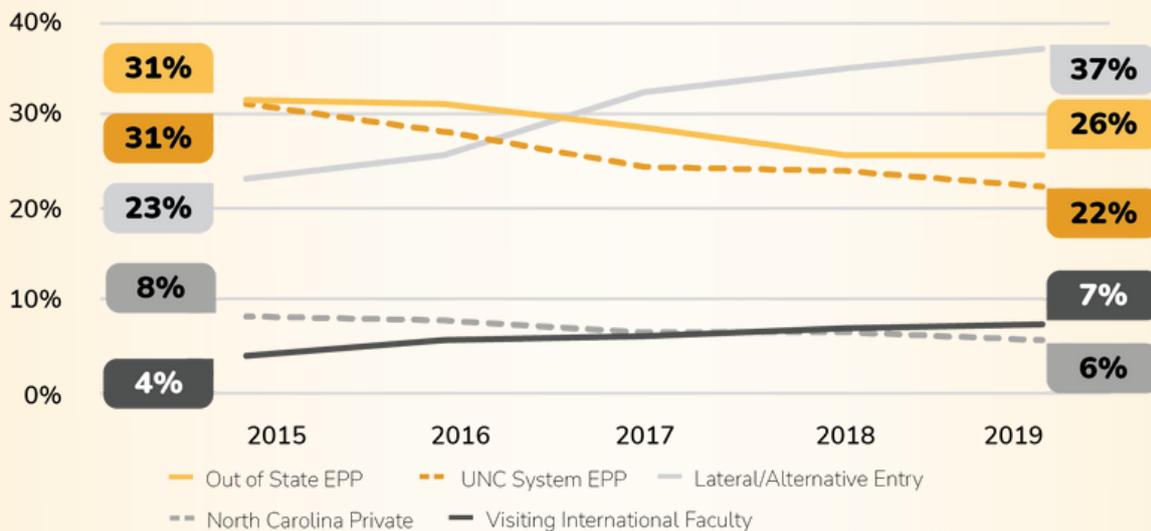
## Panelists on Strengthening the Teacher Pipeline through Paid Apprenticeships

**Kathryn Castelloes**, Apprenticeship NC Director, NC Community College System

**Stephanie Dean**, Senior Vice President for Opportunity Culture Policy and Outreach, Public Impact

**Olivia Rice**, Education Research Analyst, RTI International

## Distribution of Preparation Routes for Newly Hired K-12 Public School Teachers (2015 to 2019)



**Mid-career shifts into teaching are more common than ever.** North Carolina has seen a dramatic increase in the percentage of first-year teachers coming through the Residency (Lateral Entry) Pathway with more than a 50% increase from 2015 to 2019. Both in-state traditional and out-of-state pathways have declined during the same period. Historically, lateral entry teachers tend to have higher turnover rates than traditionally prepared teachers, including beginning teachers. They also tend to have lower EVAAS growth scores.

**For more information on this topic, see Recommendation 4b in your copy of the NC STRIDE Teacher Recruitment Action Plan.**



# Spotlight on Grow-Your-Own Strategies: Charlotte Teacher Early College



**Charlotte Teacher Early College (CTEC) opened in August 2017 on the campus of UNC Charlotte to serve students interested in a career in education.** As the only program of its kind in North Carolina, CTEC immerses students in intentional field-based learning activities in education, like student teaching. This session will highlight CTEC's work to recruit the next generation of teachers and explore opportunities to develop other Grow-Your-Own initiatives across North Carolina.

## Panelists on the Spotlight on Grow-Your-Own Strategies

**Neal Kapur**, Alumnus, Charlotte Teacher Early College; Student, UNC Chapel Hill

**Matthew Bristow-Smith**, Principal, Edgecombe Early College High School; 2019 Wells Fargo North Carolina Principal of the Year



## What is a Grow-Your-Own Program?

Grow Your Own (GYO) programs are recognized in the NC STRIDE Action Plan as a promising strategy for easing local teacher shortages and for increasing diversity in the teacher workforce. Often designed as partnerships between educator preparation programs, school districts, and community organizations, GYO programs recruit and prepare local community members to enter the teaching profession and teach in their communities. Many programs focus on secondary students by exposing them to careers in education during their formative middle and high school years. Another GYO strategy is to remove barriers for paraeducators and other young professionals to earn a teaching license and/or an education degree.

### North Carolina Teacher Cadet Program

The North Carolina Teacher Cadet Program began in 1997 and is implemented in cooperation with participating public school districts across the state. Offered as honors coursework in most LEAs, the course curriculum is geared toward high school juniors and seniors who have an interest in teaching. Employing a "Grow Our Own" philosophy, the coursework develops future educators at the point in their lives when they are actively exploring career choices. To learn more, visit: <https://www.ncfpssc.org/>.

### 2+2 Programs

In August, the North Carolina Community College System and the University of North Carolina announced a new universal articulation agreement for educator preparation. This means teacher candidates can begin their postsecondary education at a local community college and, upon completion of an associate degree in teacher preparation, can transfer seamlessly to an educator preparation program at one of the UNC-System institutions. This exciting new development paves the way for the expansion of 2+2 programs across the state and offers prospective teachers the opportunity to complete the majority of their teacher preparation without leaving their home community.

### Edgecombe Early College High School Scholar Teachers Program

Edgecombe County's Scholar Teachers Program provides outstanding high school students who have an interest in teaching with a rigorous, high-quality pathway to becoming educators. Students complete education-focused coursework and field-based learning experiences while earning a high school diploma and associate degree in partnership with Edgecombe County Community College. Students are then eligible for a \$10,000 annual scholarship (for up to three years) to complete their educator preparation. In exchange, students agree to teach in Edgecombe County for three years.



For more information on this topic, see **Recommendation 3a** in your copy of the **NC STRIDE Teacher Recruitment Action Plan**.



# Reimagining Licensure & Pathways to Excellence for Teaching Professionals



**How can North Carolina reimagine teacher licensure in a way that attracts and retains a diverse, high-quality teacher workforce?**

The NC STRIDE working group identified several challenges with the state’s current teacher licensure system, including barriers to entry and advancement criteria that do not correlate with effectiveness in the classroom. This session will provide an overview of the ongoing work to modernize licensure by the Professional Educator Preparation and Standards Commission (PEPSC) and provide opportunities for participants to share feedback and suggestions with PEPSC leadership.

## Panelists for Reimagining Licensure & Pathways to Excellence

**Dr. Patrick Miller**, Superintendent, Greene County Schools; Chair, Professional Educator Preparation and Standards Commission (PEPSC)

**Dr. Van Dempsey**, Dean, Watson College of Education at UNC Wilmington; PEPSC Subcommittee Chair

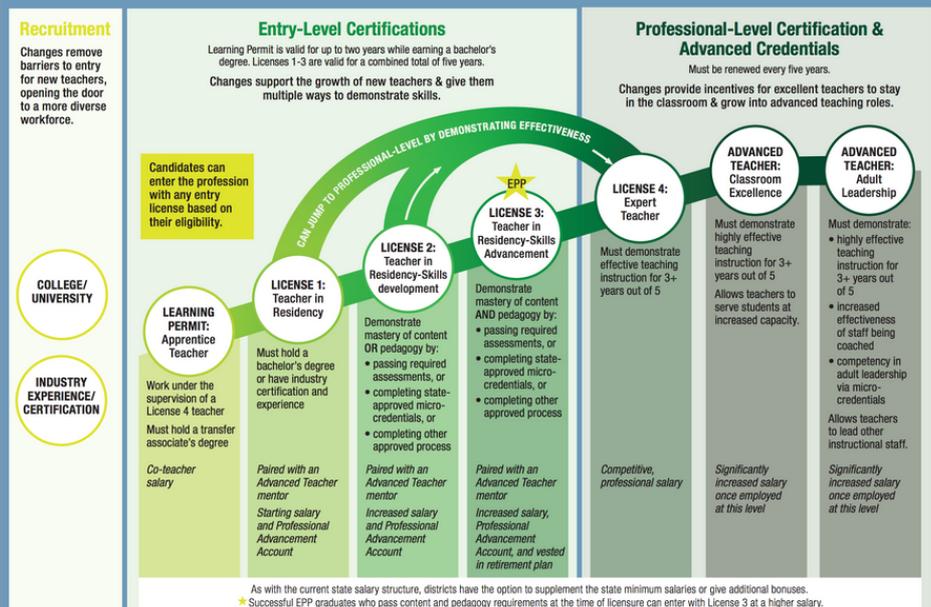
**Dr. Anthony Graham**, Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Winston-Salem State University; PEPSC Subcommittee Chair

**Maureen Stover**, 2020 Burroughs-Wellcome Fund North Carolina Teacher of the Year and 2021 Finalist for National Teacher of the Year; PEPSC Subcommittee Chair

**Dr. Westley Wood**, Assistant Superintendent of Personnel and Human Resources, Wilkes County Schools; PEPSC Subcommittee Chair

### North Carolina Pathways to Excellence for Teaching Professionals

Every student deserves a great teacher, but North Carolina is facing a shortage of educators. If we update our complex teacher licensure process, we can expand the pool of qualified candidates, help them grow into great teachers, and give them incentives to stay in our classrooms helping our students succeed.



For more information on this topic, see **Recommendation 6** in your copy of the **NC STRIDE Teacher Recruitment Action Plan**.





# 2021 Education Innovation Lab Speakers



**Brenda Berg**

Brenda is the President & CEO of BEST NC (Business for Educational Success and Transformation NC), a nonprofit, nonpartisan coalition of over 100 business leaders with a focus on making education in North Carolina the best in the nation. Through policy and advocacy, BEST NC strives to ensure that every student in North Carolina will graduate with the knowledge, skills and behaviors to succeed in a competitive global economy.



**Stephanie Dean**

Stephanie Dean is the strategic director and senior vice president of Opportunity Culture policy and outreach at Public Impact, serving on the firmwide strategy team. Her work focuses on identifying and cultivating state policy conditions that help schools extend the reach of excellent teachers. She has advised clients on teacher preparation, teacher evaluation, school leadership, technology in rural education, competency-based assessment systems, and the development of "learner positioning systems" to create a platform for personalized learning.



**Neal Kapur**

Neal Kapur is a 2021 graduate of the Charlotte Teacher Early College and a current student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill pursuing a degree in Economics and History. After graduation, he hopes to become a High School History Teacher



**Matthew Bristow-Smith**

Matthew Bristow-Smith is the 2019 Wells Fargo North Carolina Principal of the Year and principal of Edgecombe Early College High School in Edgecombe County, NC. Mr. Bristow-Smith has served Edgecombe County Public Schools his entire career. Under Mr. Bristow-Smith's principalship, Edgecombe Early College's enrollment has grown by 50 percent while maintaining a 100 percent graduation rate and a North Carolina School Performance Grade of A. Recently, Mr. Bristow-Smith's school was recognized by U.S. News and World Report as one of America's Best High Schools.



**Dr. Van Dempsey**

Van Dempsey is the Dean of the Watson College of Education at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. In 2019 Van was appointed to Governor Roy Cooper's Task Force to Develop a Representative and Inclusive Vision for Education (DRIVE). Van serves as a member of the Task Force and its Executive committee. The DRIVE Task Force is focused on improving equity and inclusion in education, with a particular focus on diversity in the profession in North Carolina. Van is a member of the Board of Directors of the Public School Forum of North Carolina. In 2018 he was appointed by the NC Speaker of the House of Representatives to the state's Professional Educator Preparation and Standards Commission.



**Dr. Alvera Lesane**

Dr. Alvera J. Lesane became the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources for Durham Public Schools in January 2021. In her role, she has fostered relationships and partnerships to highlight the human side of human resources to yield positive outcomes for employees. Under her leadership, the department is streamlining processes and has improved efficiency in all areas of service. Prior to her current role, Dr. Lesane served as the Associate Superintendent of Human Resources for Iredell-Statesville Schools for 10 years. She was also previously the Senior Director of Professional Growth and Development for Durham Public Schools from 2006 to 2010 where she coordinated activities for the Staff Development Center.



**Kathryn Castelloes**

Kathryn Castelloes began working with the NC Department of Labor in 1994 in the Pre-Apprenticeship Division. After working there for four years, she became an apprenticeship consultant with the Apprenticeship and Training Bureau. In 2006, she began working as the Western Field Supervisor and in 2008 started as the Bureau Chief for Apprenticeship and Training. In 2014, the Apprenticeship and Training Bureau was transferred to the Department of Commerce and in 2017 Apprenticeship was transferred to the NC Community College System, where she serves as Director of Apprenticeship NC.



**Dr. Patrick Miller**

Dr. Patrick C. Miller is the superintendent of Greene County Schools, NC. He was appointed superintendent in January 2008. Dr. Miller is very active in professional organizations at the state and national levels, and he has participated in numerous leadership programs while serving Greene County Schools. He has served as president of NCASCD, NCASA, NCASLD, and NCCSA. He is also a frequent presenter at conferences at both the state and national levels. He serves on numerous Boards of Directors and committees at the local, state, and national levels. Notably, he is the chair of the NC Professional Educator Preparation and Standards Commission (PEPSC) and he serves on the Governor's Commission on Access to Sound Basic Education.



**Dr. Anthony Graham**

Dr. Anthony Graham is the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at Winston-Salem State University. Prior to this position, Graham was a tenured full professor and dean of the College of Education at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. Dr. Graham serves on several boards and commissions, including the Deans For Impact Board of Directors, Senior Services Incorporated Foundation Board, Goodwill Industries of Northwest North Carolina Board of Directors, the North Carolina Professional Educator Preparation and Standards Commission, and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation Board of Directors. Additionally, he serves as the chairperson of Governor Roy Cooper's DRIVE (Developing a Representative and Inclusive Vision for Education) Task Force and co-chair of the University of North Carolina System Educator Preparation Advisory Group.



**Shawnda Cherry**

Shawnda Cherry is the Executive Director of Human Resources for Hertford County Schools. She is a graduate of East Carolina University for both her Bachelors of Science degree in Middle Grades Education (concentrations in Math & Science) and Masters in School Administration and Instructional Specialist. She has been an educator for 26 years with a wide range of experience spanning elementary, middle, high school and alternative settings serving as teacher, assistant principal, principal, and director. She has a passion for advocating for the underserved communities, especially those located in northeastern NC.



**Jessica Sanders**

Jessica Sanders began serving as an Associate General Counsel and Government Relations Director for the Alabama State Department of Education in September 2018. Prior to joining the ALSDE, Jessica served as a Legislative Attorney, an Assistant Attorney General with the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency, and an Assistant District Attorney in Prattville, Alabama. Jessica handles government relations for State Superintendent Mackey and is very excited to be here to discuss the Alabama's new TEAMS law and other recruitment and retention efforts.





# 2021 Education Innovation Lab Speakers



**Olivia Rice**

Olivia Rice serves as an education research analyst and project manager for RTI International. She has over 18 years of experience collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data, including conducting site visits, observations, interviews, and focus groups; designing and facilitating conferences, workshops, and training programs; creating marketing and communications plans and materials; and providing technical assistance and strategic advising to clients. Her current area of research focuses on innovative approaches to workforce development, such as apprenticeships/work-based learning; career and technical education (CTE); competency-based education (CBE); employability skills development; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education; and business-led education advocacy.



**Superintendent Catherine Truitt**

As North Carolina state superintendent, Catherine Truitt's work is focused on improving the state's public schools, expanding innovation, and creating new opportunities for students to learn, grow, and successfully transition into the postsecondary plans of their choice. Truitt's service in education began as a high school English teacher, where she spent 10 years in the classroom at both the high school and middle school levels. Her last three years in the classroom were spent at West Johnston High School, where she taught English to 11th- and 12th-grade students. It's this classroom experience that Truitt draws from when considering how to best equip students, engage parents and invest in teachers.



**Dr. Westley Wood**

Dr. Westley Wood is the Assistant Superintendent of Personnel and Human Resources of Wilkes County Schools. He holds an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from Gardner-Webb University. He also holds a B.S. in Middle Grades Education and a M.S.A in Public School Administration from Appalachian State University. Prior to his current position, Dr. Wood served as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, and central office director for Wilkes County Schools. In 2017, he was appointed to the North Carolina Professional Educator Preparation and Standards Commission. In 2017, Dr. Wood served as a member of the Gardner-Webb University Educational Collaborative Advisory Board. Dr. Wood currently serves as Region 7 President of the Personnel Administrators of North Carolina.



**Glasher S. Robinson**

Glasher S. Robinson earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Elizabeth City State University, a Master of Education degree in Science Education from Georgia State University, and a Master of Education degree in Educational Leadership as a part of the first cohort of High Point University's Leadership Academy. She is currently working towards her Doctoral Degree in Educational Leadership at High Point University. Mrs. Robinson is an Assistant Principal at James B. Dudley High School in Greensboro, North Carolina.



**Thomas Toch**

Thomas Toch is FutureEd's director. He is a former senior partner at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and director of the foundation's Washington office. Toch is a founder and former co-director of the think tank Education Sector, a former guest scholar at the Brookings Institution, and has taught at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Toch helped launch Education Week as a writer and co-managing editor. He is the author of two books on American education, *In the Name of Excellence* and *High Schools on a Human Scale*.



**Tom West**

Tom West joined NCICU in November 2014 and serves as vice president for government relations and general counsel. Prior to joining NCICU, Tom was a partner at Poyner Spruill LLP for over 17 years and, prior to that, served North Carolina as an administrative law judge for 11 years. Tom received his undergraduate degree from UNC-Chapel Hill and his law degree from Duke Law School.



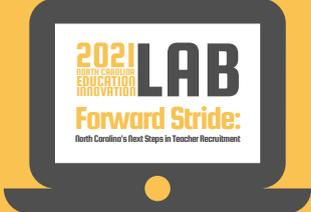
**Maureen Stover**

Maureen Stover is an Advanced Placement Physics I teacher at the North Carolina Virtual Public School. In addition to her role as a teacher, Maureen is the 2020 Burroughs Wellcome Fund North Carolina Teacher of the Year (NCTOY), a 2021 National Teacher of the Year finalist, and a 2022 National Educators Association California Casualty Excellence in Teaching awardee. Prior to her position as the NCTOY, Maureen taught biology, earth and environmental science, and advancement via individual determination (AVID) at Cumberland International Early College High School in Fayetteville, NC. She has taught at the elementary, middle and high school levels and worked as an educational consultant for the National Science Teaching Association.



**Dr. Tom Tomberlin**

Tom Tomberlin began his career in education as a Latin and Greek instructor at Tulane University in New Orleans, LA. He then moved to North Carolina where he taught high school Latin in Guilford County Schools. Tom left the classroom to pursue a doctorate in Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education where he focused on issues of teacher quality and instructional improvement, integrating technology into instruction, and program evaluation. Tom has worked for HGSE as a statistical support specialist, and was a strategic data fellow in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS). Tom now works for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction as the Director of School Research, Data, and Reporting. Tom collaborates with state, district, and local leaders on developing measures of educator effectiveness and opportunities for professional growth and development.



**To view Innovation Lab materials and recorded presentations visit**  
[www.BESTNC.org/NCEdLab2021](http://www.BESTNC.org/NCEdLab2021)

or scan the QR code below





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