NC Office of Strategic Partnerships Monthly Connect
North Carolina Cabinet and Council of State Leaders; Reflecting Back and Looking Forward
Relevant Resources

This is a follow-up to the NC Office of Strategic Partnerships (OSP) January 2023 Monthly Connect: *North Carolina Cabinet and Council of State Leaders; Reflecting Back and Looking Forward* (recording).

OSP regularly shares information and resources after the Monthly Connect sessions. Typically, panelists or participants shared the information and resources in the virtual "chat." This is not intended to be a comprehensive list of resources. More about the Monthly Connect series here.

Speakers at this Monthly Connect were:

The Honorable Machelle Baker Sanders, Secretary, NC Department of Commerce
The Honorable Catherine Truitt, Superintendent, NC Department of Public Instruction
The Honorable Jim Weaver, Secretary, NC Department of Information Technology

Resources
Descriptions are paraphrased and come directly from active links as of January 26, 2023.

Code.org
Code.org is an educational nonprofit that works to expand access to computer science in schools, with a focus on increasing participation by young women and students from other underrepresented groups.
- Hour of Code: A nationwide initiative to introduce millions of students to one hour of computer science and computer programming.

Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC)
EDPNC collaborates with state, regional, local, and private-sector partners in new business recruitment, existing employer support, international trade and export assistance, small business start-up counseling, and tourism promotion to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for North Carolinians.

myFutureNC
myFutureNC is a statewide nonprofit organization focused on educational attainment and is the result of cross-sector collaboration between North Carolina leaders in education, business, and government. It seeks to close gaps in postsecondary attainment, promote alignment between educational programming and business/industry needs, and improve the quality of educational opportunities for North Carolinians.
- NC Educational Attainment Dashboard: The dashboard shows North Carolina's progress toward the state's overall 2030 goal for postsecondary educational attainment, as well as 18 educational performance indicators. The purpose of this dashboard is to give both state and local leadership a way to measure progress across the education continuum and to unite around common goals.

North Carolina Department of Commerce (NC Commerce)
The NC Department of Commerce works with local, regional, national, and international organizations to improve the economic well-being of North Carolinians. The agency publishes data, statistics, information, and reports that are relevant to the state's economy.
- First In Talent: Secretary Sanders' strategic economic development plan, which seeks to build a more resilient economy by incorporating strategies that focus on rural communities and equitable, inclusive practices.

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- [Rural Economic Development Division](#): Provides expert advice to rural communities based on a community's specific needs and connects them with funding to facilitate change. This division heads up a growing number of grant programs, and provides planning services, analysis, and identification of resources needed to strengthen rural economic and community development projects.

[North Carolina Department of Information Technology](#) (NCDIT)
NCDIT provides information technology services and oversight to state agencies, local governments, and educational institutions. The agency also works on issues related to broadband access and digital literacy.

- [North Carolina Government Data Analytics Center (GDAC)](#): GDAC's vision is to transform existing data assets into an information utility for the State's policy and operational leaders to use in making program investment decisions, managing resources, and improving financial programs, budgets, and results. A key function of GDAC is the management of data sharing and integration initiatives. GDAC works with agencies to define their analytic needs, determine access to required data sources, and scope the level of effort to support the analytics development.

[North Carolina Department of Public Instruction](#) (NCDPI)
NCDPI implements the state's public school laws for pre-kindergarten through 12th grade public schools. The agency provides leadership and support in the areas of curriculum and instruction, accountability, finance, teacher and administrator preparation and licensing, professional development, and school business support and operations.

- [North Carolina Portrait of a Graduate](#): The Portrait identifies seven competencies that students should possess upon graduation from high school in order to thrive in a 21st century place of work. The competencies include: adaptability, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, empathy, learner's mindset, and personal responsibility.
- [Operation Polaris 2.0](#): Superintendent Truitt's updated strategic plan, which builds on successful strategies implemented during the past two years, seeks to optimize systems, and introduce policies that improve outcomes for students in North Carolina's public schools and public charter schools.

[NC Job Ready](#)
NC Job Ready is Governor Cooper's workforce development initiative to prepare North Carolinians for current and future jobs. This initiative is built on three principles: skills and educational attainment, employer leadership, and local innovation.

- [NC Job Ready Workforce Investment Grants](#): Announced in August 2021 and open to local workforce development boards, these targeted workforce training grants support On-the-Job and Incumbent Worker Training to assist companies that choose to locate or expand in NC.

[North Carolina Local Government Information Systems Association](#) (NCLGISA)
NCLGISA assists its members in sharing experiences and ideas and in undertaking cooperative efforts intended to achieve the association's goal of improving the effectiveness of local government information systems. Membership in NCLGISA is free to all North Carolina local government, K-12, and community college information systems officials.

[North Carolina Office of Strategic Partnerships](#) (OSP)
OSP develops, launces, and enhances partnerships between state agencies and NC's research and philanthropic sectors. As part of this work, OSP has created numerous resources about cross-sector partnerships.

- [North Carolina Project Portal](#): A tool for sharing state agency research needs and for people to express interest in partnering on those opportunities.

- **Philanthropy Liaison**: The philanthropy liaison works to build, strengthen, and institutionalize relationships between state government and the philanthropic sector in North Carolina. Joy Vermillion Heinsohn serves as the Philanthropy Liaison.

NC Works
NCWorks is an online resource for job seekers and employers in North Carolina. Job seekers can search for jobs, create resumes, and find education and training. Employers can find candidates, post jobs, and search labor market information.
- **NCWorks Career Centers**: A network of over 80 career centers across the state that provide support to job seekers. Job seekers can find work, improve their skills, and connect to additional resources to help prepare for interviews. Services are offered at no charge.

University of North Carolina System (UNC System)
The UNC System comprises every public educational institution granting four-year degrees in North Carolina. The multi-campus system encompasses 16 universities and the NC School of Science and Mathematics. Its governing board coordinates and accelerates North Carolina's higher education objectives.
- **Project Kitty Hawk**: A nonprofit ed-tech startup that will partner with UNC System universities to serve adult learners. This project will help universities design workforce-aligned online programs, as well as attract, enroll, and support learners through graduation.

Comments and Questions
The following is paraphrased from the Teams chat of this Monthly Connect.

- A participant mentioned NCDPI's Office of Exceptional Children and teacher pay in response to Superintendent Truitt hiring new individuals to support low performing schools through an equity lens. Another participant shared an example involving equity in the child care industry in New Mexico in response.
- A participant mentioned the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's new School of Data Science and Society in response to Superintendent Truitt's goal of increasing computer science knowledge.
- A participant mentioned that the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services is working closely with the Department of Commerce to help with hiring.
- A participant mentioned North Carolina State University's Data Science Academy in relation to flexible and accessible career-relevant learning pathways.
- A participant mentioned Family Forward NC in relation to family forward workplaces.
- A participant mentioned the NC Community College System as being key to providing opportunities for adult students.
- A participant commented that access to high-quality childcare is crucial for adults in the workforce and those pursuing postsecondary credentials/degrees. Secretary Sanders replied that high quality childcare is needed and is highlighted in the Department of Commerce First In Talent plan.
- A participant asked Secretary Sanders and Superintendent Truitt how the state will reach back to re-skill those who are no longer associated with an educational institution. Secretary Sanders responded that they can target them through employment security information and career centers. The Department of Commerce is open to suggestions for how to expand outreach. Superintendent Truitt added that they both work on this issue as board members of myfutureNC.
- A participant asked if there was support for college students that don't have a family support system that understands secondary education and the challenges of navigating the academic process. Superintendent Truitt responded by referring to Project Kitty Hawk, which seeks to create an online higher education system that will reach adult learners.

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- A participant asked how we can change the K-12 culture to show that work readiness is equally as important as college readiness and that students preparing for these jobs coming to our state are not viewed as "less than" in the school system. Superintendent Truitt replied by encouraging people to look at the Purpose of Education Index report by Populace and its five outcomes.
- A participant asked what Secretary Weaver thinks the highest risk to the Broadband Digital Equity program is. Carol Burroughs, Director of GDAC, replied on behalf of Secretary Weaver, saying that there are many risks, not one particular risk, and that the DIT team is making progress. She noted the work of the NC Division of Broadband & Digital Equity.
- A participant asked about educational alternatives or job-embedded training options for undocumented immigrants/refugees. Superintendent Truitt replied that this is not in her purview but invited people to share solutions with her office.
- Secretary Sanders made the following asks:
  - Engage and participate however you can to ensure that we are better positioning families across the state.
  - Read the First in Talent strategic plan to identify ways that you can partner with the Department of Commerce and participate in that work.
  - If you have available jobs or are interested in hosting a job fair, notify the Department of Commerce as it can help with promoting and sharing resources.
  - Continue to support and provide your expertise to the work that state agencies are doing in the state.
- Superintendent Truitt asked for research on the science behind teaching and what instructional practices work, with the goal of knowing how to ensure that all students have a high-quality teacher.