

Section VIII – Teacher of the Year

In a time when students need to compete with students and adults in a globally competitive society, educators must be creative, positive and open to new, alternative ways to equip our future generations to reason, analyze and apply content beyond the school grounds. As North Carolina's Teacher of the Year, I will advocate for teachers to collect a database of exemplary lessons, professional development resources and assessments in an easy to access wiki. These exceptional teacher created resources would be collected of all grade levels and objectives across the state. Smarter Balanced has an excellent resource that provides endless amounts of rigorous, higher-level reading and math questions for educators to raise the standard of learning within their classroom. Districts across the state must use these resources to drive our state to meet these rigorous expectations.

Together, we must find ways to drive the education system towards more rigorous standards, and the first step is to raise the standards for ourselves. Challenge yourself to require students to explain their reasoning, provide contextual evidence to support their answer, write across content areas, explore new content through the use of manipulatives, make content genuinely relevant to students and adjust your assessments to document growth and mastery. Never cease to question your profession, testing new strategies and reflecting on those results. Be courageous enough to analyze data and reflect on how your teaching impacted those scores.

Be positive and open to learning. Become a life-long learner, and share your enthusiasm with others. When you discover a strategy, technique or motivational tool that works well for students, share it! Build an entire support system around your school and learn from those around you! Understand that in order to expect students to love learning, we must also love learning ourselves. When we focus on the growth ourselves, the growth of the entire education system is inevitable, no matter what kind of circumstances surround us to ensure student success!