



## News Release

February 2, 2017

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Vance County Schools Becomes Fourth N.C. District Participating in National Initiative to Extend Reach of Excellent Teaching**

CHAPEL HILL, N.C.— With a focus on teacher recruitment and retention, Vance County Schools, based in Henderson, N.C., has joined the national [Opportunity Culture initiative](#) to extend the reach of excellent teachers and their teams to more students, for more pay, within recurring budgets. The initiative now includes 18 sites in seven states, including three other N.C. districts.

“We are excited about expanding the leadership capacity of our teacher-leaders in Vance County and expanding instructional experiences for students here,” said Superintendent Anthony D. Jackson, who joined the district in August 2015. Vance has struggled with teacher turnover and higher pay supplements offered by nearby districts.

Vance has about 500 teachers, and it serves more than 6,500 students, of whom about 62 percent are black, 13 percent Hispanic, and 20 percent white, with 74 percent eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

In Opportunity Culture schools, a team of teachers and administrators at each school select models that use job redesign and age-appropriate technology to reach more students with personalized, high-standards instruction—one hallmark of great teachers. School teams redesign schedules to provide additional school-day time for teacher planning and collaboration, typically with accountable teacher-leaders called “multi-classroom leaders” leading teams and providing frequent, on-the-job development.

The school design teams reallocate school budgets to fund pay supplements permanently, in contrast to temporarily grant-funded programs. In other Opportunity Culture sites, pay supplements have been as high as 50 percent, and an average of about 20 percent, of base salaries.

Vance intends to use the Multi-Classroom Leadership and Expanded-Impact Teacher roles. Multi-classroom leaders are excellent teachers who continue to teach while leading a team, coaching, co-teaching, co-planning, and collaborating with their team teachers to deliver high-standards, personalized instruction, while taking accountability for the learning outcomes of all the students the team serves. Expanded-impact teachers alternate face-to-face teaching with time for students to work on personalized skills practice and project work with paraprofessional supervision, while the teacher teaches another group of students.

Two N.C. foundations awarded grants to a partnership between New Leaders, Public Impact, and the Northeast Leadership Academy (NELA) to implement Opportunity Culture in Vance and Edgecombe counties and provide training for teacher leaders and school principals. The funding supports temporary transition costs; all teacher pay supplements are funded sustainably through reallocations of regular school budgets.

Public Impact will support Vance County Schools in designing new teacher-leader roles and school models, New Leaders will provide training and support to develop teacher-leaders, and NELA will provide professional development to teacher-leaders interested in becoming a principal.

The Belk Foundation is providing \$450,000 over three years for the work in northeastern N.C. counties, and the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation awarded \$100,000. Additionally, Vance County Schools was one of six districts to win a state competition for districts to create advanced roles, generating a \$125,000 grant.

In 2017–18, Vance will begin implementing its new models in three Opportunity Culture elementary schools: Aycock, Zeb Vance, and Dabney. These schools will act as “incubators of innovation” for the district to later spread Opportunity Culture into more schools.

As Opportunity Culture expands into more N.C. districts, district leaders learn from one another’s experiences. Several Vance district administrators and principals recently attended a school redesign planning session in Edgecombe County, and Edgecombe educators visited Opportunity Culture schools in Project L.I.F.T. and other participating Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools on January 25 and 26.

“Leaders in Vance and Edgecombe counties have made the most important commitment they can make to their students: giving them access to great teachers, every year.” said Public Impact Co-Director Bryan C. Hassel. “By shifting dollars to that priority, their schools can make themselves magnets for top teachers across the region.”

Fifty-nine percent of the Opportunity Culture schools in North Carolina in 2015–16 exceeded student growth expectations, more than double the percentage of N.C. schools overall at just 28 percent, according to school performance data from the state.

Similarly, high-poverty Opportunity Culture schools exceeded growth expectations at much higher rates than in North Carolina overall: 56 percent versus 26 percent of high-poverty schools statewide. High-poverty schools have 40 percent or more students qualifying for free or reduced lunch. Two-thirds of Opportunity Culture schools were high-poverty schools. (For more details, see [this press release](#).)

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### **About Public Impact**

Public Impact is a national organization whose mission is to dramatically improve learning outcomes for all children in the U.S., with a special focus on students who are not served well. We are a team of professionals from many backgrounds, including former teachers. We are researchers, thought leaders, tool-builders, and on-the-ground consultants who work with leading education reformers.

Learn more about an Opportunity Culture on the [OpportunityCulture.org](http://OpportunityCulture.org) website, which provides [tools](#)—all free—to build an Opportunity Culture, [videos of teachers and principals](#), and related [resources](#). Funding for development of resources to help schools design and implement Opportunity Culture models and support teachers taking on new roles has been provided by [national foundations](#).

Educators who have worked in Opportunity Culture schools are [publishing a series of columns](#) about their work on national news sites.

For more information, please visit [www.OpportunityCulture.org](http://www.OpportunityCulture.org). To arrange an interview with Public Impact, contact Sharon Keschull Barrett at [Sharon.Barrett@publicimpact.com](mailto:Sharon.Barrett@publicimpact.com); 919.929.4544.