

2020 SIM Initiative Award



The SIM Initiative Award has been created with regional SIM Updates in mind for an opportunity to celebrate regional accomplishments. It is given to individuals or teams that have demonstrated determination, creativity, resourcefulness, and vision in providing students with the opportunity to benefit from the Strategic Instruction Model.

Rick Powers, Teri Queen, Laura Dendy and Laura Marsden, NC Adolescent Literacy Team (NC ALT) members, are consultants in the Program Improvement and Professional Development (PIPD) section of the Exceptional Children Division at the NC Department of Public Instruction. The dedicated members of the NC ALT collaborate effectively to ensure students in many new districts across North Carolina have the opportunity to receive the continued benefit of the Strategic Instruction Model. Through their vision and creativity, the team is building on the foundation of previous state consultants who have provided opportunities for SIM professional development (PD) in NC for decades.

In 2016, adolescent literacy was included as a component of the NC State Improvement Project (NC SIP), North Carolina's OSEP funded State Professional Development Grant. The formal team was established to support adolescent literacy across NC. The link with the NC SIP and the NC ALT tied the SIM roll out in NC to the implementation science structure. The link to NC SIP also guided districts to select site schools in feeder patterns from upper elementary to middle school and / or middle school to high school. One of the most powerful accomplishments of the NC ALT is their creation of an Adolescent Literacy Readiness Packet (<https://www.ncsip.org/adolescent-literacy>), co-developed by Rick, Teri, Laura and Laura.

The NC ALT is expanding SIM beyond individual teacher implementation at the classroom level and working to ensure sustainability at the district level by coaching district teams through the development and implementation of a district adolescent literacy plan based on their Adolescent Literacy Readiness Packet. District teams are expected to complete the packet as a team prior to their teachers' participation in PD.

The NC ALT team guides the adolescent literacy work at the state level which is rolled out to all regions by the PIPD team of regional consultants. District teams attend the regional Adolescent Literacy Awareness sessions presented by the state consultants. The completion of the Adolescent Literacy Readiness Packet by districts prior to attending PD has been so effective in NC, that the section is moving toward developing a readiness packet for their other initiatives. They have introduced an approach for District Literacy Teams moving from Exploration to Installation within a Continuous Improvement Cycle System for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) that works to sustain the implementation of SIM.

The team also analyzes surveys completed by teachers across NC to determine the support needed at regional SIM PD sessions, and the annual Exceptional Children Division Summer Institute. The NC ALT meets virtually and face-to-face to support district teams and utilizes webinars for a wider reach. Collaboration with the micro-credentialing process developed at KUCRL and supported by the team is increasing the sustainability of SIM in NC. The unique role and success of this team to positively impact adolescent literacy across North Carolina is a direct result of the commitment of Laura Dendy, Laura Marsden, Rick Powers and Teri Queen, and we honor their outstanding determination and vision with the SIM Initiative Award.



Laura Dendy



Laura Marsden



Rick Powers



Teri Queen