Micro-credentialing

...the non-traditional education path where the learner gains skill sets in a specific area and receives a credential. *The micro-credential is what you* **earn** *and the badge is what you* **display**.

- Credential: one has achieved competence; attainment of an industry recognized component
- Micro-credential: one has achieved competence in a small bit
- Badging: evidence of one's credential (badges are a visual representation of a micro-credential)

Micro-credentialing in NC

Innovative districts across NC are already piloting the use of micro-credentialing and offering digital badges as a way for educators to demonstrate competency and application in their classrooms. We already have policies in place that support the use competency based professional development:

> *"LEAs may develop an alternative license renewal plan that is competency-based and results-oriented. The plan must describe the connection among professional development, the school improvement plan, and the individual's license area or job responsibilities through processes such as peer review and annual evaluation. The plan may waive specific hour requirements that a licensed employee must meet and focus instead on knowledge and skill acquired by participants. The plan must align with the expectations of the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and include outcome measures and must be submitted to the Department for review in advance of its implementation."*

The Agency has convened a *Micro-credentialing and State Policy Workgroup* consisting of DPI staff, district stakeholders, and partner organizations (Winston-Salem Forsyth, Newton-Conover, Surry, CMS, UNC-G, NCSU-FI, and NC New Schools) to inform and define a framework for using micro-credentials to transform professional learning for educators. This Workgroup is exploring the lay of the land in NC as it relates to micro-credentialing and how we can support this across the state.

Goals:

- Increase the shared understanding of current practices, local/state/federal policies, types of professional development, and evidences/artifacts related to micro-credentialing;
- Establish a common language of standardized terms and definitions in order to support framework implementation;
- Develop a framework for transitioning from CEUs to a competency based metric where time is no longer the currency; and
- Develop an implementation guide and supporting resources to facilitate the transition to competency-based professional development leveraging micro-credentials.
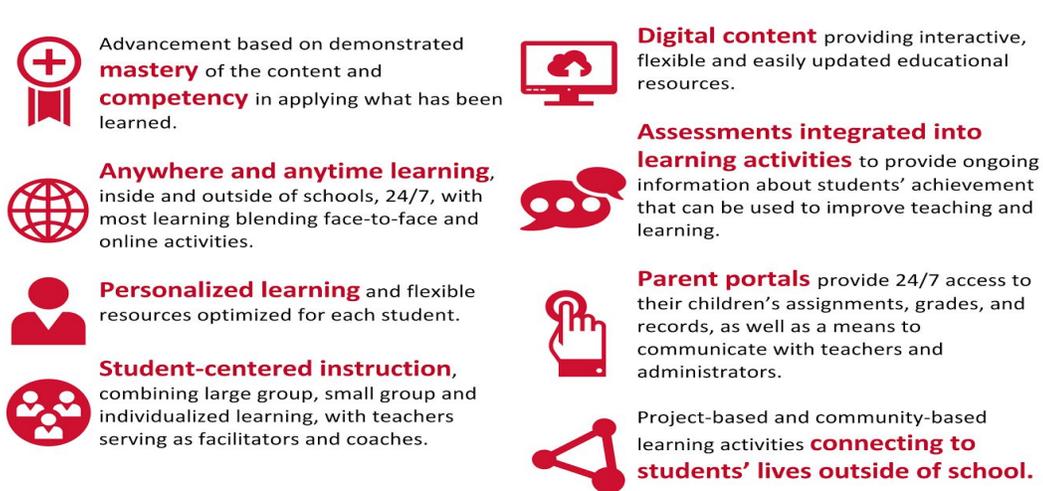
Deliverables:

- Provide a synthesized report (written document or presentation) documenting current practices, local/state/federal policies, types of professional development, and evidences/artifacts related to micro-credentialing

- Create a list of standard terms and definitions that are observed in practice that synthesizes existing language, clarifies ambiguous terms and/or program/regional specific jargon, and proposes new language when/if needed

- Create a documented framework that provides usable guidance for schools and LEAs to award/interpret CEUs based on demonstrated mastery of content

Timeline:
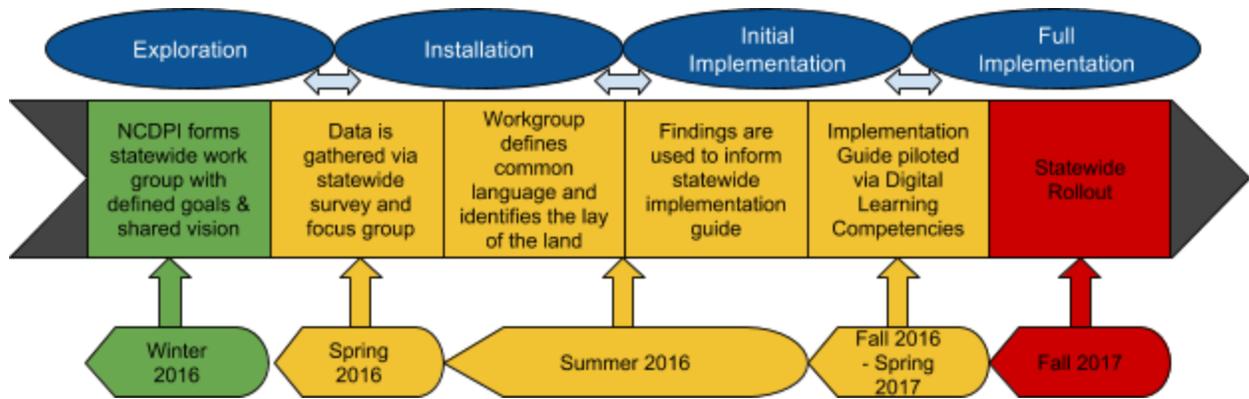
Teaching and Learning in the digital age includes a focus on advancement based on demonstrated mastery of content and competency in applying what has been learned. What implication does our current PD offer in changing teacher practice?

Advancement based on demonstrated **mastery** of the content and **competency** in applying what has been learned.

Anywhere and anytime learning, inside and outside of schools, 24/7, with most learning blending face-to-face and online activities.

Personalized learning and flexible resources optimized for each student.

Student-centered instruction, combining large group, small group and individualized learning, with teachers serving as facilitators and coaches.

Digital content providing interactive, flexible and easily updated educational resources.

Assessments integrated into learning activities to provide ongoing information about students' achievement that can be used to improve teaching and learning.

Parent portals provide 24/7 access to their children's assignments, grades, and records, as well as a means to communicate with teachers and administrators.

Project-based and community-based learning activities **connecting to students' lives outside of school.**

Background:
Digital Promise is an independent, bipartisan nonprofit, that has been leading the work of Micro-credentials at a national level. Through Digital Promise's report, Making Professional Learning Count: Recognizing Educators' Skills with Micro-credentials, the demand for personalized learning for educators is highlighted. Feedback from a nationally representative sample of educators on professional development and micro-credentials found that nearly 70 percent of educators seek out both formal and informal professional learning activities to become better teachers.
In the paper, Preparing Leaders for Deeper Learning, by Getting Smart and Digital Promise, it stresses the need for programs that prepare and develop school and district leaders who will create and sustain deeper learning environments.

The paper addresses two fundamental questions:
- As a growing body of schools and districts recognize the need for deeper, blended, competency-based learning environments for students, how must the role of leaders evolve to create and sustain them?
- How must leader preparation and ongoing professional development evolve to fully enable teacher and leader success in this new environment?

7 Lessons Learned from Implementing Micro-credential
by Lauren Acree,
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