

2010-11

Every Student Matters,
Every Teacher Counts

Quality Teaching



Learn About:

The QTL Process
QTL Partnerships
Foundations in QTL
New & Emerging Teacher Institute
21st Century Classroom Series
QTL and *Race to the Top*

Teaching the 21st Century Learner

QTL addresses concepts and strategies including:

- Brain-Based Learning
- Classroom Environments Conducive to Learning
- Learning Styles
- Multiple Intelligences
- Differentiation
- Cooperative Learning
- "Engaged Learning"
- Critical Thinking Skills
- Assessment
- Professional Learning Communities



Principal: QTL Key to “Dramatic Changes” at Creswell

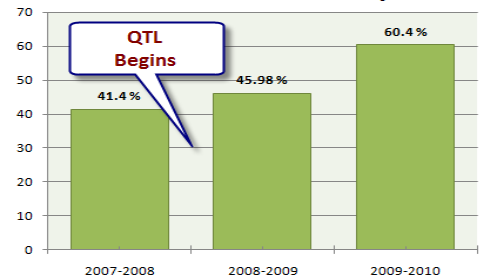
Principal Randy Steele has plenty to brag about these days. In an era of shrinking budgets and rising demand for performance, Steele has seen test scores and student engagement skyrocket in the past year at Creswell High School. Steele credits his teachers’ new approach to lesson plans, and cites the school’s partnership with Quality Teaching and Learning (QTL) as the “concrete” that solidified the staff’s efforts.

“We saw some huge gains in the areas that QTL was working on with our staff,” says Steele whose eastern North Carolina school has seen what he calls “dramatic changes” in scores since retooling classroom strategies.

A 2009 review by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction supports Steele’s claim that QTL has been one of the positive actions the school has taken to improve student success and performance.

The review, shared with QTL by the school, says: “The Quality Teaching and Learning Initiative, with its ongoing coaching, has created the structure for collaboration and the discussion of teaching and learning.”

Creswell High School Student Proficiency



Creswell High partnered with QTL to help teachers find more effective and affordable ways to engage students. QTL customized a plan for Creswell that successfully fit the school’s needs.

“QTL helped us develop a common language, work together as a faculty to problem-solve, and find different ways to incorporate research-based learning strategies with technology and other areas,” adds Steele.

CHANGES continued on page 2



The QTL Process

The QTL Process is designed to help schools and districts achieve more by showing teachers new ways to create an active and engaging learning environment.

The QTL Process is a highly customizable professional development plan. It typically begins with the five-day *Foundations of QTL*, followed by collaborative projects where teachers implement strategies they've learned. The Process can continue with more advanced professional development sessions, coaching and other services.

For Educators:

- A higher level of teacher professionalism
- A deeper and greater understanding of how to be an effective instructional leader
- Richer instructional design so that learning takes place at a higher level.

For Students:

- Academic achievement
- Higher graduation rates
- Career skill attainment

Principal: QTL Key to “Dramatic Changes” at Creswell

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An analysis of Classroom Walkthrough data at Creswell shows improvement in 18 different areas of instruction. Creswell High teachers showed a **63% increase in the variety of instructional practices** they used, and a **62% increase in the use of Marzano’s nine essential instructional strategies**. Observers also recorded a **40% increase of student work at the application and analysis level**, and a **55% increase of student work at synthesis and evaluation levels**.

Creswell’s success didn’t come overnight. Principal Steele says major changes began last year with the new approach to lesson plans. The school increased its emphasis on Marzano’s strategies, Bloom’s taxonomy, and Classroom Walkthroughs.

Steele saw a conference presentation on the QTL Process last year and saw it as the last piece of the puzzle.

And those test scores Steele mentioned? The impact of these collaborative efforts is

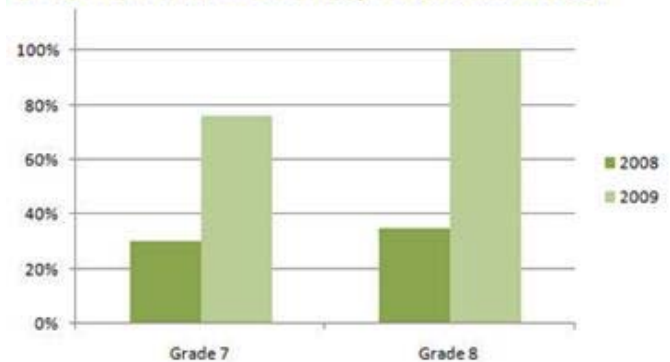
clear, especially in the middle grades, where reading scores shot up sharply and pass rates more than doubled in math.

The success story likely won’t end here for Creswell. Expectations remain high as they continue to comb through data to identify

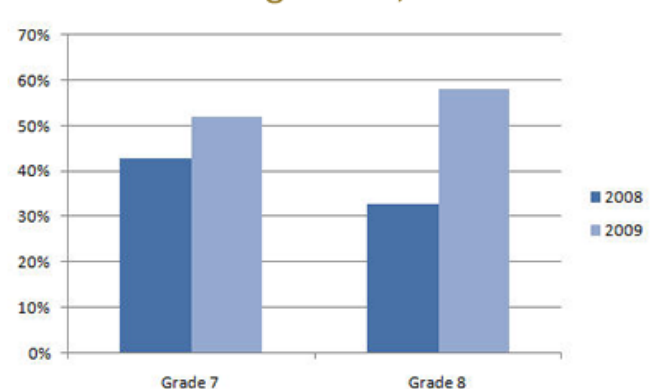
students in need of differentiated instruction and dissect strategies for further improvement.

Steele says the institutionalized strategies and common language developed with QTL form another building block for student success: consistency.

Creswell Math Scores, 2008 vs. 2009:



Creswell Reading Scores, 2008 vs. 2009:



“If a teacher wants to use a specific strategy in the classroom, the kids already know what they’re talking about and what’s expected.”

QTL Programs Align with NC RttT Goals

QTL Offers Services that Help Schools Support the Pillars of Race to the Top

QTL programs strongly support the pillars of North Carolina's Race to the Top goals. We work with you and your staff to customize processes designed to achieve those goals and eliminate obstacles that get in the way of student success.

Many districts utilize a QTL partnership to strengthen teaching practice. Others identify in-school coaching for teachers or administrators as a priority. Others focus on data and assessment, collaborative planning, or the effective use of 21st Century learning tools to enhance student success.



QTL's Teacher-Focused Programs demonstrate effective, proven teaching practices and their power to reach students regardless of different strengths and learning styles. QTL teacher programs and coaching sessions address topics such as:

- *Meaningful and practical understanding of instructional theory and teaching strategies*
- *Purposeful use of assessment and data*
- *Implementation of research-based strategies to address targeted student needs*
- *Collaborative cross-curricular planning*
- *Needs of new and emerging teachers*
- *Effective use of 21st Century technology tools (including digital devices, Web 2.0 sites, data and assessment tools, student response systems, 1:1 laptop initiatives and more)*

QTL's Leadership-Focused Programs enable administrators and other school leaders to maximize the limited time and resources available to impact student achievement. QTL Leadership Seminars and coaching help school leaders understand how they can best support the efforts of their teachers and foster the success of the QTL Initiative in their school.

QTL's School-Wide Programs address a variety of needs:

- *Analyzing and strengthening teaching practices throughout a school*
- *Preparing teachers to incorporate the appropriate use of classroom technology to engage students and teach the content*
- *Demonstrating new tools for turning passive students into active learners.*

QTL programs can be tailored to specific local needs and specific Race to the Top initiatives. The result can transform schools in many positive ways, leading to change that's sustainable even after the funding is gone. Contact us to find out how QTL can fit into your RttT plan or school improvement efforts.

"The digital learning environment will be driven by curriculum and instruction goals. To ensure the focus remains on instructional goals, Rutherford County Schools is in the second year of an intensive program, the Quality Teaching Learning Process.

The implementation of this program is building the foundation teachers will need to mold their teaching methods to a collaborative way of teaching needed for the 1:1 initiative."

Sonja Smith

*Instructional Technology
Coordinator,
Rutherford County Schools*



QTL Partnerships

The QTL Partnership Plan enables school systems to provide QTL programs to their faculties effectively and affordably. The district's own staff development professionals lead QTL sessions and nurture professional learning communities, with the goal of developing 21st Century Classrooms across the district.

Find out more at
www.qtlcenters.org/programs/districtpartnerships.htm

or contact us:
info@qtlcenters.org
888.507.3800



District Partnerships Bring QTL Close to Home

QTL Partnerships enable local instructional technology staff to deliver QTL programs.

Rutherford County Schools has become the latest district to begin implementing QTL programs through a partnership with The Centers for Quality Teaching and Learning.

RCS opened its own QTL Center in early 2010, and has prepared several members of its instructional technology staff to deliver *Foundations in QTL* to teachers.

“Our hopes and goals for the QTL Partnership are for every teacher to gain an understanding of 21st Century learning,” says district Technology Professional Development Coordinator Sonja Smith. “We want our teachers to focus not only on the integration of technology but also on the various other

teaching strategies introduced throughout the QTL Profess that encourage teachers to develop a more student-centered approach to delivering instruction.”

The partnership began with QTL staff delivering several sessions for teachers and instructional leaders across Rutherford County during Summer 2009. All principals and assistant principals and many Central Office administrators took part, along with dozens of teachers representing all the county's schools.

After that successful launch, the district began training half a dozen Technology Facilitators to deliver the program to the rest of the faculty during after-school sessions.

“I was a little worried about the (after school) time frame,” says Smith. “When teachers left smiling at 6:00, I was relieved. The teachers provided our instructors very positive feedback on their learning.”

To help prepare local instructors, QTL instructional staff provide guidance, coaching, and numerous resources including instructor manuals, videos, and an online Professional Learning Community of other QTL instructors. An annual conference of QTL instructors is held each January, and Rutherford County's instructors attended that session two weeks before launching their own center in Rutherfordton.

Other districts that have QTL Partnerships are training additional staff and expanding the program's impact and support system.

“We have just completed a QTL Foundations cycle with the county curriculum coaches,” says Brunswick County QTL instructor Pat Smith. “They will be a great asset to the county in supporting QTL and providing regular coaching in their schools.”



Rutherford County Technology Facilitators joined peers from other counties at the annual QTL Instructor Summit in January.

Read a QTL Partnership profile at www.qtlcenters.org/impact/franklin-partnership.htm
Watch a video on Johnston County's partnership at www.qualityteaching.net/qtl

"The professional development has been wonderful and given teachers the knowledge they need to provide the best instructional practices for our students which will overall impact student achievement."

Susan Campbell
Taylorsville Principal



Check out a video of the NCTA Demonstration Project at Taylorsville!

qualityteaching.net/qtl

See the evaluation and results of all the NCTA projects at

www.qtlcenters.org/qtl/news/ncta.htm



Federal Projects Show Impact of Technology & Training

Superintendent Credits Technology Grant and Professional Development for Gains

Does classroom technology really impact student performance? Nine North Carolina schools offer living proof that it can — particularly when teachers receive guidance in using those tech tools effectively.

During the past decade, the **North Carolina Technology Association** has spearheaded a series of federally funded demonstration projects in rural school districts. The projects brought new equipment, along with teacher training to ensure that it truly impacted student achievement.

The Centers for Quality Teaching and Learning has served as NCTA's professional development partner for each of the projects, offering sessions that helped teachers incorporate proven teaching strategies into lesson plans along with the new technology.

As a ninth NCTA project got underway in Warren County in 2010, educators in rural Alexander County were celebrating the success of their 2009 effort.

Taylorsville Elementary was the beneficiary of that grant, receiving new equipment along with professional development. Since the

grant's implementation, math scores at the school have soared. Taylorsville's math performance composite went from 62% to 90.4% (*see table for grade-level specifics*). That puts the school, where 75% of the student body qualifies for Free and Reduced Lunch, in position to be removed from the state's School Improvement list this year.

During a celebration at the completion of the project in Alexander County, district Superintendent Jack Hoke said teachers and students deserve a round of applause for the gains. He also credits the NCTA grant and the QTL program.

"(This) shows that if you allow teachers an opportunity to get together with quality professional development and time to share, they can do great things."

For video and more details, see the links at left.

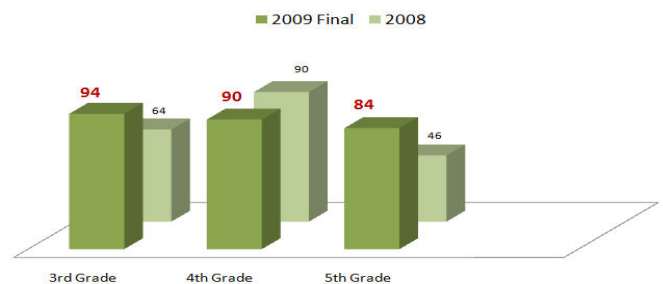
Thirty-two Taylorsville Elementary teachers completed the QTL professional development process in 2009, beginning with five days of professional development followed by a study of student data and collaborative projects that addressed specific needs.

"The result," said NCTA project manager Sheila Mitchiner, "is a well-organized training plan designed to help teachers and administrators focus on North Carolina core curriculum standards, use modern technology resources, implement new designs for teaching and learning, establish classroom management strategies, and generate best practices."

Not every school has access to NCTA grants, but quality staff development is available to all. Contact us for information on bringing QTL to your school or district:

info@qtlcenters.org

Taylorsville Math Scores



Data-Driven Decisions Pay Off for Virginia Schools

Bedford County teachers' enthusiasm and focus lead to a notable increase in student engagement - and a significant rise in test scores.

Two formerly struggling elementary schools have taken similar paths to newfound success. Having fallen short of AYP goals, principals at Bedford County, Virginia's Thaxton Elementary and Montvale Elementary recognized the need for a different approach. They knew teachers would have to be part of the process, and they would have to find out where current classroom strategies fell short.

Fresh from summer sessions of Foundations in Quality Teaching and Learning, teachers began the 2008 - 2009 school year by taking an in-depth look at specific student skills and needs. With the help of Quality Teaching and Learning (QTL) instructors, teachers looked at the available data to determine exactly where students were missing specific skills to increase performance.

By the end of the school year, both schools made AYP and are looking to make even greater gains this year. But it wasn't just the principals' commitments that led to these student success stories. QTL instructors who worked with these partner schools noted that teachers



frequently stayed after school to work together in study groups or find new ways to differentiate instruction.

At Montvale Elementary, teachers began by examining vocabulary skills, and looking at benchmark data to determine target areas and working on those areas during the year. At each grade level, teachers kept a notebook of student data to track those who needed to master specific skills in order to perform grade level tasks. The students who had not mastered specific skills received remediation, and those who had mastered skills received enrichment.

The focus was on improving reading and literacy skills at Thaxton Elementary. In an interview with Principal Judy

Reynolds, she said the difference was obvious in the students when teachers began implementing the classroom strategies used in the QTL summer sessions.

"I think they were really engaged," said Reynolds, "...we made the rooms more child-centered, using document cameras, other technology and techniques."

Teachers we talked with after the training said QTL instruction empowered them to be part of the process.

"QTL was very professional and they gave me lots of strategies that I could use in the classroom," said 3rd Grade Teacher Barbara Potts. The students responded well to everything, and it gave me ... many more tools to use when I'm teaching."

"I actually enjoyed teaching so much more this year... like when you first started teaching."

April Stephenson
4th Grade Teacher

"QTL was very professional and they gave me lots of strategies that I could use in the classroom... the students responded well to everything, and it gave me many more tools to use when I'm teaching."

Barbara Potts
3rd Grade Teacher



For information on QTL in Virginia, contact
Theresa Bell
tbell@qtlcenters.org
919.218.2024



Watch a video about QTL at Bedford County's Thaxton Elementary School!

www.qualityteaching.net/qtl

Foundations in QTL

Foundations in Quality Teaching and Learning is a five-day intensive professional development that is typically a teacher's first exposure to the QTL Process™.

Participants in this program attend sessions in a model classroom and learn new ways to engage students. The focus is strengthening lessons by incorporating research-based teaching strategies along with technology and other tools.

This five-day process is followed by an **implementation** phase involving collaborative work. Teams of teachers use student data to identify specific needs, and use the strategies and tools they've learned to plan teaching across the curriculum.

Hear Carla Jernigan's podcast interview:

qtlcenters.org/impact/news



Expectations on the Rise at Wake County High School

Students Responding to Teachers Taking More Active Role



If you ask Principal Carla Jernigan what it takes for students to succeed at Knightdale High School, she'll tell you: it's all about the teachers. And she's expecting – and getting – even more from both.

“Our teachers are taking more responsibility for learning in the classroom,” Jernigan says. “They really are taking responsibility for every aspect of our school environment. That really helps our students succeed.”

When end of grade exam scores and other benchmarks at this school just outside Raleigh came in below expectations, Jernigan enlisted the strategies of the Centers for Quality Teaching and Learning (QTL) to turn

things around.

“Last year we were looking at our data and we were trying to figure out how we could really impact teaching and learning in our classrooms,” says Jernigan.

Jernigan says teachers examined student data, identified performance trends and specific student needs, then shared what they found with their professional learning communities. Their action plan included cooperative study groups, tutoring sessions and use of new technology – all of which had been modeled to teachers during their training with QTL. And when students began to consistently attend math tutorial sessions, they

knew they were doing something right at KHS.

The credit, Jernigan adds, goes to getting teachers more involved in the process. “You see it in the classrooms, you see it in the halls when teachers are on duty, you see it in staff meetings... it allows the teachers to really give their opinions about the issues that we are trying to work on.”

QTL began working with Knightdale High in the fall of 2008, with 20 lead teachers going through *Foundations in QTL*, which gives teachers a common understanding of research-based instructional strategies, 21st Century Learning Skills and the use of classroom technology for increased student learning.

Watch a video of the QTL Process and how it offers the highest quality professional development for teachers!

qualityteaching.net/qtl

New & Emerging Teacher Institute Boosts New Teachers

Northampton County Preps 20 New Teachers for Classroom Success



These Charlotte-Mecklenburg teachers were among the first NETI participants.

When Northampton County Public Schools found it had more than 20 new teachers coming into the system last spring, administrators knew they needed to do something quickly to support and prepare them for the classroom.

“We had an opportunity to get these teachers some top quality support and we certainly found it,” says Dr. Nicholas King, the Chief Academic Officer of this northeastern North Carolina county. “We put the focus on supporting teachers this year and we got off to a great start by enrolling them in the New and Emerging Teacher Institute.”

Like many other school districts, Northampton County has turned to hiring non-traditional teachers, due in part to a teacher shortage in the state. Many of these teachers receive some training before they are

hired, but they are not graduates of colleges of education.

“Most of the new teachers we hired were from organizations that pull out the cream of the crop from colleges and universities,” Dr. King says. He adds that those new teachers received “a little training, but they weren’t prepared for what it would be like in the classroom.”

The New and Emerging Teacher Institute, or NETI, gives new and lateral entry teachers a practical, realistic understanding of the process of teaching before they face the challenges that are common to new teachers. It prepares them to meet administrators’ expectations, to initiate relationships with their new peers, to communicate with parents, and to “navigate the system.” It provides strategies for managing all of

that without taking away from their most important task: engaging and teaching their students. Some newly hired teachers have insufficient knowledge of the state standards and how to use objectives to build lesson plans. NETI prepares new teachers with strategies for success, helps fulfill some state-mandated professional development requirements, and aids in teacher retention.

NETI participants attend in their own district for three days in the summer, as a part of the state mandated 10 days of professional development before entering the classroom. They take part in three more sessions after school starts so they are supported in situations they perhaps didn’t foresee.

Dr. King says starting the program before the school year begins and then following up after teachers are actually in the classroom is “a brilliant idea” and one of the best features of NETI.

The other positive Dr. King sees in the NETI program is the opportunity for teachers to collaborate and participate in a forum that is focused on good teaching practices and aimed at strengthening their instructional strategies.

The New and Emerging Teacher Institute (NETI) is designed to help teachers get from their first day in the classroom to their fifth year and beyond.

NETI immerses participants into practical strategies for classroom management and student engagement. Sessions are directly related to Best Practices and to research-based teaching methods.

The theories teachers learned in college are put to the test when they enter the classroom for real. NETI helps them make sense of it all - from creating effective lesson plans to dealing with the challenges of the school environment.

“I am more than happy to suggest that other districts use QTL’s model for New & Emerging Teachers. Due to the student success in behavior and academics... we are scheduling this as part of our ten-day orientation for lateral entry teachers.”

Terri Sessoms

Johnston County Schools

[www.qtlcenters.org/
programs/newteachers.htm](http://www.qtlcenters.org/programs/newteachers.htm)

21st Century Classroom Seminar Series

QTL's approach to creating the 21st Century Classroom examines how the elements of teaching practice, learning theory and current technology can work together to ensure student success. Understanding how to utilize Web 2.0 and other technology tools is just the beginning. Educators must also understand how to use these tools to effectively impact learning and increase student achievement.

"QTL added relevant and exciting workshops to a successful and productive conference. Our teaching will be stronger and our students will have a greater learning experience next year thanks to the ideas that were generated and the work that was done at SummerSALT."

Wynn Smith

Executive Director of Technology
Wilson County Schools



SummerSALT Sparks Teachers' Creativity

Superintendent Credits Technology Grant and Professional Development

What do artichokes, plantains and squash have in common with GPS, laptops and wikis? A June conference challenged teachers to think creatively and integrate a variety of tools into 21st Century teaching. SummerSALT stands for Study and Learn Together. Wilson County, NC schools developed the professional development week as "an acrobatic combination of skills and abilities integrating the best of curriculum and technology."

The Centers for Quality Teaching and Learning (QTL) proved a perfect workout partner, providing the following four day-long sessions for participants:

- *Engaging Inquiring Minds*
- *Designing Instruction for Consistently High Levels of Learning*
- *Professional Learning Communities That Work*
- *The Role of Assessment in the 21st Century*

Closely aligned with QTL's emphasis on high quality teaching, SummerSALT's revolutionary approach included fresh course offerings in a full agenda that improved instructors' strength, balance and flexibility in both instructional disciplines.

So what about those artichokes? "We were told that after lunch we will have a project

that involves an artichoke, a plantain, an eggplant and an acorn squash," said teacher Victoria Bennett. That piqued her interest. "I wonder what it could be?"

Afterwards she confirmed, "Engaging Inquiring Minds has been very interesting. We have begun talking about information processing models and I am excited to put this to use in my classroom."

QTL instructor Steve Puls said teachers' confidence grew as they added creative skills to enliven and enhance student performance. "A learning community that promotes innovation and open discourse helps ensure best practice implementation for everyone."

Teacher Vanita Sharma added, "It's nice to get a chance to socialize with everyone across the county in the teaching fraternity."

Some 450 teachers filled up the SummerSALT sessions with enthusiasm and left with instructional strategies to better reach students.

The sessions led by QTL staff were part of the organization's 21st Century Classroom Series, sessions which can be offered to school staff during professional development conferences like SummerSALT, or on teacher workdays or early release days.



QTL Takes Flight in Arkansas Schools

Teachers learn, collaborate, plan, and follow through with great lessons.

2010 will be a busy year for QTL in Arkansas, with multiple schools and districts planning session for their teachers during the summer.

Texarkana's Genoa School District sent teachers through the program during Summer 2009, with follow-up sessions conducted during this school year.

Genoa is like many others across the country these days; working hard to raise standards and improve student performance in a world of shrinking budgets and increased competition. But what makes this southwest Arkansas school system unique is its effort to involve all grades in all schools toward a common goal.

Last summer elementary, middle and high school teachers participated in joint professional development led by The Centers for Quality Teaching and Learning. It was a new experience making teachers a more active part of the equation.

"I haven't had an opportunity to work so closely with elementary and middle school teachers," said Gia Falls, a high school math teacher. "I learned a lot from



QTL models engaging activities.

the collaboration."

And that collaboration reinforced the relationships that get a large part of the credit for student success here.

"Our students do well because of the good relationships between students and teachers and administrators," added middle school principal Deloris Coe.

It's part of the district's plan to build a solid learning community.

"We stress learning for all," says Genoa Central High School Principal Bobby Hart. "This means that learning is as important for adults in my building as it is for students."

Hart points out that when adults exhibit a love of learning, it's reflected in the students.

"They see adults enjoy learning and all of a sudden school is not a 178-day grind,

it's a place where everyone can enjoy learning."

The result is a district-wide atmosphere and culture that focuses on learning.

"Our staff will take what they learned back to the classroom," added Genoa Central Elementary Principal, Jane Scott. Scott said the collaborative sessions gave members of her staff "different ways of doing different things."

Debbie Coffman, instructor with The Centers for Quality Teaching and Learning (QTL) lead the week of professional development with Genoa's teachers and staff. "It was a great week," Coffman said. "The teachers here enjoy the atmosphere their administrators have created for them."

"We see the professional development from QTL as the first step in the 'Good to Great' process we are implementing in Genoa," says Hart.

"We see the professional development from QTL as the first step in the 'Good to Great' process we are implementing in Genoa."

Bobby Hart

Genoa Central High School Principal

For information on bringing QTL to a district in Arkansas or surrounding states, contact

Debbie Coffman:

dcoffman@qtlcenters.org

870.761.7607

For information on QTL in Mississippi, contact

Dr. Dewey Blackledge:

dblackledge@qtlcenters.org

601.408.8787





THE QTL PROCESS

The **QTL Process** is a series of school-based professional development programs aimed at increasing student engagement and achievement. Beginning with the five-day *Foundations in QTL*, schools can customize a QTL plan that meets local needs.

Details inside!



NEW & EMERGING TEACHER INSTITUTE

The **New & Emerging Teacher Institute (NETI)** gives new teachers a successful start in the classroom. This practical six-day program begins with three days before school starts and continues with three days of follow-up during the school year.

Learn more inside this issue.

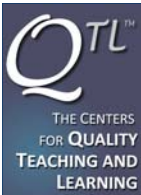


THE CENTERS FOR QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

The **Centers for Quality Teaching and Learning** is an educational non-profit that partners with schools and districts to provide high quality, high impact professional development for teachers, helping them find ways to reach **every student, every day.**

Find us at www.qtlcenters.org.

Quality Teaching 2010-11



The Centers for Quality Teaching and Learning
4009 Barrett Dr. Suite 102
Raleigh, NC 27609

888.507.3800 (toll-free)
info@qtlcenters.org