



2014

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Implementation of the Master Plan for Statewide Professional Staff Development for 2013-2014

An Evaluation Study

The Master Plan for Statewide Professional Development (PD Master Plan) includes major providers from four PD provider groups: the Center for Professional Development (CPD), institutions of higher education (IHEs), regional education service agencies (RESAs), and the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE). The goal of this evaluation was to study the effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of the plan.

Method of study. Most data were collected via more than a thousand reports submitted by providers and more than 4,500 responses to a survey from a random sample of participants in the sessions.

Findings. Regarding effectiveness, the PD Master Plan included more topics (479), sessions (1,056), and participants (33,196) than in previous years. Providers' session reports showed that of the total participants, about 5,700 educators participated in PD lasting at least 30 hours, which is the duration shown by research to be the minimum needed to change teacher practice and impact student learning. The two Board Standards for Professional Learning that providers least often reported meeting were Standard 4 (Use of data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning) and Standard 6 (Applies research on change and sustains support for implementation for long-term change). Of five research-based PD practices, *active learning* scored lowest; only slightly higher was *sufficient duration and timespan*. Regarding efficiency, decentralization of PD appears to be working, with the WVDE decreasing its offerings, while the RESAs' rose dramatically; still, the WVDE reported the greatest numbers for both sessions held and participants in attendance. RESAs and WVDE offices operated very collaboratively, partnering with each other and IHEs. CPD, on the other hand operated independently with few collaborations according to their session reports. Regarding impact of the Master Plan, all four of the Board's Goals for Professional Development received coverage, and the participant surveys showed a high level of general agreement—at least 75%—that the sessions they attended had been helpful in meeting the Board goal with which it was aligned. According to retrospective self-reports, the PD had large effects on educators' knowledge of the PD topic, and moderate effects on their practice and attitudes/beliefs.

Limitations of study. The response rate for this study was lower than usual, and the use of a retrospective pretest/posttest methodology to assess changes in knowledge, behavior and skills, and attitudes and beliefs poses some concerns.

Recommendations include (a) address research-based PD practices and Board Standards for Professional Learning that lagged behind others as described above; (b) bring the last of the public IHEs into the PD Master Plan; (c) promote the Board's Standards for Professional Learning at the school and district levels; (d) adopt a model for PD providers that aligns with and supports research-based PD practices and local learning communities; (e) revisit the purposes and possible uses of the PD Master Plan to guide PD, aligning it to the Transforming Professional Development Initiative; and (f) consider ways to redesign the evaluation of the PD Master Plan and put it to better use.

For more information, contact Patricia Cahape Hammer, Office of Research (phammer@k12.wv.us), or download the full report from the Office of Research website at:
<http://wvde.state.wv.us/research/reports2014.html>.

Recommendations include (a) address research-based PD practices and Board Standards for Professional Learning that lagged behind others as described here; (b) bring the last of the public IHEs into the PD Master Plan; (c) promote the Board's Standards for Professional Learning at the school and district levels; (d) adopt a model for PD providers that aligns with and supports research-based PD practices and local learning communities; (e) revisit the purposes and possible uses of the PD Master Plan to guide PD, aligning it to the Transforming Professional Development Initiative; and (f) consider ways to redesign the evaluation of the PD Master Plan and put it to better use.