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## ABSTRACT

This study examined professional development offered in South Carolina, how it was offered, support given to implement skills acquired from professional development, and how professional development enhanced academic goals outlined in district and school strategic plans. The paper describes characteristics of high quality professional development (e.g., focus on rigorous content knowledge and content-specific instructional practices, teacher and principal engagement as active learners and problem solvers, and content derived from research and examples of best practice). The study involved surveys of 3,250 educators, case studies of professional development in 10 school districts, interviews with State Department of Education staff, and review of documents on state professional development programs and policies. While many teachers believed the professional development available to them was worthwhile, it missed the mark for many others. Though teachers and principals did not give professional development very high marks, many schools and districts were reasonably positive environments for it. Respondents did not have enough time to take advantage of what they learned in professional development. State and local level professional development were primarily supply-driven. Locally, professional development was fragmented. Recommendations for improving professional development quality are included. Two appendixes present research design, methodology, and survey instruments. (SM)

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## A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH CAROLINA

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January 2001

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Ms. Shirley Chapman, Principal, Hughes Academy  
Dr. Paul Horne, Director of Curriculum and Program Review, Education Oversight Committee

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Finally, we are very grateful to the many South Carolina teachers, principals, and district administrators and staff who spent time talking with us about their professional learning experiences. This study would not have been possible without their help. We hope that our report will be of benefit to them and their colleagues.

MBH  
LF

January 2001  
Washington, D.C.

## Introduction

Increasingly, policymakers, practitioners, and researchers agree that the professional development of teachers, principals, and other educators is the cornerstone of successful education reform. The introduction of rigorous standards for student learning and the assessments necessary to measure mastery of these standards require teachers to have thorough knowledge of content and to be able to draw on a broad repertoire of instructional strategies to help all students meet the standards. New models for comprehensive school reforms require teachers, principals, and school staff to assume challenging new roles as they transform their schools. For some teachers and principals, the new roles require extending their current knowledge and skills to incorporate new information and practices. For others, the challenges posed by the new roles are much more daunting. These educators may require considerable help in merely shoring up weak mastery of content and basic instructional skills. They require even more help in mastering more complex content and sophisticated instructional practices associated with standards-based reforms and the management strategies necessary to support them. Many schools and districts also employ large numbers of new teachers who may require help in learning the basics of their new jobs as well as the complex roles they will take on as they gain experience. For all of these reasons, professional development has emerged as one of the most important policy and program issues of the decade.

In 1998, the South Carolina legislature passed the Education Accountability Act (EAA), which affirms the legislature's commitment to high-quality education for all of South Carolina's children. This legislation also affirms the legislature's recognition that the professional development of teachers, principals, and other educators is essential to efforts to improve education. Passage of the EAA puts South Carolina at the forefront of states that are setting policies that link education reform, accountability, and professional development. As implementation of the key provisions of the EAA proceeds, the convergence of programs and policies provides enormous opportunities for sweeping reforms in schools and classrooms across the state. The convergence also presents real challenges. In the area of professional development, the challenges include creating and maintaining the high-quality professional learning opportunities envisioned in the statutes and ensuring that these activities focus on the rigorous new standards and the accountability system that accompanies them.

As part of the larger strategy to improve professional development as a component of comprehensive education reform, section 59-18-1930 of the EAA charges the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) with the responsibility of providing a comprehensive review of professional development in South Carolina. In 1999, the EOC commissioned Policy Studies Associates to conduct this review. Specifically, the study was to describe and report on:

- What professional development is offered;

- How the professional development is offered;
- The support given to implement the skills acquired from professional development; and
- How the professional development enhances the academic goals outlined in district and school strategic plans.

A central goal of this review is to identify ways to make high-quality professional learning opportunities available for South Carolina educators, and to offer recommendations for state policymakers and program administrators, district and school leaders, and professional organizations with a stake in the reform efforts.

Our review of professional development begins with a brief discussion of four characteristics of high-quality professional development. Next is an overview of the study design. We present the findings about the content, format, and governance of professional development available to South Carolina educators in the third section, and we discuss our conclusions and recommendations in the final section. There are two appendices. Appendix 1 is a discussion of the study design and methodology. Appendix 2 includes the four survey instruments administered for this study.

## Four Characteristics of High-Quality Professional Development

Just as there is growing consensus about the importance of the professional development of teachers and principals, there is increasingly strong agreement about the characteristics of high-quality professional development. As Tom Corcoran (1995) and others have concluded, high-quality professional development challenges participants' intellect, adds to their skills and knowledge, enhances their contributions to the organization and climate of their schools, and leads to improvements in their practice. And, most important, it leads to increased student learning.

There are four characteristics of high-quality professional development, which have informed the design of our study and the recommendations we offer.<sup>1</sup>

1. *A focus on rigorous content knowledge and content-specific instructional practices.* When professional development focuses on (a) the content that teachers are expected to teach, particularly as this content is articulated by the state and local standards and

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<sup>1</sup> Other studies and essays have offered different lists of the characteristics of high-quality professional development, but most, if not all, of these lists focus on similar themes to define the elements of high-quality professional development. See, for example, "The essentials of effective professional development: A new consensus," by Hawley and Valli (2000).

accountability systems, and (b) using appropriate instructional strategies, it is more likely to result in changes in instruction. Workshops and other kinds of training that merely inform teachers about standards and instructional strategies associated with them are typically not sufficient, by themselves, to ensure mastery or implementation. Similarly, professional development that focuses on generic instructional strategies without attention to content is unlikely to result in changes in instruction.

2. ***Teacher and principal engagement as active learners and problem solvers.*** Professional learning opportunities have the greatest impact when they engage teachers and principals in learning activities that are directly related to their work and that help them solve problems that they confront. This characteristic also has important implications for the organization and governance of professional development. Because teachers and principals have valuable insights about what they need to learn, they should be actively involved in designing and planning professional development.
3. ***Learning opportunities embedded in the daily work of teachers and principals.*** As Milbrey McLaughlin (1994) observed, “teachers professional development of the most meaningful sort takes place not in a workshop or in discrete, bounded convocations, but in the context of professional communities-discourse communities, learning communities.” Activities such as peer observation, discussion groups, collaborative lesson planning, joint work on curriculum or school improvement teams, mentoring, and networking are all examples of job-embedded learning opportunities that can have a positive impact on practice. Opportunities for individual reflection and practice-often reflection and practice associated with skills presented in traditional workshops-can also have a positive impact on practice. Rather than being at odds with traditional training, sustained, job-embedded professional development provides a context in which the traditional activities and events can contribute to improved practice.
4. ***Content derived from research and examples of best practice.*** Professional development is most effective when it provides access to the best research on what works and to the experience of successful practitioners. Effective professional development not only informs participants about what works, it also informs them about the conditions that facilitate or hinder success. In short, when the content of professional development is based on research and best practice, it contributes to teachers' and principals' ability to make informed, reliable choices about how to improve their work.

Together, and as a definition of high-quality professional development, these characteristics have four important implications for policymakers and those responsible for planning, organizing, and conducting professional development. First, as the new South Carolina Professional Development Standards clearly demonstrate, these characteristics can inform the articulation of professional development standards. Second, these characteristics expand traditional visions of professional development by including activities that are job-embedded and often informal, as well as more familiar activities such as workshops, courses, and other kinds of training. Third, the focus on job-embedded professional development and professional development oriented to participants' definitions of problems and solutions mean that professional development is essentially a local, often school-based process.

Fourth, professional development is an ongoing process and not a series of events-although individual events such as workshops and similar activities can make important contributions to professional learning.

## Study Design

This study was designed to provide a comprehensive portrait of professional development in South Carolina. As noted above, the design rested on a broad definition of professional development. For purposes of this study, professional development includes:

Any professional learning activity that has the potential to enable teachers and principals to perform their work more effectively, including traditional activities (e.g., workshops, institutes, university coursework) and informal learning opportunities (e.g., teacher or principal networks, study groups, mentoring, collaborative projects with colleagues, independent study).

The primary data collection activities included surveys of approximately 3,250 South Carolina Educators and case studies of professional development in ten South Carolina school districts. In addition, members of the study team interviewed staff in the South Carolina Department of Education (SCSDE) and reviewed a variety of documents on professional development programs and policies in South Carolina. Surveys and case studies were conducted in spring 2000. Interviews with SCSDE staff were conducted in fall 1999.

Readers who are interested in reviewing all of the survey data collected for this study should contact the EOC directly to obtain electronic copies of the database.

### Surveys of South Carolina Educators

We administered surveys to (1) stratified random samples of teachers and principals, (2) random samples of first-year annual contract teachers and induction year teachers, and (3) all district staff development coordinators. (See Appendix 1 for more information about the survey methodology.) The surveys asked respondents about the content and format of professional development, their assessment of the quality and usefulness of professional development, their role in the governance of professional development, and the extent to which their schools and districts are supportive environments for professional development. (See Appendix 2 for copies of the survey instruments.) Sample sizes and response rates for the surveys are displayed in Exhibit 1.

**Exhibit 1**  
**Survey Sample Sizes and Response Rates**

<u>Survey</u>	<u>Sample Size</u>	<u>Number of Surveys</u>	
		<u>Returned and Completed</u>	<u>Response Rate</u>
All Teacher	1,692	1,179	70%
Principal	667	491	74%
Induction Year and First Year Annual Contract Teachers	800	561	70%
Staff Development Coordinators	87	80	92%

Exhibit reads: The sample for the All Teacher survey is 1,692.

The relatively high response rates to the surveys-70 percent or higher on each of the four surveys-lend a considerable degree of confidence to the survey findings.

**Case Studies of South Carolina School Districts**

The ten district case studies were intended to provide information about local professional development programs and policies, the governance of professional development, and how teachers, principals, and district staff and leaders viewed professional development as part of their work. (See Appendix 1 for more information about our approach to the case studies.) Data collection for the case studies included interviews with teachers, principals, staff development coordinators, and central office staff and administrators. In addition, the study team reviewed a variety of documents made available during the visits. The time and resources available for this study did not permit observations of professional development activities and programs in the case study districts. Case study reports are internal documents used for analysis and in preparing reports.

**Interviews with SCSDE Staff**

As part of the design and preparation for the surveys and case studies, the study team interviewed staff in the SCSDE who were responsible for a number of professional development programs and policies. These interviews focused on the rationale, design, and scope of various professional development activities for which the SCSDE has some responsibility. Interviews focused

on state-funded programs as well as those funded by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation.

### Limitations of the Study

Before turning to a discussion of the study findings, it is important to note two limitations to this study. First, although survey items and interview questions asked respondents to reflect on their professional learning opportunities during the 12 months prior to data collection and to comment on changes in their professional development over the past several years, the findings represent a portrait of a single point in time. The study did not examine any changes or patterns over time in professional development. Second, the study did not examine individual professional development programs in depth. Both the surveys and case studies focused on educators' perceptions of all of the professional development activities in which they participated. The surveys and interviews conducted during the site visits did include questions about specific examples of activities that teachers and principals considered to have been particularly useful, and the case studies did generate some descriptive information about individual professional development activities and programs. Nevertheless, a systematic review of content or format and follow-up with individual participants was beyond the scope of this study.

## **Findings about Professional Development in South Carolina**

We turn now to a discussion of key findings about professional development in South Carolina. We begin by presenting findings about teacher and principal participation in professional development, the content and format of these activities, and teachers' and principals' assessments of the quality of these activities. Next, we review findings about the kinds of support and incentives that are available to encourage participation in professional development. Third, we discuss our findings and observations about the organization and governance of professional development. In the final part of this section, we present our findings about South Carolina's System for Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching Performance Dimensions (ADEPT).

### Participation Patterns and the Content and Format of Professional Development

*South Carolina teachers report participating in professional development on a wide variety and large number of topics.* (See Exhibits 2 and 3.) Even the least frequently reported topic, parental

**Exhibit 2**  
**Teacher Participation in Professional Development, by Topic**  
**(n=1,155)**

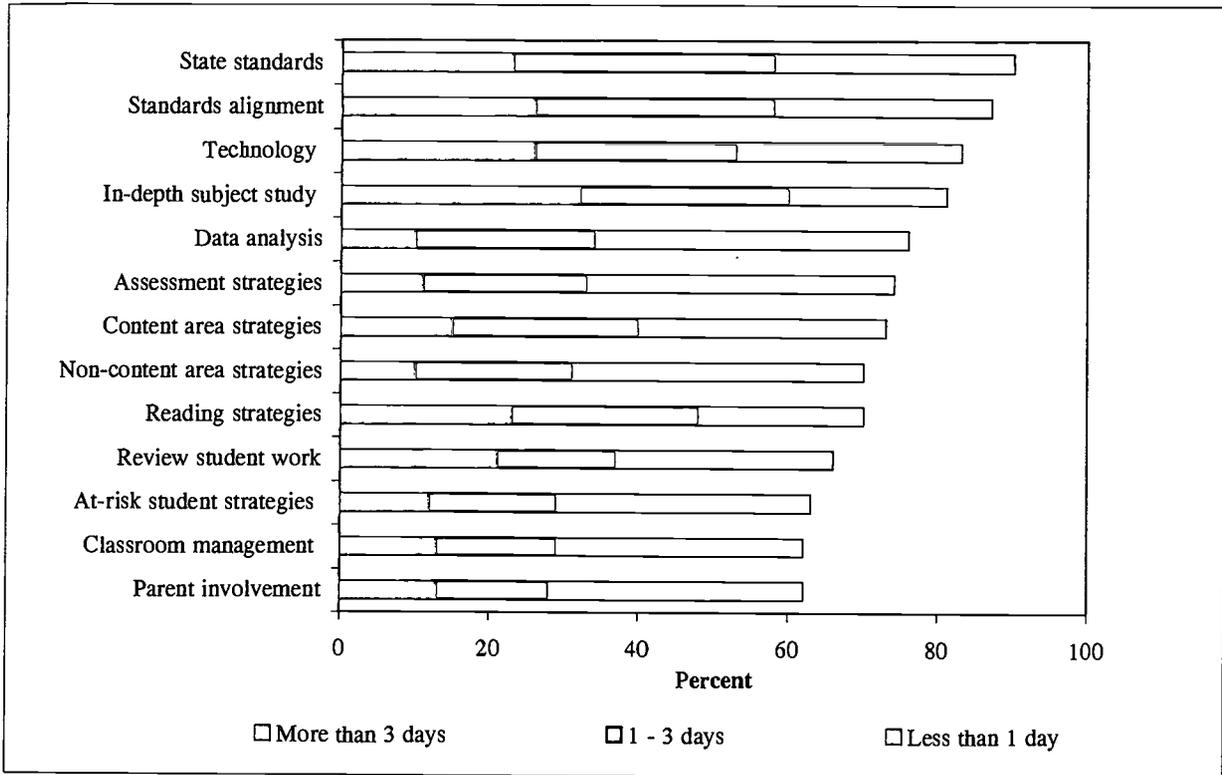


Exhibit reads: Twenty-three percent of teachers report participating in professional development activities on state standards for more than 3 days, 35 percent report participating 1-3 days, and 32 percent report participating less than one day.

involvement, was a topic in training, workshops, and other similar activities for 61 percent of the teachers.<sup>2</sup>

As the data summarized in Exhibit 3 show, 76 percent of teachers report at least some professional development on eight or more of the topics listed in the survey item, and 40 percent report participation in professional development on 12 or more topics. These data, in effect, define very broad and ambitious professional development agendas for individual teachers.

<sup>2</sup> The survey asked teachers to indicate when they had participated, in professional development on the topics listed in Exhibit 2. The list of topics included ADEPT and 45 percent of teachers report receiving at least some ADEPT training, but we did not include ADEPT training in Exhibit 2 because we expected that participation in training on this topic would be limited to teachers who were serving as ADEPT mentors or members of ADEPT evaluation teams.

**Exhibit 3**  
**Teacher Participation in Professional Development,**  
**by Number of Topics**  
**(n=1,166)**

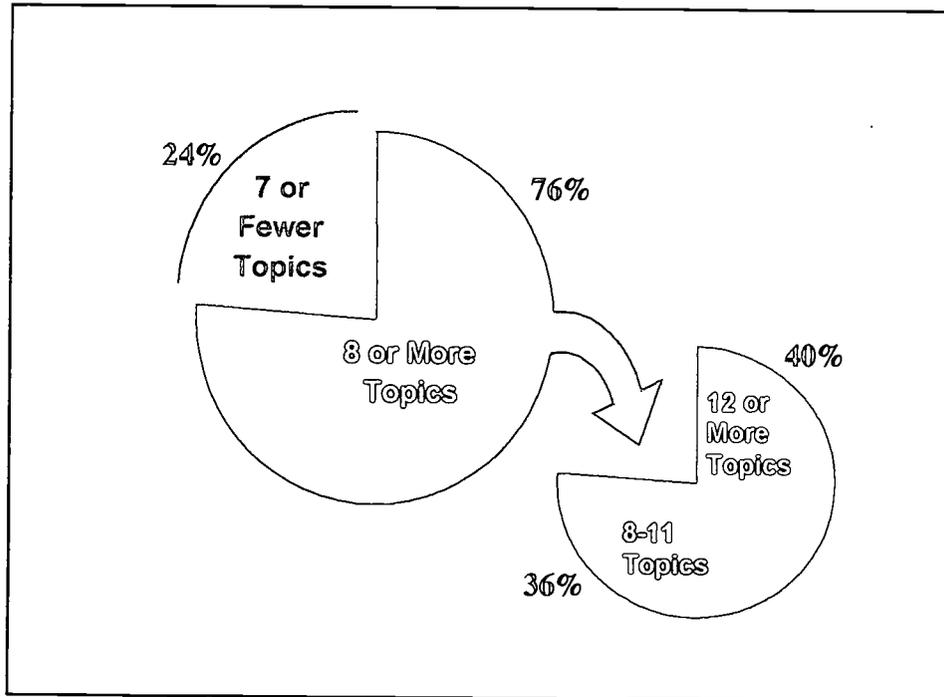


Exhibit reads: Twenty-four percent of teachers report participating in professional development on seven or fewer topics.

*Although the amount of time that teachers report spending in professional development varies considerably by topic, South Carolina's emphasis on implementing new content standards for students is reflected in the amount of time that teachers spend in professional development related to the standards.* Again looking at the data in Exhibit 2, just under 60 percent of teachers report participating in one or more days of professional development on knowledge/understanding of state standards or aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment with state standards. Nearly half (49 percent) report both of these topics as a focus of a day or more of the professional development activities they attended in a 12-month period. Sixty percent of teachers report one or more days of professional development devoted to in-depth study of a subject [they] teach, and more than half (53 percent) report participating in one day or more of professional development on using technology in instruction. By contrast, fewer teachers say they participated in one day or more of professional development focused on topics such parental involvement, instructional strategies for students with learning difficulties or who are at risk of failure, classroom management and student discipline, and assessment strategies (28, 29, 29, and 33 percent, respectively). Overall, relatively small numbers of

teachers report participating in more than three days of professional development on any of these topics.

*These patterns in teacher participation vary by school grade level (elementary school, middle school, and high school) and less by school poverty level and district size.* Almost 70 percent of elementary school teachers report participating in some type of in-depth training in a subject they teach compared with 59 percent of middle school teachers and 48 percent of high school teachers. Not surprisingly, a higher proportion of elementary school teachers (70 percent) participated in professional development on instructional strategies for reading than their colleagues in middle schools (40 percent) and high schools (22 percent). Whether a teacher participated in professional development on reading strategies is also associated with a school's poverty level. Sixty-one percent of teachers in the highest poverty stratum report participation in professional development on this topic compared with 29 percent of teachers in the lowest poverty stratum. There is no significant variation by district size on topics covered by professional development activities.

*Based on data from the survey of induction year and first-year annual contract teachers, their experience generally parallels those of other teachers in terms of the topics and amount of time spent in professional development activities.* One difference is that induction year and first-year annual contract teachers report more professional development—at least one day or more—on classroom management than other teachers (47 percent versus 29 percent). At the same time, nearly 20 percent of induction year and first-year annual contract teachers report that they did not participate in any professional development on this topic.

*According to the survey data, 9 percent of teachers had sought certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).* These data do not indicate how many completed the certification process or how many actually received NBPTS certification. At the time of our data collection, only one of the districts in our case study sample had developed a candidate support system. In this district, central office staff organized a series of seminar sessions to help teachers develop their NBPTS portfolios. Staff also drew heavily on the assistance of an NBPTS-certified teacher who had developed an extensive candidate support system in a large North Carolina school district. At the state level, the Palmetto State Teachers Association provides an orientation to the NBPTS process as well as some candidate support services.

Many of the teachers interviewed during our visits to districts said that they did not know very much about the NBPTS process or requirements. Of those who did know something about the process, many cited the time and work required to complete the candidacy process as reasons for not seeking NBPTS certification. A few said that they did not see any real benefits to becoming certified.

*Teachers and principals differ somewhat in their views of the topics that are important for teachers' professional development.* (See Exhibit 4.) When asked to identify the three most important topics for their own professional development, teachers most often listed in-depth study of a subject they teach (41 percent); aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment with state standards (40 percent); and instructional strategies for students with learning difficulties or who are at risk of failure (37 percent). Principals identified instructional strategies for students with learning difficulties or who are at-risk of failure (57 percent) and aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment with state standards (55 percent) as the two most important topics for professional development for teachers in their schools. Only 10 percent of principals identified in-depth study in content areas as important topics for teacher professional development.

**Exhibit 4**  
**Teacher and Principal Reports of the Most Important Topics**  
**for Teachers' Professional Development**

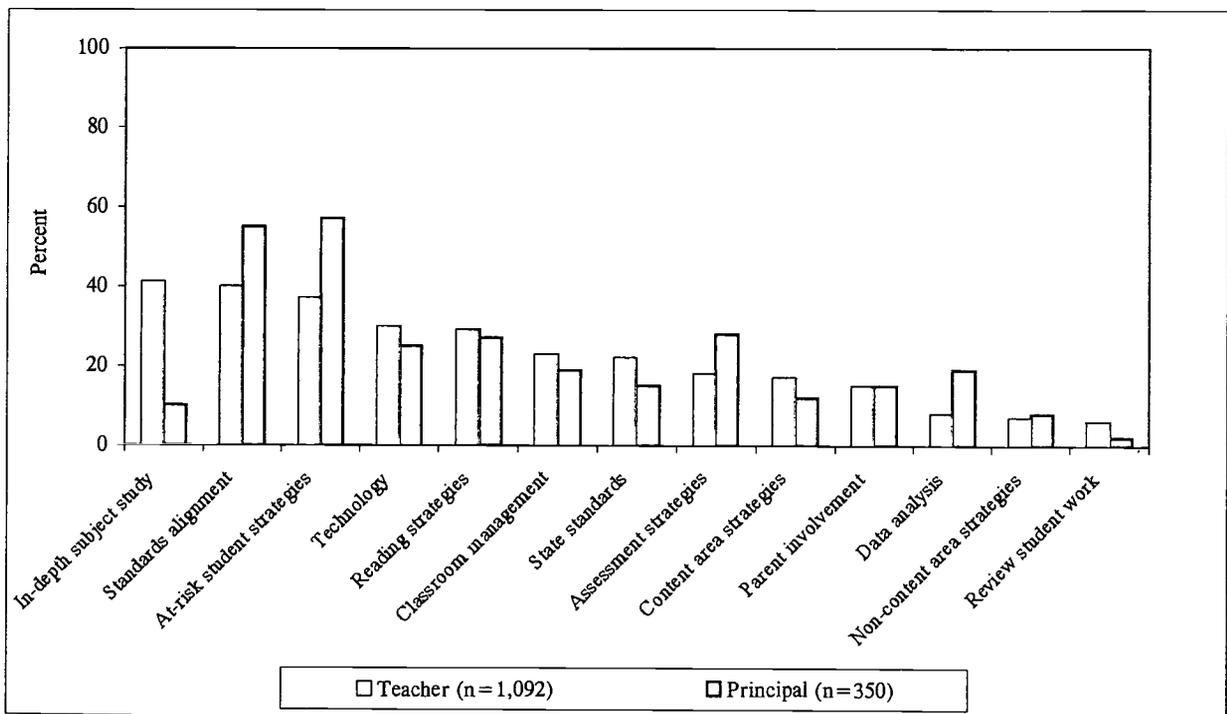


Exhibit reads: Forty one percent of teachers and 10 percent of principals report that in-depth subject study is one of the most important topics for teachers' professional development.

Here, again, the emphasis on standards is consistent with current state priorities. The difference between how principals and teachers assess the importance of professional development that includes in-depth study of a content area may indicate that at least some principals do not recognize

teacher learning needs in this area. It is also possible that the relatively low priority that both principals and teachers assign to assessment strategies, examining and analyzing test scores and other student data, and reviewing student work as teacher professional development topics indicates that they have not yet grappled with the full implications of new standards-based instructional models or of South Carolina's new accountability system.

*Like the teachers, South Carolina principals report participating in at least some professional development on a wide range and large number of topics, and their participation also reflects state priorities.* (See Exhibits 5 and 6.) Ninety percent or more of principals report participating in professional development on the following topics: the state standards, classroom observation,

**Exhibit 5**  
**Principal Participation in Professional Development, by Topic**  
 (n=1,155)

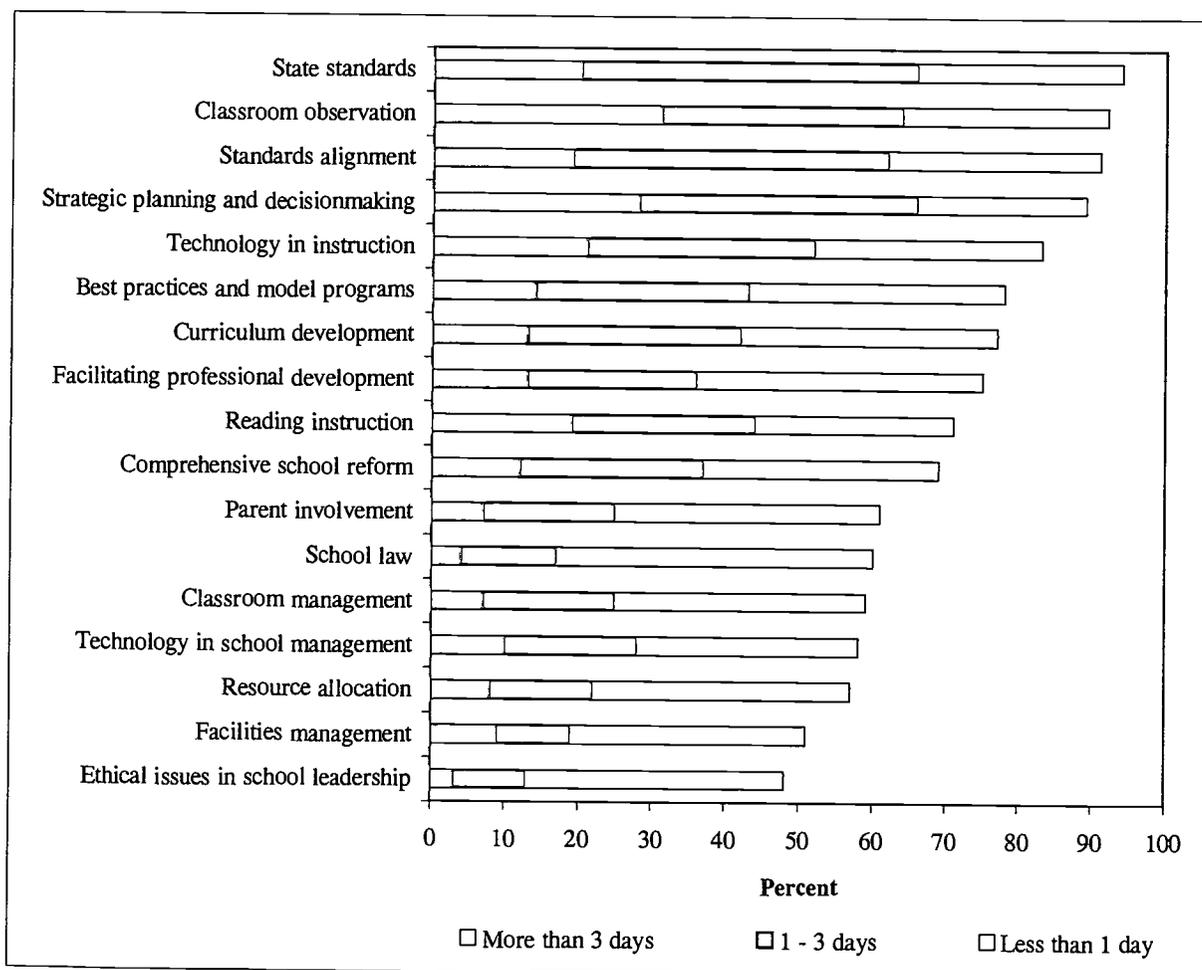


Exhibit reads: Twenty percent of principals report participating in professional development activities on state standards for more than 3 days, 46 percent report participating 1-3 days, and 28 percent report participating less than one day.

**Exhibit 6**  
**Principal Participation in Professional Development by Number of Topics**  
**(n = 363)**

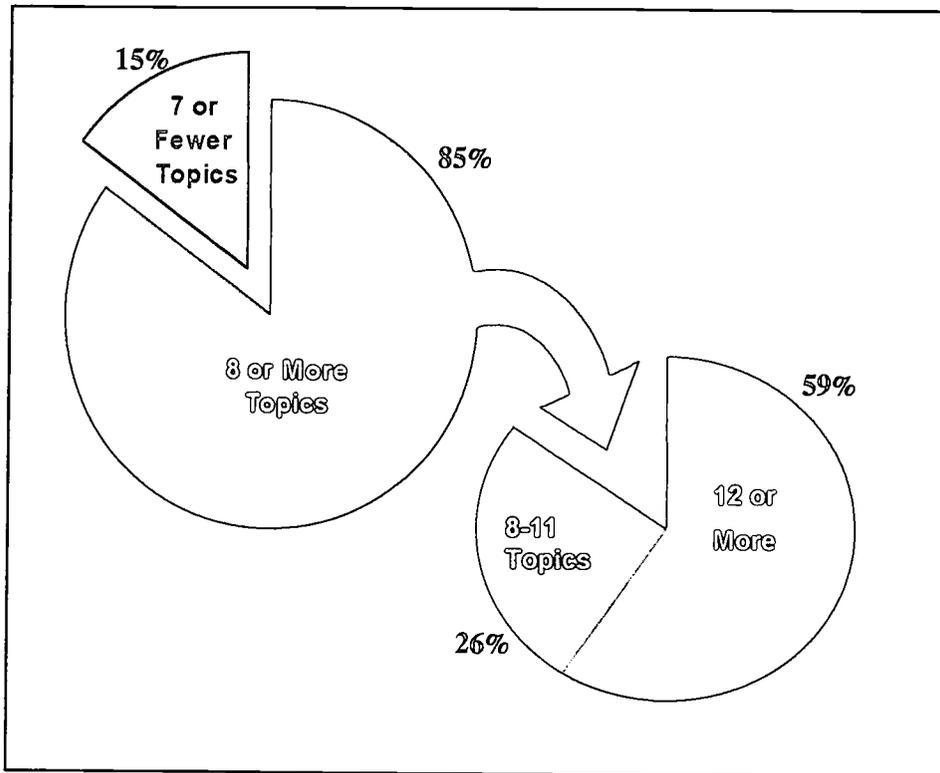


Exhibit reads: Fifteen percent of principals report participating in professional development on 7 or fewer topics

feedback, and teacher performance appraisals (including ADEPT), strategic planning and decision making, and school law. At the other end of the spectrum, fewer principals report participation in professional development on resource allocation (57 percent), facilities management (52 percent), and ethical issues in school leadership (48 percent).

*Teachers and principals report extensive participation in traditional professional development activities (e.g., workshops, courses) and limited participation in professional development that involves working with their colleagues.* (See Exhibits 7 and 8.) Nearly all teachers (95 percent) and principals (96 percent) report participating in workshop(s) or training session(s). These workshops or training sessions, especially those that last 2 hours or less, account for a large amount of the time spent by both teachers and principals in professional development activities. Seventy percent of teachers and principals report participating in these short activities 3 or more times. Large numbers of teachers and principals report at least some participation in other traditional activities, such as certification courses (57 percent of teachers and 52 percent of principals) and conferences (57 percent of teachers and 93 percent of principals).

**Exhibit 7**  
**Teacher Participation in Professional Development, by Activity**  
**(n=1,155)**

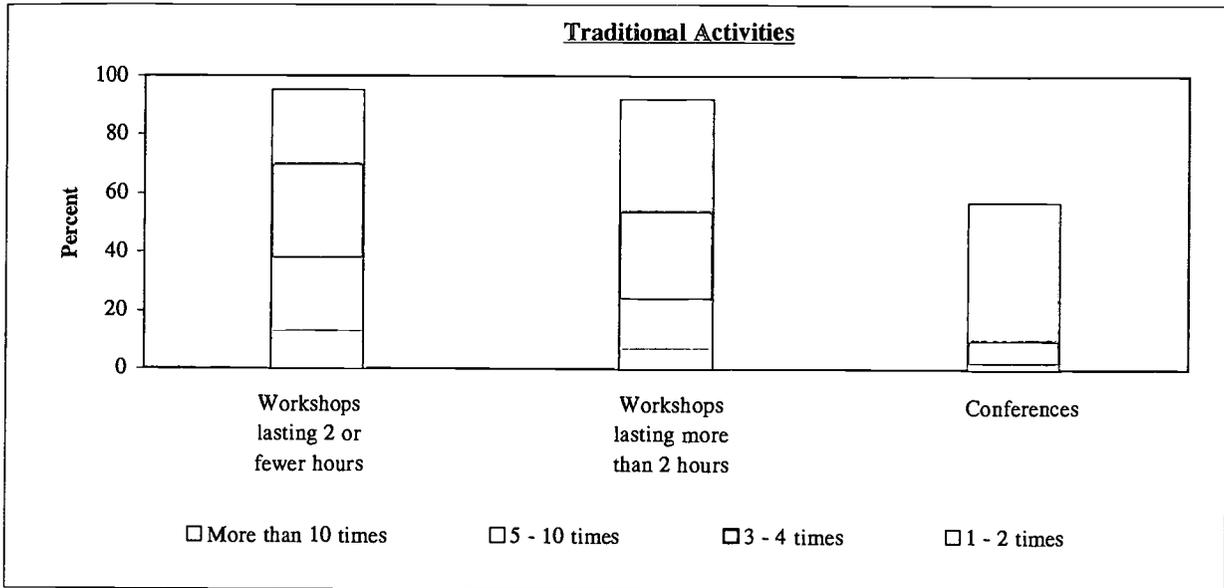


Exhibit reads: Thirteen percent of teachers report participating in professional development workshops lasting 2 or fewer hours more than 10 times, 25 percent report participating 5-10 times, 32 percent report participating 3-4 times, and 25 percent report participating 1-2 times.

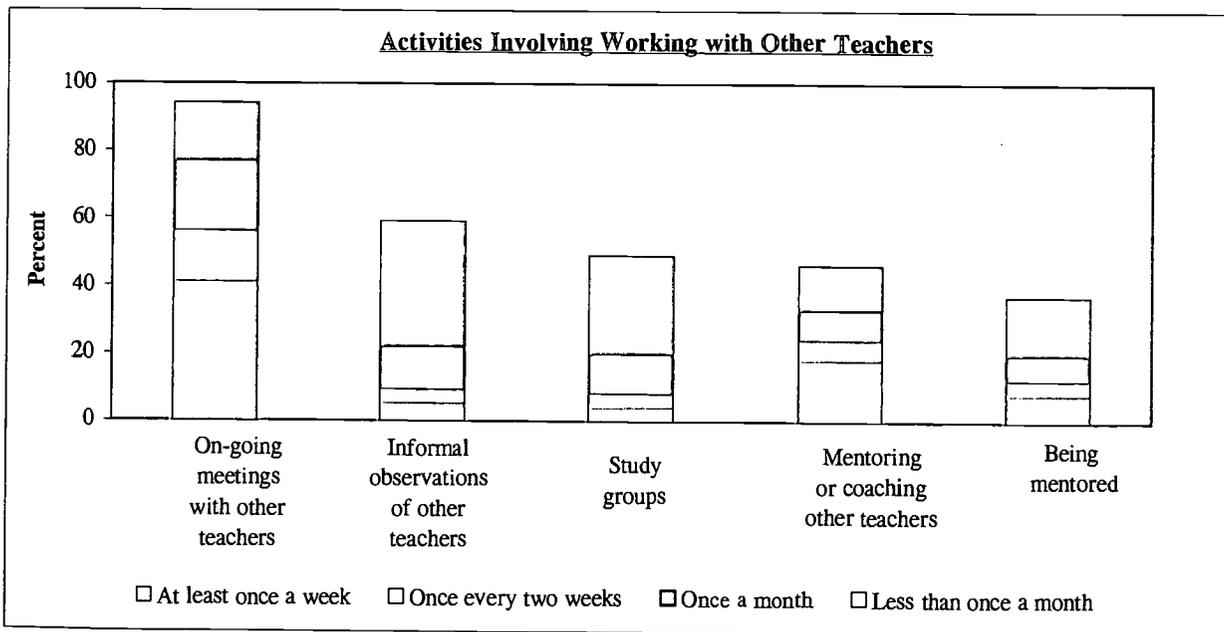


Exhibit reads: Forty-one percent of teachers report participating in on-going meetings with other teachers at least once a week, 15 percent once every two weeks, 21 percent once a month, and 17 percent less than once a month.

**Exhibit 8**  
**Principal Participation in Professional Development, by Activity**  
**(n = 356)**

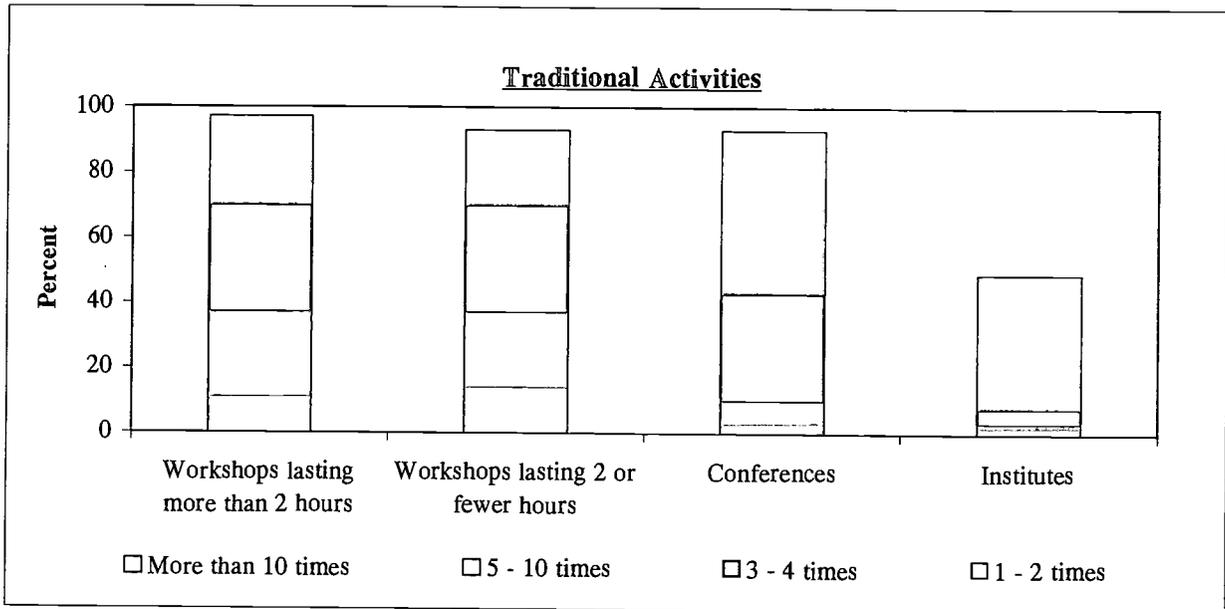


Exhibit reads: Eleven percent of principals report participating in professional development workshops lasting more than 2 hours more than 10 times, 26 percent 5-10 times, 33 percent 3-4 times, and 27 percent 1-2 times.

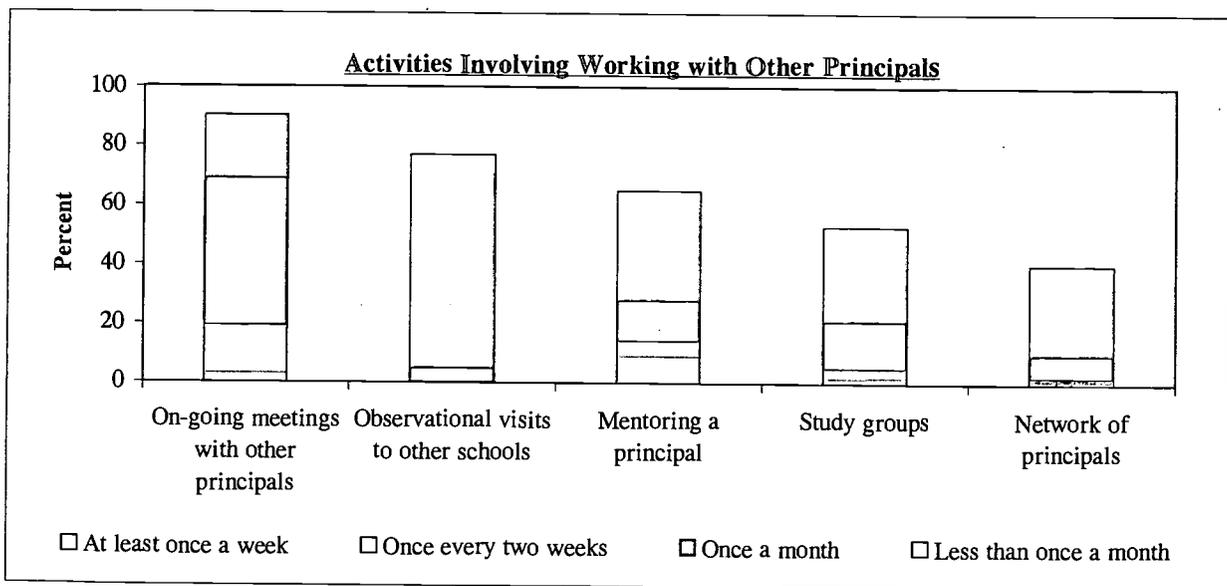


Exhibit reads: Three percent of principals report participating in on-going meetings with other principals at least once a week, 16 percent once every two weeks, 50 percent once a month, and 21 percent less than once a month.

Teachers and principals report few instances of professional learning with colleagues. Just over a third of teachers and 28 percent of principals report that they mentored a colleague once a month or more. Other activities, such as being mentored by a colleague, visiting other teachers or other schools, and participating in a study group or network, occur even less often. Although one-on-one or small-group interactions seldom occur, both teachers and principals report frequent attendance in meetings with their colleagues.

Substantial numbers of the teachers who participated in informal learning activities with their colleagues report that these interactions included lesson planning and curriculum development (66 percent), discussing student needs and interests (57 percent), reviewing and sharing new curriculum materials (47 percent), or learning about new instructional strategies (44 percent). By contrast, very few reported that these activities included experimenting with new instructional strategies (28 percent), examining assessment data (17 percent), examining or assessing samples of student work (10 percent), or studying deep content of subjects (6 percent) during these activities.

*Teachers' reviews of the quality of professional development are mixed.* (See Exhibit 9.) We asked teachers to rate professional development on 12 dimensions that represent indicators of quality. (These dimensions are listed in the key to Exhibit 9). These dimensions fall into three broad

**Exhibit 9**  
**Teacher Ratings of the Quality of Professional Development**  
 (n = 1,170)

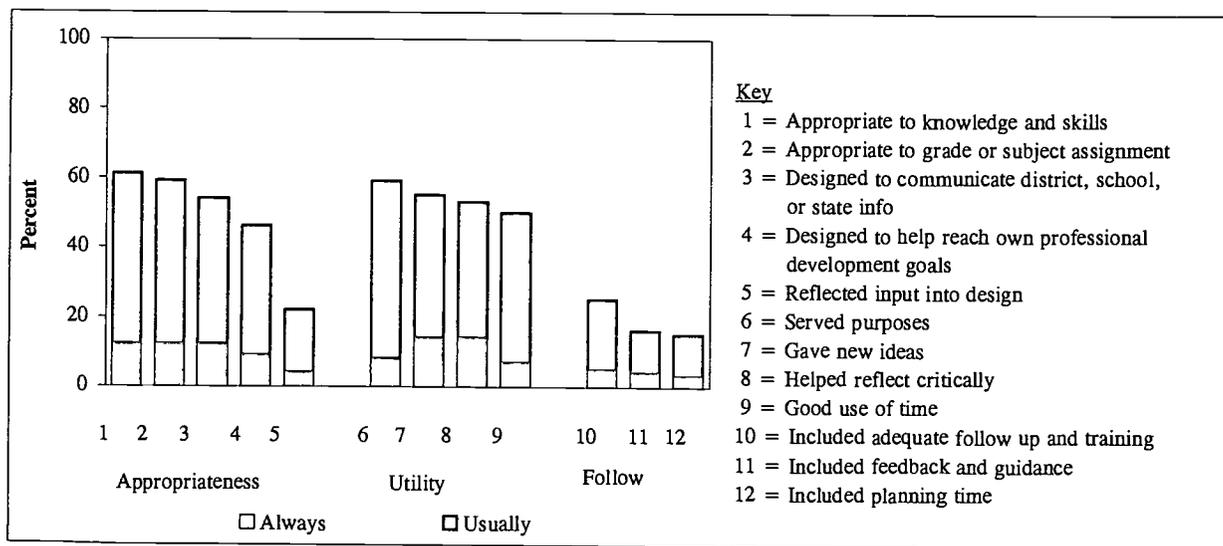


Exhibit reads: Twelve percent of teachers rate the quality of their professional development as always appropriate to knowledge and skills, and 49 percent report that it is usually appropriate.

categories: appropriateness of the activities, utility of the activities, and follow-up. As the data in Exhibit 8 suggest, a majority of teachers report that professional development is “always” or “usually” (1) appropriate to their knowledge and skills (61 percent); (2) appropriate for the grade level or subject they teach (59 percent); and (3) designed to communicate information about school, district, or state priorities, goals, or initiatives (54 percent).

Looking at teacher ratings of the utility of professional development, 59 percent say that professional development always or usually serves their purposes. Slightly fewer say that it has (1) helped them to reflect critically on how they teach and to develop plans for improving their teaching (53 percent); (2) given them new ideas and strategies to experiment with in their classrooms (55 percent); and (3) been a good use of their time (50 percent).

For many teachers, there is very little follow-up to professional development. Specifically, 25 percent or fewer teachers report that professional development always or usually (1) included adequate follow-up or additional training to enable them to implement new ideas or strategies (25 percent); (2) included planning time to enable them to implement new ideas and strategies (15 percent); and (3) included feedback and guidance while they tried new strategies (16 percent).

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*As I have worked with teachers, one of the most frustrating things has been that there is not enough time for planning, reflection, or preparing for what they are supposed to do. There is not enough time to process what you are supposed to do and to have an opportunity to talk it over with your peers. Often there is not an opportunity to go back and get feedback.*

—A curriculum resource teacher

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The data in Exhibit 9 suggest two additional observations about teachers' ratings of the quality of professional development. First, even though half or more of teachers say that professional development is always or usually appropriate and useful on the dimensions included in the surveys, between 40 percent and 50 percent say that it reflects these characteristics only “sometimes” or “seldom,” with a few indicating that it “never” reflects these characteristics. Second, at the other end of the spectrum (displayed as the blue portion of the bars in Exhibit 9), relatively few teachers say that professional development always reflects these characteristics.

Teachers' ratings of professional development vary somewhat by grade level and by school poverty level. Elementary school teachers appear somewhat more satisfied with their professional development than their colleagues in middle schools and high schools. In general, high school teachers appear least satisfied with their experiences in professional development activities. With respect to school poverty, survey data indicate that teachers in schools with higher concentrations of poverty were more satisfied with professional development in terms of its appropriateness, utility, and follow-up.

Interview data from the district case studies confirm the survey findings. At the same time, there are professional development activities that teachers value. When asked about professional development activities that they considered to have been particularly useful in meeting their needs, teachers cite workshops, technical assistance, and materials provided by the South Carolina State Systemic Initiative's Hubs and 4-Block Training. Teachers view the Hubs as solid and dependable resources that offer a variety of professional development and other help in mathematics and science education. Teachers also cite examples of training in using technology in their classrooms as valuable. Finally, teachers told us again and again that they value opportunities to work with their colleagues and that they see these opportunities as examples of very good professional development.

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*We need more time with our colleagues. Right now most professional development is organized for individual teachers. It is the shopping mall model where I have to find the stuff on my own. It consists of isolated learning...There are colleagues in my building who could help me. They are the ones that I should be talking with.*

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-A high school teacher

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*Principals' ratings of their professional development are also mixed, although their ratings are somewhat more positive than those of teachers.* (See Exhibit 10.) Thus, 69 percent of principals report that their professional development is always or usually appropriate to their knowledge and skills, but only 22 percent say that professional development always or usually reflects their input.

**Exhibit 10**  
**Principal Ratings of the Quality of Professional Development**  
 (n = 356)

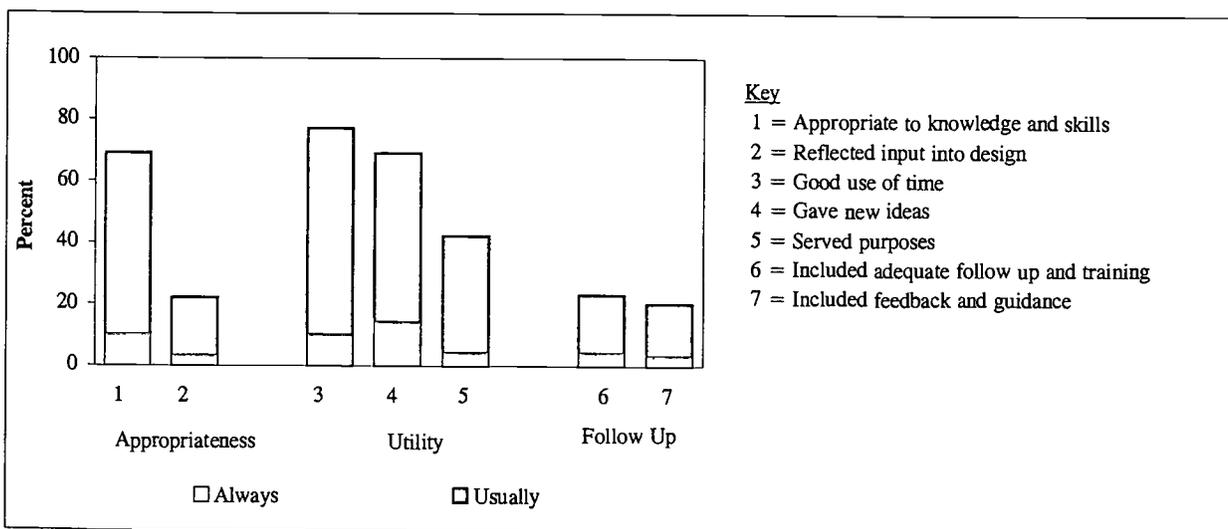


Exhibit reads: Ten percent of principals rate the quality of their professional development as always appropriate to knowledge and skills, and 59 percent report that it is usually appropriate.

In terms of the utility of professional development, just over three-fourths (77 percent) of principals say that professional development is always or usually serves their purposes, and 69 percent think that professional development always or usually gives them new ideas or strategies with which to experiment with in their schools. Less than a quarter report that professional development included adequate follow-up or additional training to enable them to implement new ideas or practices (23 percent) or adequate feedback and guidance to assist them in trying new approaches (24 percent).

When asked about specific professional development activities that they found useful, many principals we interviewed mentioned SCSDE's Principals Leadership Academy and the South Carolina Association of School Administrators' summer institutes. These activities got high marks for relevance, practicality, and the timeliness of information. The summer institutes also got high marks as opportunities for networking.

### Supports and Incentives for Participating in Professional Development

A number of survey items and interview questions focused on factors in schools and districts that can facilitate or impede participation in professional development. We turn now to a discussion of what we learned about schools and districts as environments for professional development and the rewards and incentives that encourage and support participation in professional learning activities.

*Teachers and principals generally view their schools as positive environments for professional development and improvement.* (See Exhibit 11.) For example, large numbers of teachers agree that it is “true” or “mostly true” that (1) principals encourage them to experiment with new strategies (85 percent); (2) teachers are genuinely interested in learning new approaches to teaching and staying current in their content areas (88 percent); (3) professional development is a routine part of teachers’ work (78 percent); and (4) professional development is aligned with their school’s improvement efforts (85 percent). Similarly, principals think it is true or mostly true that in their school (1) teachers are interested in learning (93 percent); (2) professional development is a routine part of teachers’ work (87 percent); and (3) professional development is aligned with the school’s improvement efforts. Considerably more principals than teachers report that teachers assess their professional development needs and receive training to meet those needs (81 percent of principals versus 64 percent of teachers). On the downside, teachers and principals agree that there are limited opportunities for interactions with teachers from other schools, although considerably more principals than teachers think that these opportunities exist (51 percent versus 31 percent).

**Exhibit 11**  
**Teacher and Principal Beliefs about Their School's Climate**  
**for Professional Development**

School Climate	Percent Reporting "Mostly True" or "True"	
	Teachers (n = 1150)	Principals (n = 364)
Teachers are genuinely interested in learning new approaches to teaching and staying current in their content areas	88	93
The principal encourages teachers to experiment with new strategies in their classrooms	85	NA
The principal regularly participates in professional development activities with teachers	79	NA
Professional development is a routine part of teachers' work	78	87
Professional development is aligned with the school's improvement efforts	75	95
Teachers receive adequate resources to implement new curriculum and instruction	70	92
Teachers assess their professional development needs and receive training to meet those needs	64	81
Teachers have regular opportunities to interact with teachers from other schools	31	51

Exhibit reads: Eighty-eight percent of teachers agree that it is true or mostly true that teachers are genuinely interested in learning new approaches to teaching and staying current in their content areas.

A surprising finding from our surveys is that 92 percent of principals say that it is "true or mostly true" that teachers receive adequate resources to implement new curriculum and instruction. Fewer teachers (70 percent), although still a large majority, agree that they have adequate resources to implement new curriculum and instruction. One possible explanation for these findings is that there are, in fact, enough resources for implementing new practices. A second possible explanation is that principals and teachers have not yet assessed all that needs to be done and therefore do not fully understand their resource needs. Other explanations may also be possible.

*Principals see their districts as generally positive environments for professional development, but there are two areas of concern.* (See Exhibit 12.) Ninety percent or more either strongly agree or agree that district leaders believe that (1) professional development is a routine part of teachers' work; (2) facilitating professional development for teachers is part of the routine work of principals; and (3) principals should be encouraged to engage in their own professional development. Ninety percent of principals also indicate that their district's strategic plan emphasizes the importance of professional development.

The two areas of concern are resources and time for professional development. Sixty-five percent of principals either strongly agree or agree that their districts provide adequate resources for professional development. Fifty-six percent strongly agree or agree that district leaders encourage

**Exhibit 12**  
**Principal Beliefs about Their District's Climate for Professional Development**

<b>District Climate</b>	<b>Percent Reporting “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” Principals (n = 360)</b>
District leaders believe that facilitating professional development for teachers is part of the routine work of principals.	92
District leaders believe that professional development is part of the routine work of teachers.	90
The district’s strategic plan emphasizes the importance of professional development.	90
District leaders encourage principals to engage in their own professional development.	90
The district provides adequate resources (e.g., tuition reimbursement, conference fees) for professional development.	65
District leaders encourage flexible scheduling to facilitate teacher participation in professional development.	56

Exhibit reads: Ninety-two percent of principals report they “strongly agree” or “agree” that district leaders believe that facilitating professional development for teachers is part of the routine work of principals.

flexible scheduling to facilitate teacher participation in professional development. Recall that considerably more principals (92 percent) agreed that teachers have adequate resources for implementing new instructional practices. Together these findings suggest that even if the resources for improving instruction are available, resources for the professional development necessary to support implementation are not. Further, the absence of flexibility in scheduling and the resulting lack of time can mean that teachers can not engage in the kinds of professional learning and practice that support and sustain change.

Case study data support the survey finding that districts are reasonably hospitable environments for professional development. In these cases, district leaders are quite clear about the value of professional development. Many also acknowledge that there is considerable room for improvement in local professional development activities, particularly in terms of coordination and follow-up. In our view, these districts and others like them are places where professional development can flourish. Their experiences also indicate that, as important as it is to value professional development, considerable time and energy are necessary to create viable professional development systems.

*About 90 percent of teachers cite the lack of time as an impediment to their participation in informal learning activities.* (See Exhibit 13.) Other possible impediments are mentioned much less often. Interview data from the case studies offer strong affirmation of the complaints about the lack of

time. Data from the principal survey and from interviews with principals confirm the lack of time as an impediment.

Exhibit 13  
Teacher Reports on the Greatest Impediments to Informal Learning  
(n=1,140)

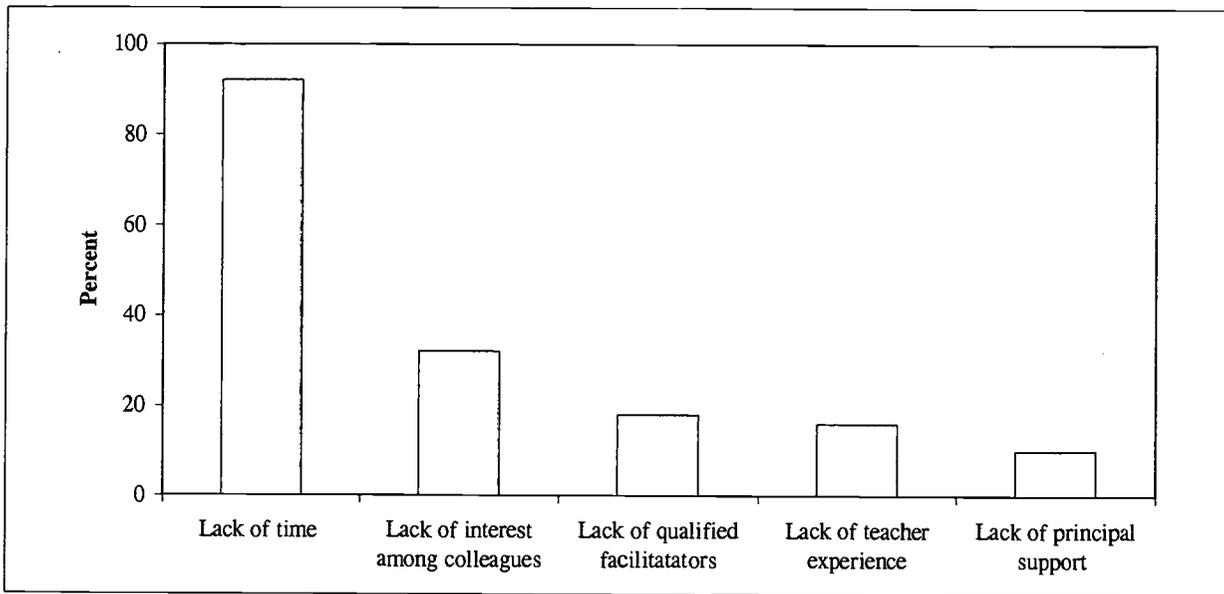


Exhibit reads: Ninety-two percent of teachers report that the greatest impediment to informal learning is the lack of time.

When asked about the supports and incentives that are most important in encouraging their participation, the two most frequently mentioned supports are release time from teaching (48 percent of teachers) and time set aside during the regular school day (38 percent). (See Exhibit 14.)

Teachers report that other supports are available to support their participation in professional development, although the availability varies. About 20 percent say that financial support is important to their participation in professional development. Space, library resources, and Internet access are available in a number of schools, but teachers see these resources as less important supports for participation in professional development.

*Teachers' reports of the incentives available to them for participating in professional development also vary slightly by grade level and by school poverty.* High school teachers report fewer incentives available to them than both their elementary and middle school counterparts. For example, 47 percent of high school teachers report that release time from teaching is available to them compared with 53 percent of middle school teachers and 58 percent of elementary school teachers.

**Exhibit 14**  
**Teacher Reports on the Most Important Incentives for Professional Development**  
**(n = 1,148)**

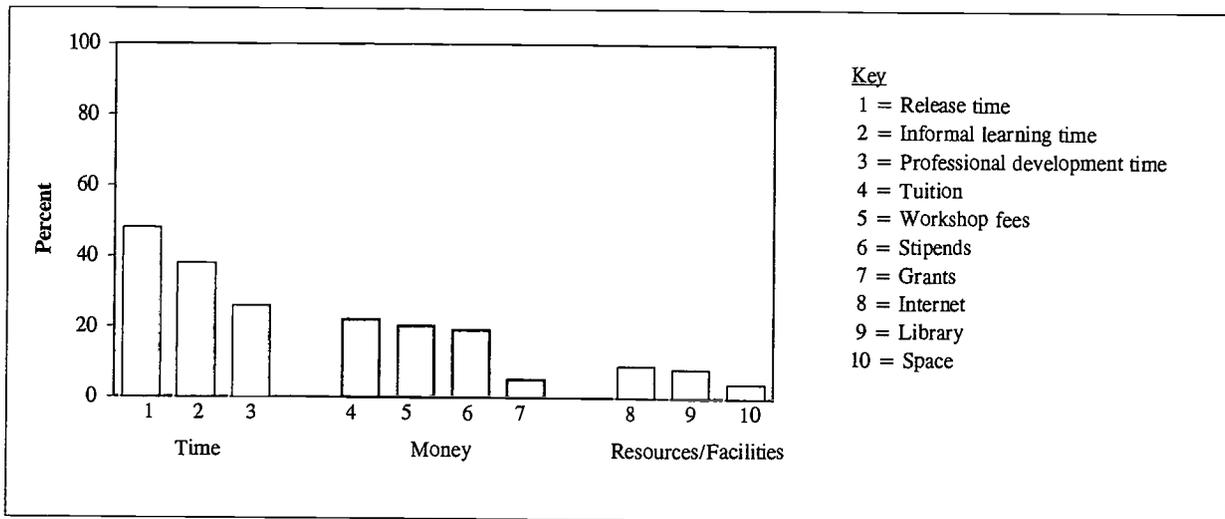


Exhibit reads: Forty-eight percent of teachers report that release time is the most important incentive for their participation in professional development.

Only 21 percent of high school teachers report that time is set aside in their school’s regular schedule for teachers to work together on activities related to improving instruction compared with 39 percent of middle school teachers and 33 percent of elementary school teachers.

With respect to school poverty, the survey data indicate that, in general, the proportion of teachers for whom at least one incentive was available is higher in schools with higher concentrations of poverty than it is in schools with lower concentrations of poverty. For example, 62 percent of teachers in very high poverty schools report release time from teaching compared with 51 percent of teachers in the lowest poverty schools. Seventy-one percent of teachers in very high poverty schools and 65 percent of teachers in high poverty schools report reimbursement for conferences or workshop fees (including travel) compared with 62 percent of teachers in medium poverty schools and 54 percent of teachers in low poverty schools.

**Organization and Governance of Professional Development**

As in other states, the SCSDE and school districts have responsibilities for professional development. In addition, schools have a degree of autonomy in planning and conducting professional development, and a number of other organizations add to the mix as providers of professional

development. Our surveys and case studies sought to examine how professional development is organized and whether and how the various entities that play roles in professional development work together. Here, we discuss what we learned about the organization and governance of professional development.

*At both the state and local level, professional development is primarily program- or menu-driven.* Based on interviews with SCSDE staff and district staff who are familiar with local professional development activities, it appears that the goals and objectives of a number of state and local programs and priorities drive the content of professional development. For example, state efforts to introduce new content standards have relied on a variety of regional and local training activities intended to familiarize teachers and principals with the new standards and how to align curriculum, instruction, and assessments with these standards. Similarly, at the district level, district staff plan and conduct professional development to support district initiatives. In both cases, participant needs tend to be defined in terms of program interests rather than in terms of the learning and development needs of individual teachers and principals or school staffs.

Interview data reveal several key characteristics of this program-driven professional development. First, although there are certainly some exceptions, there appears to be little coordination across the various activities, which tends to re-enforce the program-driven model. Second, planning for these activities tends to focus on achieving maximum coverage with the resources available. The coverage is broad at the expense of depth. Third, attention to breadth of participation means that there is little attention to follow-up activities and other support to ensure use and implementation of new ideas and strategies. Based on these findings and observations, we suggest that many professional development activities, especially more traditional training and workshops, are best described as dissemination activities and efforts to raise awareness about important issues and priorities, such as the introduction of standards and new assessment and accountability systems. They are less likely to be designed to result in the changes in practice that are necessary to ensure that all student meet the standards or to support the new assessment and accountability systems.

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*There are lots of organizations providing professional development, but they are not integrated. There is fragmentation, individual agendas, and turf issues. There is no common vision or communication. We have never gotten together with other providers to chat or decide who is in charge. And we don't have an external force bringing us in to talk. We have no reason to work together. If we do, we lose funding, time, and our identity.*

—A science coordinator

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*The five professional development days available to educators in South Carolina are used for many purposes.* Teachers, principals, and staff development coordinators all agree that these days are used for many different, sometimes competing activities. Principals report that they often try to plan

activities for their faculty, but find that some teachers are pulled away for other activities, such as grade-level or subject area sessions organized by the district. Many teachers and principals we interviewed are frustrated by the lack of coherence in the activities scheduled for these days, although principals and teachers in several of the case study districts report that they are able to plan and carry out professional development activities that they consider to be important for improving their schools.

*Professional development days in this district have always been a tug of war. Everyone wants to control them so you end up having a hard time making any choices.*

–A district staff development coordinator

*A large majority of principals indicate that they feel “very well prepared” or “prepared” to carry out a variety of functions related to planning and organizing professional development in their schools.* (See Exhibit 15.) About two thirds of principals say that they and assistant principals are responsible “to a great extent” for planning professional development in their schools. (See Exhibit 16.) According to principals’ reports, other groups are also involved, but much less often. This is consistent with teachers’ reports about the limited extent to which professional development reflects their input, which we discussed above in reviewing teachers’ ratings of the quality of professional development.

**Exhibit 15**  
**Extent to Which Principals Feel Prepared to Carry Out**  
**Professional Development Functions**  
**(n=365)**

	<u>Percent of Principals Reporting “Very Well Prepared” or “Prepared”</u>
Organizing professional development	83
Evaluating professional development	83
Using professional development evaluations to plan professional development	82
Assessing teachers’ professional development needs	82
Incorporating professional development into school plan	81
Designing professional development	73

Exhibit reads: Eighty-three percent of principals report that they are “very well prepared” or “prepared” to organize professional development.

**Exhibit 16**  
**Principal Reports of the Extent to Which Various Individuals or Organizations**  
**are Involved in Planning Professional Development at Their Schools**  
**(n = 366)**

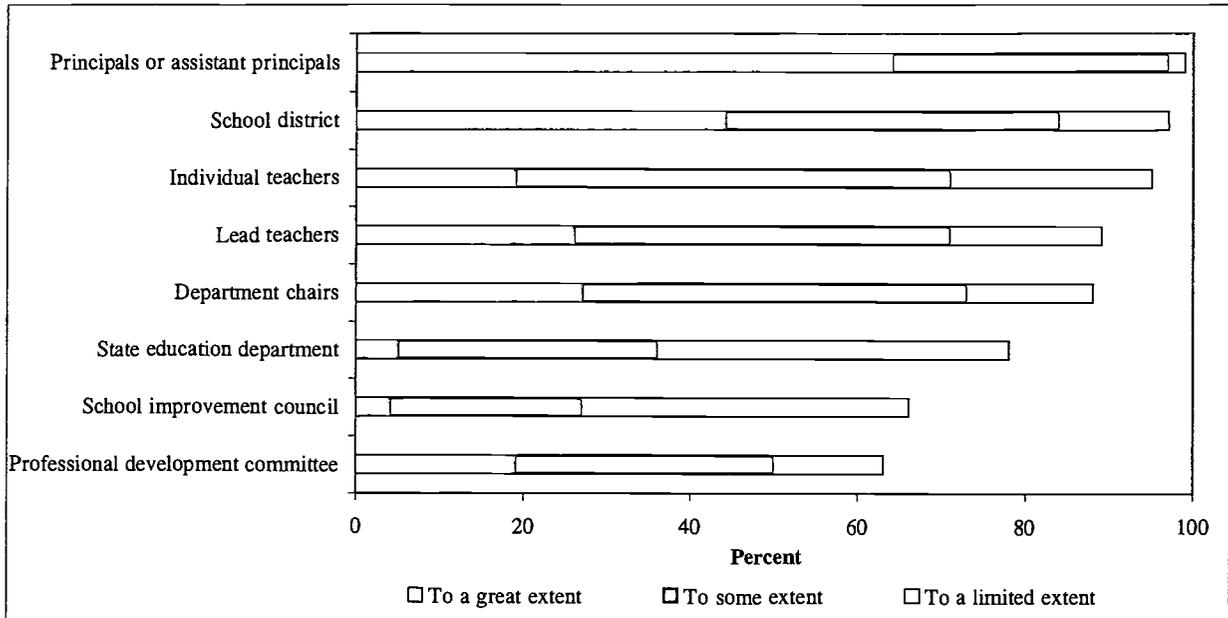


Exhibit reads: Sixty-four percent of principals report that principals or assistant principals are involved in planning professional development at their school to a great extent, 33 percent are involved to some extent, and 2 percent are involved to a limited extent.

The survey data also indicate that elementary school principals are more likely to feel very well prepared than principals in middle schools and high schools.

*District staff development coordinators report somewhat limited roles in district professional development activities.* Forty-six percent of them spend less than 25 percent of their time in this role, and 28 percent spend between 25 percent and 50 percent of their time. Sixty-one percent of the coordinators report that they plan specific professional development activities, and about a third or fewer reported involvement in other kinds of activities related to professional development at either the school or district level. One obvious explanation for the fact that some district staff development coordinators devote less than half their time to professional development-related tasks is that they have a number of other responsibilities.

Findings about the South Carolina System for Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching Performance Dimensions (ADEPT)

Currently, large numbers of new and inexperienced teachers leave the profession within five years of entering the classroom for the first time. Many of these teachers cite the absence of support as they struggled to "learn the ropes" about everything from finding the supply room to managing unruly students and teaching to new content standards as their reason for leaving. In a growing number of states and school districts across the country induction programs have shown positive results in facilitating new teachers' transitions into their jobs and in reducing attrition. Here, we present our findings about the South Carolina's ADEPT program, which is, among other things, an important investment in helping new teachers master critical teaching skills.

*Induction year and first-year annual contract teachers report substantial amounts of participation in ADEPT activities.* (See Exhibit 17.) Slightly more than half (52 percent) report

**Exhibit 17**  
**ADEPT Experience of Induction Year and First Year**  
**Annual Contract Teachers**  
**(n = 293; n = 271)**

	<b>Percent of Induction Year and First Year Annual Contract Teachers Reporting in the Affirmative</b>
<b><u>Involvement</u></b>	
Evaluated by ADEPT evaluation team	93
ADEPT mentoring	87
Professional development focused on ADEPT	86
ADEPT course for induction teachers	83
<b><u>Satisfaction</u></b>	
Support to implement ADEPT evaluation report recommendations	90
Timely ADEPT evaluation report	87
Adequately prepared mentor	80
Sufficient time commitment from mentor	73
Very useful course for induction teachers	65
<b><u>Effects on Teaching</u></b>	
Feedback from ADEPT evaluation report has improved instruction	86
Mentoring has had a significant, positive effect on teaching performance	76

Exhibit reads: Ninety-three percent of induction year and first year annual contract teachers report that they were evaluated by the ADEPT evaluation team.

receiving three days or more of training focused on ADEPT. At the same time, a substantial minority (31 percent) received less than a day or no professional development on ADEPT. Eighty-three percent of these teachers report participating in a course for induction year teachers, and 87 percent report having an ADEPT mentor. Among those teachers who had an ADEPT mentor, 79 percent report meeting with the mentor at least monthly, and 49 percent report meeting once a week or more. Finally, teachers report that mentoring support includes a number of activities related to their professional responsibilities, and 66 percent report that mentors provided emotional support.

*Induction year and first-year annual contract teachers give generally favorable marks to the support and assistance that they receive under ADEPT.* Almost two-thirds (65 percent) of those teachers who took a special course for induction year teachers say that the course was “very useful,” and an additional 18 percent say that it was useful but that they needed more help. Large numbers of teachers who had ADEPT mentors strongly agree or agree that (1) mentors’ support had a “significant positive effect” on their teaching (76 percent); (2) mentors were “adequately prepared” to support them (80 percent); and (3) mentors generally had enough time to provide good support (73 percent). Very high percentages of teachers who had received written evaluation reports strongly agree or agree that (1) these reports were timely (87 percent); (2) the feedback was useful for improving instruction (86 percent); (3) the support necessary to make the recommended changes has been available (90 percent); and (4) the feedback had an important effect on the quality of their teaching (81 percent).

*Teachers who serve as members of ADEPT evaluation teams and/or as ADEPT mentors typically see the benefits of these activities, although some expressed concerns about the amount of time required and the challenge of evaluating their colleagues.* Eighty-two percent of teachers who served on evaluation teams either strongly agree or agree that the ADEPT evaluation process had helped to improve the quality of instruction in their schools, and an equal number either strongly agree (18 percent) or agree (64 percent) that the feedback they provided had an important effect on individual teachers.

Overall, nearly all ADEPT evaluation team members strongly agree (30 percent) or agree (63 percent) that they had been adequately prepared for their ADEPT tasks.

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*I think that [ADEPT] is a good process. I find that it's highly time-consuming. It takes a lot of time away and makes it hard for me to do what I need to do in my own classroom. I would like to see some concessions made for teachers who are mentors.*

-High school teacher

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In a finding that is consistent with findings on other issues included in the surveys and case studies, time-or lack of time-is a concern for teachers on the ADEPT evaluation teams. Nearly half of these teachers either strongly disagree (11 percent) or disagree (36 percent) with the statement: “I have generally been able to find enough time to complete my observations and provide good feedback.” A second source of concern is the evaluation of colleagues. Although the majority of teachers on the

evaluation teams strongly disagree (21 percent) or disagree with the statement: “It is difficult to evaluate other teachers at my school because I am uncomfortable judging my colleagues,” others express strong agreement (8 percent) or agreement (18 percent) with this statement.

Almost 90 percent of the teachers who served as ADEPT mentors strongly agree (34 percent) or agree (54 percent) with the statement: “My support as a mentor has had a significant positive effect on the teacher I am mentoring.” About three-fourths of ADEPT mentors also felt that they had been adequately prepared for this role. Thirty-seven percent report that it is difficult to find the time for these activities. In addition, 42 percent of mentors report that it is difficult to serve as both a mentor and a member of an evaluation team.

*Principals are generally positive about teachers' roles and contributions in the ADEPT program, but they are somewhat ambivalent about their own roles.* Seventy-nine percent of principals either strongly agree (18 percent) or agree (61 percent) that mentoring has had significant impact on the performance of induction year teachers, and over 80 percent said that mentoring is a good professional learning opportunity for the mentors. Principals offer similar ratings of the benefits of serving on an evaluation team and generally agree that teachers do a good job on tasks related to the evaluation role. Principals are divided about whether teachers are comfortable in the evaluation role and whether or participation on the evaluation team is a good use of teachers' time.

Ninety-two percent of principals serve on ADEPT evaluation teams. Large majorities of these principals strongly agree or agree that this responsibility is a good use of their time (72 percent) and that it allows them to learn about the quality of instruction in their schools (76 percent) and the professional development needs of new teachers (81 percent). A large minority, however, do view participation on the evaluation team as a good use of their time (29 percent) or as helpful in learning about instruction in their schools (25 percent).

In several of the case study districts, teachers and principals made distinctions between the organization and effectiveness of ADEPT evaluation activities and those of the mentoring component. In these districts, the evaluation activities were viewed as better organized and more effective than the mentoring activities. Principals and teachers also said that more time was spent on the evaluation component.

## Recommendations

We offer three sets of recommendations. The first set focuses on improving the quality of professional development available to South Carolina educators. The second set focuses on building

district capacity to establish and maintain high-quality learning opportunities for teachers, principals, and other educators. The third set focuses on finding time and resources for professional development. Just as these recommendations are related to each other, improving professional development is a shared responsibility. The Governor, the South Carolina State Legislature, particularly the Education Oversight Committee, and the SCSDE have already exerted considerable leadership in this area, and we urge them to continue to do so. In addition, school district leaders and staff, principals, teachers, and professional associations all have important roles to play in improving professional development.

Our recommendations are based on five key findings and conclusions from the study.

1. ***Although many South Carolina educators think that the professional development that is available to them is worthwhile, it appears that professional development misses the mark for many others.*** For these teachers and principals, professional development may not meet their needs, reflect their input in planning, or contribute much to improved practice or greater student learning. For more than 80 percent of the educators who responded to our surveys, professional development does not include adequate follow-up.
2. ***Despite the fact that professional development does not get very high marks from teachers and principals, many South Carolina schools and districts appear to be reasonably positive environments for professional development.*** In these places, teachers and principals agree that professional development is encouraged as part of their work and that there are resources and facilities in place to support their participation.
3. ***The problem in these places is time, or, to be precise, the lack of time.*** There is not enough time to take advantage of what is learned in various workshops and training, there is not enough time to engage in informal, job-embedded learning with colleagues, and there is not enough time to serve as a consistently effective ADEPT mentor or to complete all the work required by the ADEPT evaluation process.
4. ***Professional development at both the state and local levels is primarily supply-driven.*** State and local priorities and program goals and objectives define the content of professional development. In addition, resource limits combined with a general goal of reaching as many teachers and principals as possible, can result in professional development that is marked more by its breadth than its depth. Hence, teachers and principals report participation in professional development on a large number of topics, little or no follow-up, and limited input in planning. This is not to suggest that federal, state, and local priorities and goals should not be reflected in professional development. It is, however, to suggest that when professional development does not explicitly link attention to these goals and priorities to participants' needs and concerns, the

professional development is likely to have limited payoff, except perhaps as a dissemination or communication activity.

5. *At the local level—perhaps as a reflection of the supply-driven system—professional development looks fragmented and appears to lack coordination.* Professional development appears as a menu of events—including workshops, training, certification courses, and graduate courses. In some districts, strategic plans emphasize professional development as an ingredient in school improvement, but we are not aware of any examples of comprehensive planning for professional development. Many principals report that planning professional development for their schools is one of their responsibilities, but they express frustration at the extent to which competing activities and priorities pull teachers away and make school-level activities difficult to plan. District staff and professional development providers express confidence that the professional development they provide is of high quality, but there is little evidence of formal evaluations of quality or impact.

### Recommendations Related to Improving the Quality of Professional Development

The new South Carolina Professional Development Standards and the requirement that state professional development funds be spent on activities that meet the standards is a very important lever for improving the quality of professional development. Our recommendations suggest several options for taking advantage of this lever at both the state and local levels. In conversations that took place as this report was being prepared, SCSDE staff indicated that some of some of the activities that we recommend here are already underway. As we suggest here, we recommend that these activities be continued and expanded.

1. *The SCSDE should mount an aggressive effort to disseminate and build strong consensus around the South Carolina Professional Development Standards.* The development of the standards represents the beginning of important conversations about professional development. These conversations should grow and become more intense. The standards communicate a new vision of professional development, albeit one which is unfamiliar to many people. It is important for them to understand the vision and how it can and should affect their work. Professional development standards can serve at least four related functions, and it will be necessary to review and discuss each of them. Thus, in addition to providing a clear vision of high-quality professional development, these standards can inform the development of an accountability system and define patterns of responsibility for professional development, and inform decisions about spending on professional development (including decisions about what activities not to spend on). Finally, based on our study findings, we suggest that these

discussions should include special attention to two critical dimensions of professional development quality: follow-up and targeting content and format to the needs of the intended participants.

We recommend that this dissemination and consensus-building effort focus extensively, although certainly not completely, on district staff who are responsible for professional development and on school principals who are responsible for planning and facilitating the professional development of their staff. We also recommend including superintendents and school board members in this effort, with special attention to their leadership roles. We strongly urge that the state department consider working in partnership with the professional associations in the process. Conversations about the standards can be included on the agendas on statewide professional meetings and continued later in existing professional networks and publications.

2. *The SCSDE and local school districts should establish professional development accountability systems to ensure that professional development meets the new standards.*

Under the EAA Programs funded with state resources must meet the standards of best practice in professional development.” In our view, the SCSDE has an excellent opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to the new standards by working with districts to plan activities sponsored with Professional Development Standards Implementation Funds to ensure that the plans reflect the standards. The SCSDE should also create an internal review process to (1) ensure that plans for SCSDE-sponsored professional development meet the standards and (2) evaluate at least a sample of SCSDE-sponsored professional development activities to determine whether they took place as planned and had the intended outcomes. We recommend creating an intra-agency working group or task force responsible for ongoing monitoring of the quality of SCSDE-sponsored professional development. In addition to the tasks discussed here, we recommend that this group prepare a quality assurance guide based on the standards to assist SCSDE in planning and organizing professional development, including planning with external providers. On this point, we think that it is particularly important for the quality assurance guide to address quality issues in certification courses and other university-based professional development activities. For example, the quality assurance process and guide could require that all certification courses include activities and assignments that require experimentation and practice as well as feedback on these assignments.

As we discuss below in our recommendations for building local capacity, we strongly urge superintendents and school boards to consider establishing local professional development accountability systems similar to what we have described here.

One of the issues associated with developing these accountability systems is to determine how the standards will be applied. For example, must every professional development activity meet every standard in order to be approved or to be funded? We think not. Instead, it is necessary to review individual activities in the larger context of ongoing professional learning opportunities. Thus, a proposed training activity may be one that meets standards for content and relevance and is based on solid research but does not include any follow-up. The question then is not so much whether the absence of follow-up as a component of the planned activity means that the activity does not meet the standards. Instead, the question should be whether an appropriate set of follow-up support and activities may be linked to the activity. Suppose that a teacher or group of teachers may request funds for participation in a three-day workshop on standards-based instruction. The question should be whether the principal or other instructional leader will work with the teachers on their return to encourage practice or further development of what they learned. If no support will be available, it is possible that there will be little return on the investment, and it does not make sense to invest in teacher participation in the workshop.

### Recommendations for Building Local Capacity for Professional Development

Consistent with the vision of professional development as a local process, we think that it is critical to build local capacity to plan, organize, and provide high-quality professional learning opportunities for teachers, principals, and other educators. This is not to suggest that schools and districts have the sole responsibility for professional development. It is, however, to suggest that they do have important responsibilities for identifying their particular professional learning needs and using the resources that they have available to ensure that those needs are met. They also have a responsibility to communicate these needs and interests to the SCSDE, the professional associations, institutions of higher education, and others who can help meet them.

1. ***Provide professional development on professional development to principals, other school leaders, and district staff.*** Beyond the dissemination and consensus-building activities discussed above, we recommend professional development that focuses on the role of school leaders in creating learning environments for adults. Topics could include (1) adult learning theory; (2) needs assessment; (3) effective practices; (4) strategies for organizing and facilitating professional development, including resource allocation; and (5) linking professional development to school improvement. Professional development for district staff could focus on the same or a similar list of topics, with an orientation to district-level concerns.

These activities fall within the purview of the leadership training programs within the SCSDE as well as the professional development portfolio of the South Carolina Association of School Administrators. These two entities could collaborate on this effort.

2. ***Create district professional development working groups to strengthen local professional development systems.*** As noted above, we strongly encourage superintendents and school boards to create these groups to focus district attention on high-quality professional development. Specifically, these groups could review and, as appropriate, tailor the state professional development standards as standards for the district. Next, they could use the standards to review the quality of existing professional development activities and investments and to recommend improvements. They could also develop a quality assurance system based on the professional development standards. Finally, an important operational task could be setting priorities and coordinating professional development activities on the five contractual professional development days.

Based on our experience in working with these groups, we suggest that they be broadly representative of professional development stakeholders in the district, including, at a minimum, teachers, principals, and central office staff who are responsible for professional development. We also suggest that the superintendent convene the groups and give them a formal charge.

3. ***Continue to strengthen local organization and operation of ADEPT.*** Overall, our findings indicate that ADEPT is viewed having a positive effect on the performance of induction year teacher and first-year annual contract teachers. Our findings also indicate that large numbers of teachers and principals who have been involved in either the evaluation or mentoring components of ADEPT feel that they have benefited from their participation. The Office of Teacher Certification and Recruitment and districts should work together to continue recruiting teachers and principals to serve on evaluation teams and teachers to serve as mentors. We also recommend that the Office of Teacher Certification and Recruitment work with districts to identify “best” or “promising” ADEPT practices and to share them with other districts. Areas of best and promising practices could include (1) courses for induction year teachers and first-year annual contract teachers, (2) training materials and other supports for mentors and evaluation team members, (3) organization and administration of the observation and feedback processes, and (4) strategies for using ADEPT teacher evaluation results for assessing district professional development needs.
4. ***Encourage and support increased teacher participation in the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification process.*** The certification process is often

considered some of the most rigorous and effective professional development available to teachers. Districts can both support and enhance this process by creating candidate support systems that help teachers organize their portfolios and provide opportunities for working with colleagues, often including NBPTS-certified teachers. As the experience of the Charlotte-Mecklenberg (North Carolina) Schools is beginning to show, a cadre of NBPTS-certified teachers represents a valuable resource for improving instruction in the district. Teachers who support candidates report that they continue to sharpen their teaching skills in the process, and the coaching models used in these systems can serve as a model for professional development throughout the district.

### Recommendations for Finding Time and Resources for Professional Development

Ongoing high-quality professional development requires time and can be costly. As we have discussed in several places in this report, the problem of inadequate time for all kinds of professional development is a recurring theme in our findings. Lack of time is a serious problem, but we think that a large part of the reason for the problem is that much of the professional development that is available is unfocused and not clearly linked to priorities nor to meeting individual needs. In effect, the time available for professional development is not used efficiently, and there appears to be limited time to engage in activities that are important and that can contribute to improvement. Lack of adequate resources appears to be much less of a concern, although lack of resources is certainly a problem in some districts. Together, these findings lead us to recommend looking for time and resources for professional development but not necessarily increasing the formal allocations that are already in place, at least in the short term. In both cases, we emphasize the importance of deciding about what to do as well as what to stop doing.

- 1. School and district leaders should work together to find ways of altering school and district schedules to include more time for professional development clearly linked to school and district improvement priorities.* One place to begin looking is the plans for the five professional development days that are already available. Professional development on these days should be limited to high-priority topics and issues. In some instances, districts will identify district-wide needs that can be addressed. In other cases, improvement goals will be better served if school staff pursue their own learning activities. Careful planning, informed by the professional development standards, can reduce or eliminate ineffective and competing activities. Second, we recommend that part of the professional development on professional development discussed above should focus on daily and weekly scheduling options that increase opportunities for teachers to work together during the school day and the elimination of unnecessary meetings and other activities that are distractions. In the end, we believe that

teachers and principals see ten one-hour events that are not clearly linked to their needs and priorities as much more burdensome than one ten-hour activity that helps them solve their problems.

2. *The South Carolina Professional Development Standards and key priorities should guide all investments in professional development.* This recommendation underscores the theme of the importance of the new professional development standards and, for the SCSDE, reiterates a key provision of the EAA. It also underscores the importance of creating efficient mechanisms for reviewing the quality of professional development, particularly during the planning stages. The basic rule should be that only professional development that clearly meets the standards and addresses improvement priorities should be supported with state and local resources.

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**Appendix A:**

**Design and Methodology**

## Methodology and Design

This study consisted of two major data collection activities: (1) surveys of professional development participants and district level coordinators of professional development and (2) case studies of a sample of 10 districts. Key respondents in both data collection activities included teachers, principals, and district staff development coordinators.

The teacher and principal surveys were designed to generate state-representative data on: (1) how teachers and principals engage in professional development activities, (2) the principal's role in the professional development of school staff, (3) teachers' and principals' assessment of the quality and usefulness of specific types of professional development, (4) the experiences of induction year and first year annual contract teachers, particularly with respect to ADEPT, and (5) the supports available for applying new knowledge and skills in the classroom or principal's office. The staff development coordinator survey was designed to gather representative data on district-level professional development infrastructures. Survey respondents were asked to report on their experiences over the last 12 months.

The case studies were designed to gather descriptive information on the professional development system in each of the districts, including the sources of professional development available to teachers and principals, the supports available to take advantage of professional development opportunities and to apply new knowledge and skills, and the degree to which they are aligned with district and school strategic plans.

## Survey Component

### Sampling

*Teachers.* In order to generate representative data that could be reported by district size, school poverty, and school level, we drew a disproportionate, stratified random sample of 1,692 teachers from the population of all South Carolina *classroom* teachers. (The sample does not include specialists, such as speech pathologists, resource teachers, and itinerant teachers.) We used the following three data sources to create the database from which we drew our teacher sample: (1) the 1999-2000 Professional Certified Staff File (PCSF) provided to us by the South Carolina Department of Education's Office of Finance, (2) the 1998-1999 Educational Data Bank available on-line from the South Carolina Department of Education's web site, and (3) the 1996-1997 Rankings of the Counties and School Districts of South Carolina. The PCSF file contained the names, school assignments, contract status (e.g., induction year), and other information for all teachers in the state. The data bank

and rankings information provided data on district size and school poverty levels. These data sources indicated a population of approximately 44,000 eligible teachers in about 1,100 schools (including area vocational centers) across the state. The names of these 44,000 were sorted into the following three district size strata: (1) large districts of more than 15,000 students, (2) mid-size districts of 6,001 - 15,000 students, and (3) small districts of 6,000 or fewer students, and the following four school poverty strata: (1) 0 - 29 percent of students qualify for Free- or Reduced- Price Lunch (FRPL), (2) 30 - 49 percent (FRPL), (3) 50 - 74 percent (FRPL), and (4) 75 - 100 percent (FRPL). We used a random-number generator to select cases from each of these strata, oversampling from some strata and undersampling from others based on expected response rates and cell sizes. The sample was large enough to allow us to report results by school level without stratifying by this variable.

*Principals.* Using the 1999-2000 Directory of South Carolina Schools provided by the South Carolina Department of Education and the data sources used to create the teacher database, we used a random-number generator to select a proportionate, stratified random sample of 667 principals from the entire population of South Carolina principals. In addition to stratifying the principal sample by district size and school poverty (the parameters are identical to those used in selecting the teacher sample), we sorted principals by school level (i.e., elementary school, middle school, high school, schools with mixed grades) since the size of the sample did not otherwise permit reporting by this variable.

*Induction Year and First-Year Annual Contract Teachers.* After drawing the sample of all teachers from our database, we divided the remaining teachers into three groups - induction year teachers, first year contract teachers, and all other teachers. We used a random-number generator to randomly select 400 teachers from the induction year group and another 400 from the first year contract teacher group, for a total of 800 teachers to whom we mailed a separate survey that included items tailored to the experiences of new teachers.

*Staff Development Coordinators.* We surveyed staff development coordinators for all 86 districts in the state, for a total of 87 potential respondents (one district had more than one staff development coordinator).

#### Data Collection and Response Rates

We administered surveys by mail from March 2000 to June 2000. We followed up the initial mailing with three rounds of postcard reminders to all non-respondents. Non-respondents who reported not receiving or losing survey instruments received a second instrument. The teacher sample included 1,692 teachers. Of this number, 1,179 completed and returned the survey for a response rate of 70 percent. The principal sample included 667 principals. Four hundred ninety-one principals

completed and returned the survey for a response rate of 74 percent. We sent the induction year/first year annual contract teacher survey to 800 induction year/first year annual contract teachers; 561 returned and completed the survey for a response rate of 70 percent. The staff development coordinator survey was mailed to 87 staff development coordinators; 80 returned and completed the survey for a 92 percent response rate. For the teacher and principal final samples, we assigned weights to adjust for differential response patterns by strata and thereby reflect the proportion of teachers and principals in South Carolina.

### Data Analysis

We computed frequencies for each response category on each survey item and cross tabulations on the key variables of the sampling framework. We used the chi-square statistic to test whether variation by strata was statistically significant. We also conducted difference of proportions tests to determine whether differences between two groups were statistically significant. All variation and differences that we report are statistically significant.

## Case Study Component

### Sampling

We selected our sample of 10 districts based on district size, district poverty, PACT performance, and geographic region. Our district size strata were: (1) large districts of more than 15,000 students, (2) mid-size districts of 6,001 - 15,000 students, and (3) small districts of 6,000 or fewer students. Our poverty strata were: (1) high poverty districts with 66 - 100 percent of students qualifying for Free- or Reduced- Price Lunch (FRPL), (2) medium poverty districts with 33 - 65 percent qualifying for FRPL, and (3) low poverty districts with 0 - 32 percent qualifying for FRPL. Our PACT performance strata were: (1) high test score districts where 65 - 100 percent of eighth-grade students scored "above basic" or "basic" on the English/language arts portion of PACT, (2) mid-range test score districts where 56 - 64 percent were "above basic" or "basic", and (3) low test score districts where 0 - 55 percent were "above basic" or "basic." Using these strata, we placed district names into a sampling matrix. Using the selection criteria presented in the table below, we used a random-number generator to select 10 districts from our sampling matrix and then made adjustments to ensure appropriate regional variation.

**Exhibit 1**  
**Sampling Selection Criteria**

	<u>Number of Districts to be Included in the Sample</u>
<b>District Size</b>	
15,001 students or more	2
6,001 -15,000 students	3
0 - 6,000 students	5
<b>District Poverty</b>	
High poverty (66 – 100 percent)	5
Medium poverty (33 – 65 percent)	3
Low poverty (0 – 32 percent)	2
<b>District PACT Performance</b>	
High test scores (65 – 100 percent)	4
Mid-range scores (56 – 64 percent)	2
Low test scores (0 – 55 percent)	4
<b>District Geographic Region</b>	
Region 1	2
Region 2	4
Region 3	2
Region 4	2

**Data Collection**

Once we identified a sample of districts, we contacted the superintendent and district staff development coordinator to invite the districts to participate in the study. Two districts in the original sample declined to participate, citing competing demands on their time. In these instances, we selected a second district from the appropriate sample cells to complete the sample.

Between January 2000 and March 2000, PSA study team members visited each district in the sample for two days. While on site, PSA staff interviewed the staff development coordinator as well as any other district staff responsible for planning or providing professional development for teachers and principals. Site visitors also conducted focus groups with teachers and principals and reviewed a variety of documents made available before and during the site visits.

## Data Analysis

Following onsite data collection and document review, the study team prepared a case report on each district in the case study sample. Case studies focused on (1) district demographics and priorities; (2) key professional development opportunities available in the district; (3) quality of professional development; (4) school and district climate for professional development and (5) the organization of professional development. Once the case reports were completed, the study team conducted a cross-case analysis to identify similarities and differences across the districts. Case reports are internal documents.

**Appendix B:**  
**Survey Instruments**

# **A Comprehensive Review of Professional Development in South Carolina**

## **Staff Development Coordinator Survey**

**This survey was commissioned by the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee and has the support of the following organizations:**

**The South Carolina Education Association  
Palmetto State Teachers Association  
South Carolina Association of School Administrators  
South Carolina School Boards Association  
South Carolina Center for Teacher Recruitment  
South Carolina Association for Rural Education  
The South Carolina Department of Education**

**Surveys returned to the contractor will be kept confidential; no individuals, schools, or districts will be identified in reporting. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Please answer each item according to directions. Return the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope by April 14 to:**

**Policy Studies Associates  
PO Box 4001  
Keyser, West Virginia 26726**

**If you have questions or comments, please call Lara Fabiano, Survey Coordinator, at (202) 939-5342, or e-mail her at [lfabiano@policystudies.com](mailto:lfabiano@policystudies.com).**

**THANK YOU!**

## A Definition of Professional Development

In this survey, the term "professional development" refers to any professional learning opportunity that has the potential to enable teachers and principals to perform their work more effectively. Professional development may include university coursework, workshops, institutes, or other kinds of training. It also includes a variety of informal learning opportunities, such as teacher networks, mentoring relationships, collaboration with colleagues, and independent study. As you complete the questions on this survey, please keep this broad definition of professional development in mind.

1. Approximately how much of your time do you spend on your responsibilities as staff development coordinator?  
(CIRCLE ONE)

1. Less than 25 percent
2. Between 25 and 50 percent
3. Between 50 and 100 percent
4. 100 percent

2. Use the space below to list any other positions you hold in the district.

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3. Which of the following tasks are among your primary responsibilities as staff development coordinator?  
(CIRCLE THREE)

1. Assessing professional development needs in the district
2. Developing a comprehensive plan for professional development in the district
3. Approving or evaluating professional development proposals from schools or teachers
4. Planning specific professional development activities
5. Selecting providers and facilitators of professional development activities
6. Assisting schools in planning professional development activities
7. Providing or facilitating professional development activities
8. Facilitating opportunities for teachers to work together (e.g., mentoring, peer coaching, common planning meetings)
9. Monitoring the quality of professional development activities
10. Redesigning professional development activities based on evaluations
11. Monitoring the impact of professional development activities in schools and classrooms
12. Communicating with the state department of education, school district staff members, and schools about professional development activities and policies
13. Administering ADEPT
14. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

4. Does your district have a comprehensive plan for professional development?  
(CIRCLE ONE)

1. Yes, it is a stand-alone document.
2. Yes, it is included as part of the district's strategic plan.
3. No.

5. Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about your district.  
(CIRCLE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH ROW)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
a. District leaders view professional development as an important part of efforts to improve student learning.	1	2	3	4	5
b. District leaders actively encourage <i>experienced teachers</i> to participate in professional development activities.	1	2	3	4	5
c. District leaders actively encourage <i>new and inexperienced teachers</i> to participate in professional development activities.	1	2	3	4	5
d. The district actively encourages <i>principals</i> to participate in professional development activities.	1	2	3	4	5
e. Teachers and principals play a significant role in selecting the content and format of professional development activities.	1	2	3	4	5
f. The district's annual schedule allocates sufficient time for professional development.	1	2	3	4	5
g. The district's overall investment in professional development is adequate to meet our needs.	1	2	3	4	5
h. Parents and community members understand the importance of professional development for teachers and principals.	1	2	3	4	5

6. What are the three most important sources of professional development for your district?

1. Name of organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Professional development activity(ies): \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name of organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Professional development activity(ies): \_\_\_\_\_

3. Name of organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Professional development activity(ies): \_\_\_\_\_

7. How does your district use the five contractual days set aside for professional development activities each year?  
(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. The district schedules full-day events.
2. The district uses the time to schedule early-release days on a regular basis.
3. Schools have complete discretion over how the days will be scheduled and used.
4. Both the district and schools schedule activities for these days.
5. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

8. What kinds of professional development typically take place on the five contractual days?  
(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. Workshops and other training events organized by the district
2. Workshops and other training events organized by individual schools
3. Opportunities for teachers and principals to attend conferences and other events outside the district
4. Time for teachers to work together on curriculum development, reviewing student work, action research, and other similar activities
5. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

9. Here is a list of possible topics for professional development. Which THREE represent the greatest areas of need among teachers in your district?  
(CIRCLE THREE)

1. Subject/content area knowledge
2. Instructional strategies that can be applied to any content area (e.g., cooperative learning)
3. Instructional strategies for reading
4. Instructional strategies for other content areas (not reading)
5. Instructional strategies for students with learning difficulties or who are at risk of failure
6. Examining/analyzing test scores and other student data
7. Assessment strategies
8. Reviewing student work
9. Knowledge/understanding of state standards
10. Aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment with state standards
11. Using technology in instruction
12. Parental involvement
13. Classroom management and student discipline
14. ADEPT
15. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

10. Looking across all of the professional development activities in which teachers and principals in your district have participated in the last 12 months, how often do the following statements apply?  
(CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

The professional development has ...	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
a. been a good use of participants' time.	1	2	3	4	5
b. served the district's purposes.	1	2	3	4	5
c. been appropriate to the existing knowledge, skills, and interests of teachers and principals.	1	2	3	4	5
d. been explicitly focused on improving classroom instruction and student learning.	1	2	3	4	5
e. provided teachers and principals with new ideas and strategies to experiment with in their schools.	1	2	3	4	5
f. included adequate follow-up or additional training for implementing new ideas and practices.	1	2	3	4	5
g. included feedback and guidance to teachers and principals for implementing new strategies.	1	2	3	4	5
h. taken into account teacher and principal input regarding the design and content of the activities.	1	2	3	4	5
i. been explicitly aligned with school's own priorities for improvement.	1	2	3	4	5

11. In general, how often do you or someone else in your district do each of the following?  
(CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	Always	Usually	Seldom	Never	Don't Know
a. Review the experience and qualifications of the professional provider of development before inviting or contracting with them to provide professional development	1	2	3	4	5
b. Review the plans and materials for each activity.	1	2	3	4	5
c. Survey teachers and principals to see how they rate the quality and usefulness of professional development activities in which they participate	1	2	3	4	5
d. Share the results of participant surveys and other feedback with providers	1	2	3	4	5
e. Share the results of participant surveys and other feedback with district staff	1	2	3	4	5
f. Ensure that teachers and principals receive adequate support to implement what they learn from professional development	1	2	3	4	5
g. Observe classrooms and schools to determine whether participants use what they learn in the activity	1	2	3	4	5
h. Track the impact of professional development on student learning	1	2	3	4	5

12. Do district leaders encourage teachers in the district to pursue certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)?  
(CIRCLE ONE)

1. NBPTS certification is a high priority in our district.
2. NBPTS certification is encouraged, although it is not a high priority.
3. We have not taken any steps to encourage teachers to seek NBPTS certification.
4. Don't know.

13. What supports exist in your district for teachers seeking NBPTS certification?  
(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. No support is available
2. Financial support or fee reimbursement
3. An NBPTS candidate support system
4. District staff members trained as NBPTS assessors
5. Other (SPECIFY) : \_\_\_\_\_
6. Don't know

14. Are you responsible for overseeing ADEPT activities in your district?

1. Yes
2. No

15. Which of the following is the primary purpose of ADEPT as the program has been implemented in your district?  
(CIRCLE ONE)

1. To improve student learning
2. To improve instruction
3. To support new and inexperienced teachers
4. To assess teacher performance
5. To weed out incompetent teachers
6. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

16. Do you or others in your district conduct a summary review of the results of ADEPT evaluations and feedback reports?  
(CIRCLE ONE)

1. Yes    2. No (SKIP TO QUESTION 19)    3. Don't know (SKIP TO QUESTION 19)

17. Who, among the following, receives the results of the review of ADEPT evaluations and feedback reports?  
(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. Central office staff who are responsible for professional development
2. Principals
3. External providers of professional development (e.g., universities, Hubs)
4. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_
5. Results not distributed
6. Don't know

18. How are the results used?  
(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. To strengthen support programs for induction year teachers
2. To improve evaluations and feedback reports
3. To plan professional development
4. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_
5. Don't know

19. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about teachers' roles as ADEPT mentors?  
(CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH ROW)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
a. ADEPT and other training prepared them adequately for the mentoring role.	1	2	3	4	5
b. Teachers are able to devote adequate time to their mentoring role.	1	2	3	4	5
c. ADEPT mentoring has a positive impact on classroom instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
d. Principals actively support teachers in carrying out the mentoring roles.	1	2	3	4	5
e. ADEPT mentoring is a good professional learning opportunity for the mentors.	1	2	3	4	5

20. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements about ADEPT evaluation team members?  
(CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH ROW)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
a. It is a good professional learning opportunity for them.	1	2	3	4	5
b. ADEPT training provides the skills they need to carry out this role effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
c. Teachers on the ADEPT teams are generally comfortable assessing their colleagues and providing formal feedback.	1	2	3	4	5
d. Their classroom observations and feedback reports have a significant impact on classroom instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
e. Overall, the time and energy spent on ADEPT has been commensurate with the payoffs to the district and our schools.	1	2	3	4	5

## A Comprehensive Review of Professional Development in South Carolina

### Principal Survey

This survey was commissioned by the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee and has the support of the following organizations:

The South Carolina Education Association  
Palmetto State Teachers Association  
South Carolina Association of School Administrators  
South Carolina School Boards Association  
South Carolina Center for Teacher Recruitment  
South Carolina Association for Rural Education

Surveys returned to the contractor will be kept confidential; no individuals, schools, or districts will be identified in reporting. The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Please answer each item according to the directions. Return the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope by April 14 to:

Policy Studies Associates  
PO Box 4001  
Keyser, West Virginia 26726

If you have questions or comments, please call Lara Fabiano, Survey Coordinator, at (202) 939-5342, or e-mail her at [lfabiano@policystudies.com](mailto:lfabiano@policystudies.com).

THANK YOU!

### A Definition of Professional Development

In this survey, the term "professional development" refers to *any* professional learning opportunity that has the potential to enable you to perform your work more effectively. Professional development may include university coursework, workshops, institutes, or other kinds of training. It also includes a variety of informal learning opportunities, such as teacher networks, mentoring relationships, collaboration with colleagues, and independent study. As you complete the questions on this survey, please keep this broad definition of professional development in mind.

1. How many years have you been a principal?
  - a. Fewer than 2 years
  - b. 2 - 5 years
  - c. More than 5 years
  
2. How many years have you been principal at your school?
  - a. Fewer than 2 years
  - b. 2 - 5 years
  - c. More than 5 years
  
3. Who is responsible for planning professional development at your school? Indicate the extent to which each of the following is involved in planning professional development activities for teachers at your school.  
(CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	To a Great Extent	To Some Extent	To a Limited Extent	Not at All
a. Individual teachers	1	2	3	4
b. A professional development committee	1	2	3	4
c. The School Improvement Council	1	2	3	4
d. Lead teachers or instructional support teachers	1	2	3	4
e. Department chairperson/team leaders	1	2	3	4
f. Principal/assistant principals	1	2	3	4
g. School district central office	1	2	3	4
h. State department of education	1	2	3	4
i. Other (SPECIFY): _____	1	2	3	4

4. How prepared are you to carry out the following functions related to professional development for teachers and other staff at your school? (CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	Very Well Prepared	Prepared	Somewhat Prepared	No Experience	Not a Central Part Of My Job
a. Designing high-quality professional development opportunities for teachers	1	2	3	4	5
b. Organizing professional development activities	1	2	3	4	5
c. Incorporating professional development strategies into our school renewal plan	1	2	3	4	5
d. Assessing teachers' professional development needs	1	2	3	4	5
e. Evaluating professional development activities	1	2	3	4	5
f. Using evaluation data to make decisions about future professional development activities	1	2	3	4	5

5. Who decides how your school will use the five contractual days set aside by the state for professional development activities? (CIRCLE ONE)
- District (SKIP TO QUESTION 7)
  - School
  - The district and school
  - Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_
6. How does your school use the five contractual days set aside by the state for professional development activities? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)
- We schedule full-day activities for teachers.
  - We use the time to allow individual teachers to attend professional development activities outside of the school building.
  - We use the time to schedule early-release days on a regular basis.
  - We use the time for teachers to collaborate together on a regular basis.
  - Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_
7. Considering the professional development activities available to you during the five contractual days, how often do each of the following statements apply? (CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

The professional development activities available on the five contractual days...	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
a. respond to our school's own needs and interests.	1	2	3	4
b. address the goals and priorities of our school renewal plan.	1	2	3	4
c. address <u>district</u> goals and priorities.	1	2	3	4
d. address <u>state</u> goals and priorities.	1	2	3	4
e. reflect our school's input on the content and format of the activities.	1	2	3	4
f. are clearly linked to other professional development activities and programs.	1	2	3	4

8. Indicate the extent to which the following statements are true of your school. (CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH ROW)

In my school...	True	Mostly True	Mostly Untrue	Untrue
a. teachers receive adequate resources to implement new curriculum and instruction.	1	2	3	4
b. teachers assess their professional development needs and receive training to meet those needs.	1	2	3	4
c. teachers have regular opportunities to interact with teachers from other schools.	1	2	3	4
d. teachers are genuinely interested in learning new approaches to teaching and staying current in their content areas.	1	2	3	4
e. professional development is aligned with the school's improvement efforts.	1	2	3	4
f. professional development is a routine part of teachers' work.	1	2	3	4

9. How often do teachers in your school work together on each of the following activities?  
(CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
a. Developing new standards-based curricula	1	2	3	4
b. Developing new classroom assessments	1	2	3	4
c. Reviewing student work	1	2	3	4
d. Conducting action research	1	2	3	4
e. Peer coaching and mentoring, not related to ADEPT	1	2	3	4
f. Other (SPECIFY): _____	1	2	3	4

10. What do you consider to be the TWO biggest impediments to teachers working together on the activities listed in Question 8?  
(CIRCLE TWO)

- a. Lack of time in the regular school schedule
- b. Lack of teacher experience in engaging in such activities
- c. Lack of interest among teachers
- d. Lack of qualified individuals to facilitate collaborative learning opportunities for teachers
- e. Lack of encouragement and support from the district and elsewhere
- f. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

11. Here is a list of possible topics for professional development. Which THREE represent the areas of greatest need among the teachers in your school? (CIRCLE THREE)

- a. In-depth study of subjects they teach
- b. Instructional strategies for reading
- c. Instructional strategies for other content areas (not reading)
- d. Instructional strategies not linked to content area (e.g., cooperative learning)
- e. Instructional strategies for students with learning difficulties or who are at risk of failure
- f. Examining/analyzing test scores and other student data
- g. Assessment strategies
- h. Reviewing student work
- i. Knowledge/understanding of state standards
- j. Aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment with state standards
- k. Using technology in instruction
- l. Parental involvement
- m. Classroom management and student discipline
- n. ADEPT
- o. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

12. During the last 12 months, what have been the THREE most important professional development activities for teachers in your school? (USE THE SPACES BELOW TO LIST AND BRIEFLY DESCRIBE EACH ACTIVITY)

a. ACTIVITY: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PLANNED/INITIATED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

b. ACTIVITY: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PLANNED/INITIATED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

c. ACTIVITY: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PLANNED/INITIATED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

13. Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about your district.  
(CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
a. The district provides adequate resources (e.g., tuition reimbursement, conference fee) for professional development.	1	2	3	4	5
b. District leaders encourage flexible scheduling to facilitate teacher participation in professional development.	1	2	3	4	5
c. District leaders believe that professional development is part of the routine work of teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
d. The district's strategic plan emphasizes the importance of professional development.	1	2	3	4	5
e. District leaders believe that facilitating professional development for teachers is part of the routine work of principals.	1	2	3	4	5
f. District leaders encourage principals to engage in their own professional development.	1	2	3	4	5

14. How often do you participate in the following activities? (CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	At Least Weekly	Every Other Week	Monthly	Less Than Monthly	Never
a. On-going, regularly scheduled meetings with other principals in the district (excluding meetings convened solely for administrative purposes)	1	2	3	4	5
b. Mentoring a colleague	1	2	3	4	5
c. A network of principals organized by an outside agency or through the Internet	1	2	3	4	5
d. A study group or similar ongoing discussion related to education	1	2	3	4	5
e. Observational visits to other schools	1	2	3	4	5

15. In the last 12 months, how many times have you participated in each of the following professional development activities for principals? (CHECK ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	None	1 - 2 Times	3 - 4 Times	5 - 10 Times	More Than 10 Times
a. Workshop(s) or training session(s) that lasted 2 or fewer hours	1	2	3	4	5
b. Workshop(s) or training session(s) that lasted more than 2 hours	1	2	3	4	5
c. Certification course(s)	1	2	3	4	5
d. University course(s) related to your work as a principal	1	2	3	4	5
e. Conference(s)	1	2	3	4	5
f. Institute(s)	1	2	3	4	5

16. In the last 12 months, have you done either of the following? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

a. Read a professional journal(s) regularly

If yes, which one(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

b. Belonged to a professional association(s)

If yes, which association(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

17. Looking across all of the professional development activities for principals that you have participated in during the last 12 months, how much time have you spent in professional development focused on the following topics?  
(CHECK ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	None	Less Than 1 Day	1 - 3 Days	More Than 3 Days
a. Classroom observation, feedback, and teacher performance appraisals, including ADEPT	1	2	3	4
b. Facilities management	1	2	3	4
c. Resource allocation	1	2	3	4
d. Strategic planning and decisionmaking	1	2	3	4
e. Facilitating professional development for teachers	1	2	3	4
f. Comprehensive school reform models and implementation strategies	1	2	3	4
g. Best practices and model programs in core academic subjects	1	2	3	4
h. Curriculum development in core academic subjects	1	2	3	4
i. Knowledge/understanding of state standards	1	2	3	4
j. Aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment with state standards	1	2	3	4
k. Discipline and classroom management strategies	1	2	3	4
l. Using technology in instruction	1	2	3	4
m. Using technology in school management	1	2	3	4
n. Reading instruction	1	2	3	4
o. Parental involvement	1	2	3	4
p. School law	1	2	3	4
q. Ethical issues in school leadership	1	2	3	4
r. Other (SPECIFY): _____	1	2	3	4

18. Of the topic areas listed in question 17, which **THREE** are the most important to you in your own professional development?  
(ON THE LINES BELOW, WRITE THE LETTERS CORRESPONDING TO THREE TOPICS)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

19. What are your main purposes for participating in professional development activities?  
(CIRCLE THREE)

- a. Keeping current professionally
- b. Obtaining ideas or contacts that would strengthen your work
- c. Obtaining ideas or contacts that would strengthen your school
- d. Obtaining ideas or contacts that would help your school carry out a major, planned improvement effort
- e. Being a resource to others
- f. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_



26. Have you served as a member of an ADEPT evaluation team?

- a. Yes      b. No (SKIP TO QUESTION 29)

27. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your participation as a member of an ADEPT evaluation team? (CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. It is a good use of my time.	1	2	3	4
b. It is a good way to learn about the quality of instruction in my school.	1	2	3	4
c. It is a good way to learn about the professional development needs of new teachers.	1	2	3	4
d. ADEPT training provided the skills I need to carry out this role effectively.	1	2	3	4
e. Written and verbal feedback from an ADEPT evaluation team has a positive impact on the performance of induction teachers.	1	2	3	4
f. Overall, participation on an ADEPT evaluation team has been a good professional experience.	1	2	3	4

28. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about teacher participation on ADEPT evaluation teams? (CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
a. Evaluating teachers is a good professional learning opportunity for ADEPT evaluation team members.	1	2	3	4	5
b. ADEPT training provides the skills teachers need to carry out ADEPT evaluations effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
c. Teachers do a good job evaluating their colleagues' performance.	1	2	3	4	5
d. Teachers do a good job of providing formal feedback.	1	2	3	4	5
e. Teachers are generally comfortable evaluating their colleagues and providing formal feedback.	1	2	3	4	5
f. Participating in ADEPT evaluation teams is a good use of teachers' time.	1	2	3	4	5

29. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about teachers' roles as mentors in ADEPT? (CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
a. Teachers are able to devote adequate time to their role as mentors.	1	2	3	4	5
b. Mentoring has had a significant impact on the performance of induction year teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
c. ADEPT training prepared teachers adequately for the mentoring role.	1	2	3	4	5
d. ADEPT mentoring is a good professional learning opportunity for the mentors.	1	2	3	4	5

THANK YOU!

**A Comprehensive Review of Professional Development in South Carolina**

**Survey for Induction Year and  
First-Year Annual Contract Teachers**

This survey was commissioned by the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee and has the support of the following organizations:

The South Carolina Education Association  
Palmetto State Teachers Association  
South Carolina Association of School Administrators  
South Carolina School Boards Association  
South Carolina Center for Teacher Recruitment  
South Carolina Association for Rural Education

This survey is intended for induction year teachers and first-year annual contract teachers in South Carolina. If you are not an induction year or first - year annual contract teacher, you have received this survey in error. Please check this box  and return the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope by April 14.

If you are an induction year or first-year annual contract teacher, please answer each survey item according to the directions. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Surveys returned to the contractor will be kept confidential; no individuals, schools, or districts will be identified in reporting. Return the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope by April 14 to:

Policy Studies Associates  
PO Box 4001  
Keyser, West Virginia 26726

If you have questions or comments, please call Lara Fabiano, Survey Coordinator, at (202) 939-5342, or e-mail her at [lfabiano@policystudies.com](mailto:lfabiano@policystudies.com).

**THANK YOU!**

## A Definition of Professional Development

In this survey, the term "professional development" refers to *any* professional learning opportunity that has the potential to enable you to perform your work more effectively. Professional development may include university coursework, workshops, institutes, or other kinds of training. It also includes a variety of informal learning opportunities, such as teacher networks, mentoring relationships, collaboration with colleagues, and independent study. As you complete the questions on this survey, please keep this broad definition of professional development in mind.

1. What is your teaching status in South Carolina? (CIRCLE ONE)
  - a. Induction year teacher
  - b. First-year annual contract teacher
  
2. How long have you been teaching, including any experience outside South Carolina? (CIRCLE ONE)
  - a. Less than one year
  - b. Between one and two years
  - c. More than two years
  
3. At what grade level(s) are you currently teaching? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)
 

PreK   K   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11   12   Ungraded
  
4. What subjects are you currently teaching? How well prepared do you feel to teach these subjects? (IN EACH ROW, CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE UNDER "A." IF YOUR RESPONSE UNDER "A" IS "YES," THEN CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE UNDER "B" IN THE SAME ROW.)

	A. Do you teach this subject?		B. How well prepared do you feel to teach this subject?			
	Yes	No	Very well Prepared	Prepared	Somewhat Prepared	Not Prepared At All
a. Language Arts/reading	1	2	1	2	3	4
b. Mathematics	1	2	1	2	3	4
c. Social studies/history	1	2	1	2	3	4
d. Science	1	2	1	2	3	4
e. Foreign language	1	2	1	2	3	4
f. Related arts (SPECIFY): _____	1	2	1	2	3	4
g. Other (SPECIFY): _____	1	2	1	2	3	4

5. In the last 12 months, how often have you participated in the following types of professional development activities that involve working with other teachers? (CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH ROW)

	At Least Weekly	Every Other Week	Monthly	Less Than Monthly	Never
a. On-going, regularly scheduled sessions with other teachers, during or after school, to work together on curriculum development, planning, or reviewing student work	1	2	3	4	5
b. Informal observational visits to classrooms of other teachers	1	2	3	4	5
c. Participation in a study group or action research on a topic related to education	1	2	3	4	5
d. Other (SPECIFY): _____	1	2	3	4	5

6. In the last 12 months, how many times have you participated in each of the following professional development activities, including activities sponsored by your school, your district, the state, colleges/universities, professional associations and other organizations? (CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	None	1 - 2 Times	3 - 4 Times	5 - 10 Times	More Than 10 Times
a. Workshop(s) or training session(s) that lasted for 2 or fewer hours	1	2	3	4	5
b. Workshop(s) or training session(s) that lasted for more than 2 hours	1	2	3	4	5
c. Certification course(s)	1	2	3	4	5
d. Graduate course(s) in a content area you teach (other than certification courses)	1	2	3	4	5
e. Conference(s)	1	2	3	4	5
f. Other (SPECIFY): _____	1	2	3	4	5

7. Looking across all of the professional development activities you reported on in Question 6, how much time have you spent in activities focused on the following topics? (CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	None	Less Than 1 Day	1 - 3 Days	More Than 3 Days
a. In-depth study of a subject you teach	1	2	3	4
b. Instructional strategies for reading	1	2	3	4
c. Instructional strategies for other content areas (not reading)	1	2	3	4
d. Instructional strategies not linked to a content area (e.g., cooperative learning)	1	2	3	4
e. Instructional strategies for students with learning difficulties or who are at risk of failure	1	2	3	4
f. Examining/analyzing test scores and other student data	1	2	3	4
g. Assessment strategies	1	2	3	4
h. Reviewing student work	1	2	3	4
i. Knowledge/understanding of state standards	1	2	3	4
j. Aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment with state standards	1	2	3	4
k. Using technology in instruction	1	2	3	4
l. Parental involvement	1	2	3	4
m. Classroom management and student discipline	1	2	3	4
n. ADEPT	1	2	3	4
o. Other (SPECIFY): _____	1	2	3	4

8. Of the topics listed in Question 7, which THREE are most important to your own professional development?  
(ON THE LINES BELOW, WRITE THE LETTERS CORRESPONDING TO THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT TOPIC AREAS)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

9. During the last 12 months, have you done any of the following to foster your own professional development?  
(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- a. Read a professional journal(s) regularly. If yes, which one(s)? \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Belonged to a professional association(s). If yes, which one(s)? \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Belonged to a network of teachers organized by an outside agency or through the Internet.

10. What are your THREE main purposes for participating in professional development activities?  
(CIRCLE THREE)

- a. Keeping current professionally
- b. Obtaining ideas or contacts that would strengthen your work
- c. Obtaining ideas or contacts that would strengthen your school's work
- d. Obtaining ideas or contacts that would help your school carry out a major planned improvement effort
- e. Being a resource to others
- f. Gaining credits toward state recertification or additional certification
- g. Gaining recognition or higher ratings on teacher performance reviews
- h. Qualifying for an administrative or other non-teaching position (e.g., principal, guidance counselor) in the field of education
- i. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

11. Looking across all of the professional development activities in which you have participated in the last 12 months, how often do each of the following statements apply? Consider both formal and informal professional development activities (e.g., work with other teachers—in meetings during and after school, in mentoring relationships, as part of ADEPT, or in peer coaching—as well as workshops, recertification courses, and conferences) (CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

The professional development I have participated in has...	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
a. served my purposes.	1	2	3	4	5
b. been a good use of my time.	1	2	3	4	5
c. been appropriate to my knowledge, and skills.	1	2	3	4	5
d. been appropriate for the grade level(s) or subject(s) I teach.	1	2	3	4	5
e. been designed to communicate information about school, district, or state priorities, goals, or initiatives.	1	2	3	4	5
f. been designed to help me reach the professional development goals I have set for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
g. helped me to reflect critically on how I teach and to develop plans for improving my teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
h. given me new ideas and strategies to experiment with in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
i. included adequate follow-up or additional training to enable me to implement new ideas and strategies.	1	2	3	4	5
j. included planning time during the regular school schedule to enable me to implement new ideas and strategies.	1	2	3	4	5
k. included feedback and guidance while I was trying new strategies and approaches in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
l. reflected my input into the design and content of the activities.	1	2	3	4	5

12. Which of the following are available to you to facilitate your participation in professional development activities?  
(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- a. Release time from teaching (i.e., your regular teaching responsibilities are temporarily assigned to someone else so that you can participate in professional development activities)
- b. Time set aside in the regular school schedule for training or other professional development activities, in addition to the 10 contractual professional development/work days
- c. Time set aside in the regular school day for working with other teachers on curriculum development, reviewing student work, action research, and other activities related to improving instruction
- d. Stipend for professional development activities that take place outside of regular work hours
- e. Full or partial reimbursement of tuition for graduate courses
- f. Reimbursement for conference or workshop fees (including travel)
- g. Suitable space in the school building for working with other teachers
- h. An easily accessible library of resources and other professional materials for teachers
- i. Convenient Internet access
- j. Grants to support professional development
- k. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

13. Of all the supports and incentives listed in item Question 12, which TWO are most important to you?  
(ON THE LINES BELOW, WRITE THE LETTERS CORRESPONDING TO TWO SUPPORTS AND INCENTIVES)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

14. Of the supports and incentives listed in Question 12 that are not available to you, which TWO would be most helpful in enabling you to participate in professional development opportunities?  
(ON THE LINES BELOW, WRITE THE LETTERS CORRESPONDING TO TWO NEEDED SUPPORTS AND INCENTIVES)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

15. Indicate the extent to which the following statements are true of your school.  
(CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	True	Mostly True	Mostly Untrue	Untrue
a. The principal regularly participates in professional development activities with teachers.	1	2	3	4
b. The principal encourages teachers to experiment with new strategies in their classrooms.	1	2	3	4
c. Teachers receive adequate resources to implement new curriculum and instruction.	1	2	3	4
d. Teachers assess their professional development needs and receive training to meet those needs.	1	2	3	4
e. Teachers have regular opportunities to interact with teachers from other schools.	1	2	3	4
f. Teachers are genuinely interested in learning new approaches to teaching and staying current in their content areas.	1	2	3	4
g. Professional development is aligned with the school's improvement efforts.	1	2	3	4
h. Professional development is a routine part of teachers' work.	1	2	3	4

16. Considering the various forms of professional development in which you have participated in the last 12 months, name and briefly describe ONE activity that has been most valuable to you. (Note: Consider all types of professional development.)

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To the best of your knowledge, who sponsors this activity? \_\_\_\_\_

17. Have you participated in a special course for induction year teachers?  
(CIRCLE ONE)

- a. Yes
- b. No (SKIP TO QUESTION 19)
- c. I didn't know there was one (SKIP TO QUESTION 19)

18. Which of the following best describes the overall usefulness of this course?  
(CIRCLE ONE)

- a. It has been very useful.
- b. It has been useful, but I need more help.
- c. It hasn't been very useful, and I need a lot of help.

19. Have you had a mentor assigned to you through ADEPT (i.e., another teacher who provides you with advice, feedback, and other kinds of support)?  
(CIRCLE ONE)

- a. Yes
- b. No (SKIP TO QUESTION 23)

20. Indicate the frequency of your meetings with your ADEPT mentor.  
(CIRCLE ONE)

- a. More than once a week
- b. Weekly
- c. Every other week
- d. Monthly
- e. Less than once a month

21. What kinds of support have you received from your ADEPT mentor?  
(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- a. Classroom observations and feedback
- b. Regular discussion of instructional strategies
- c. Regular discussion of classroom management and
- d. Regular discussion of students' needs and interests
- e. Sharing of instructional materials
- f. Sharing of ideas for lessons
- g. Demonstration teaching
- h. Emotional support (e.g., a shoulder to cry on) discipline strategies
- i. Help in preparing for ADEPT evaluations
- j. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

22. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your experience with your ADEPT mentor?  
(CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. My mentor's support has had a significant positive effect on my performance as a teacher.	1	2	3	4
b. My ADEPT mentor was adequately prepared to support me.	1	2	3	4
c. My ADEPT mentor generally has been able to find enough time to provide me with good support.	1	2	3	4

23. As an annual contract teacher, have you received regular observations and a formal, written evaluation report from an ADEPT evaluation team?  
(CIRCLE ONE)

- a. Yes, I have received regular observations.
- b. Yes, I have received a formal, written observation report.
- c. Yes, I have received both regular observations and a formal, written observation report.
- d. No. (SKIP TO THE END OF THE SURVEY)
- e. Not applicable; I am an induction teacher. (SKIP TO THE END OF THE SURVEY)

24. Did you receive the formal, written evaluation report before Christmas break?  
(CIRCLE ONE)

- a. Yes
- b. No

25. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the formal, written evaluation report you received?  
(CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH ROW)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. The written report was timely.	1	2	3	4
b. The feedback I received in the report was useful for improving my instruction.	1	2	3	4
c. I have generally had the support I need to implement changes recommended in the report.	1	2	3	4
d. The feedback has had an important effect on the quality of my teaching this year.	1	2	3	4

THANK YOU!

## **A Comprehensive Review of Professional Development in South Carolina**

### **Teacher Survey**

**This survey was commissioned by the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee and has the support of the following organizations:**

**The South Carolina Education Association  
Palmetto State Teachers Association  
South Carolina Association of School Administrators  
South Carolina School Boards Association  
South Carolina Center for Teacher Recruitment  
South Carolina Association for Rural Education**

**Surveys returned to the contractor will be kept confidential; no individuals, schools, or districts will be identified in reporting. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Please answer each item according to the directions. Return the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope by April 14 to:**

**Policy Studies Associates  
PO Box 4001  
Keyser, West Virginia 26726**

**If you have questions or comments, please call Lara Fabiano, Survey Coordinator, at (202) 939-5342, or e-mail her at [lfabiano@policystudies.com](mailto:lfabiano@policystudies.com).**

**THANK YOU!**

### A Definition of Professional Development

In this survey, the term "professional development" refers to *any* professional learning opportunity that has the potential to enable you to perform your work more effectively. Professional development may include university coursework, workshops, institutes, or other kinds of training. It also includes a variety of informal learning opportunities, such as teacher networks, mentoring relationships, collaboration with colleagues, and independent study. As you complete the questions on this survey, please keep this broad definition of professional development in mind.

1. How long have you been teaching?  
(CIRCLE ONE)

- a. Fewer than 2 years
- b. 2 to 5 years
- c. 6 to 12 years
- d. 13 to 20 years
- e. More than 20 years

2. At what grade level(s) are you currently teaching? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

PreK   K   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11   12   Ungraded

3. What subjects are you currently teaching? How well prepared do you feel to teach these subjects? (FOR EACH ROW, CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE UNDER "A." IF YOUR RESPONSE UNDER "A" IS "YES," THEN CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE UNDER "B" IN THE SAME ROW.)

	A. Do you teach this subject?		B. How well prepared do you feel to teach this subject?			
	Yes	No	Very Well Prepared	Prepared	Somewhat Prepared	Not Prepared At All
a. Language Arts/reading	1	2	1	2	3	4
b. Mathematics	1	2	1	2	3	4
c. Social studies/history	1	2	1	2	3	4
d. Science	1	2	1	2	3	4
e. Foreign language	1	2	1	2	3	4
f. Related arts (SPECIFY): _____	1	2	1	2	3	4
g. Other (SPECIFY): _____	1	2	1	2	3	4

4. In the last 12 months, how often have you participated in the following types of professional development activities that involve working with other teachers?  
(CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	At Least Weekly	Once Every 2 Weeks	Once a Month	Less Than Once a Month	Never
a. On-going, regularly scheduled meetings with other teachers, during or after school, to work together on curriculum development, planning, or reviewing student work	1	2	3	4	5
b. Participation on an ADEPT evaluation team	1	2	3	4	5
c. Serving as a mentor or coach to other teachers	1	2	3	4	5
d. Having another teacher mentor or coach you	1	2	3	4	5
e. Informal observational visits to classrooms of other teachers in your school	1	2	3	4	5
f. Participation in a study group or action research on a topic related to education	1	2	3	4	5
g. Other (SPECIFY): _____	1	2	3	4	5

5. When you work with other teachers in the ways you reported in Question 4, what do you focus on?  
(CIRCLE THREE)

- a. Planning lessons or developing curriculum
- b. Learning about new instructional strategies
- c. Experimenting with new instructional strategies in the classroom and discussing the results
- d. Reviewing/sharing new curriculum materials
- e. Discussing students' needs and interests
- f. Examining/assessing samples of student work
- g. Examining assessment data for students in our school or district
- h. Studying the deep content of subjects we teach
- i. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you work with other teachers as much as you would like?

- a. Yes
- b. No

7. What do you consider to be the TWO biggest impediments to working with other teachers on the kinds of activities listed in Question 4?  
(CIRCLE TWO)

- a. Lack of time in the regular school schedule
- b. Lack of encouragement and support from the principal
- c. Lack of qualified individuals to facilitate collaborative learning opportunities for teachers
- d. Lack of teacher experience in working collaboratively on such activities
- e. Lack of interest among my colleagues
- f. Other (SPECIFY) : \_\_\_\_\_

8. In the last 12 months, how many times have you participated in each of the following professional development activities, including those activities sponsored by your school, your district, the state, colleges/universities, professional associations, and other organizations? (CHECK ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	None	1 - 2 Times	3 - 4 Times	5 - 10 Times	More Than 10 Times
a. Workshop(s) or training session(s) that lasted for 2 or fewer hours	1	2	3	4	5
b. Workshop(s) or training session(s) that lasted for more than 2 hours	1	2	3	4	5
c. Certification course(s)	1	2	3	4	5
d. Graduate course(s) in a content area you teach (other than certification courses)	1	2	3	4	5
e. Conference(s) (e.g., regional, state, or national education conference)	1	2	3	4	5
f. Other (SPECIFY): _____	1	2	3	4	5

9. Looking across all of the professional development activities you reported on in Question 8, how much time have you spent in activities focused on the following topics? (MARK ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	None	Less Than 1 Day	1 - 3 Days	More Than 3 Days
a. In-depth study of a subject you teach	1	2	3	4
b. Instructional strategies for reading	1	2	3	4
c. Instructional strategies for other content areas (not reading)	1	2	3	4
d. Instructional strategies not linked to content area (e.g., cooperative learning)	1	2	3	4
e. Instructional strategies for students with learning difficulties or who are at risk of failure	1	2	3	4
f. Examining/analyzing test scores and other student data	1	2	3	4
g. Assessment strategies	1	2	3	4
h. Reviewing student work	1	2	3	4
i. Knowledge/understanding of state standards	1	2	3	4
j. Aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment with state standards	1	2	3	4
k. Using technology in instruction	1	2	3	4
l. Parental involvement	1	2	3	4
m. Classroom management and student discipline	1	2	3	4
n. ADEPT	1	2	3	4
o. Other (SPECIFY): _____	1	2	3	4

10. Of the topics listed in Question 9, which THREE are most important to you in your own professional development? (ON THE LINES BELOW, WRITE THE LETTERS CORRESPONDING TO THREE TOPIC AREAS)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

11. In the last 12 months, have you done any of the following to foster your own professional development?

(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- a. Read a professional journal(s) regularly If yes, which one(s)? \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Belonged to a professional association(s) If yes, which one(s)? \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Sought certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

12. What are your THREE main purposes for participating in professional development activities?

(CIRCLE THREE)

- a. Keeping current professionally
- b. Obtaining ideas or contacts that would strengthen your work
- c. Obtaining ideas or contacts that would strengthen your school's work
- d. Obtaining ideas or contacts that would help your school carry out a major planned improvement effort
- e. Being a resource to others
- f. Gaining credits toward state recertification or additional certification
- g. Qualifying for an increase in salary or other pay increase
- h. Qualifying for an administrative or other non-teaching position (e.g., principal, guidance counselor) in the field of education
- i. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

13. Looking across all of the professional development activities in which you have participated in the last 12 months, how often do each of the following statements apply? Consider both formal and informal professional development activities (e.g., work with other teachers—in meetings during and after school, in mentoring relationships, as part of ADEPT, or in peer coaching—as well as workshops, recertification courses, and conferences).

(CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

The professional development I have participated in has...	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
a. served my purposes.	1	2	3	4	5
b. been a good use of my time.	1	2	3	4	5
c. been appropriate to my existing knowledge, and skills.	1	2	3	4	5
d. been appropriate for the grade level(s) or subject(s) I teach.	1	2	3	4	5
e. been designed to communicate information about school, district, or state priorities, goals, or initiatives.	1	2	3	4	5
f. been designed to help me reach the professional development goals I have set for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
g. helped me to reflect critically on how I teach and to develop plans for improving my teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
h. given me new ideas and strategies to experiment with in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
i. included adequate follow-up or additional training to enable me to implement new ideas and strategies.	1	2	3	4	5
j. included planning time during the regular school schedule to enable me to implement new ideas and strategies.	1	2	3	4	5
k. included feedback and guidance while I was trying new strategies in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
l. reflected my input into the design and content of the activities.	1	2	3	4	5

14. Which of the following are available to you to facilitate your participation in professional development activities?  
(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- a. Release time from teaching (i.e., your regular teaching responsibilities are temporarily assigned to someone else so that you can participate in professional development activities)
- b. Time set aside in the regular school schedule for training or other professional development activities, in addition to the 10 contractual professional development/work days
- c. Time set aside in the regular school day for working with other teachers on curriculum development, reviewing student work, action research, and other activities related to improving instruction
- d. Stipend for professional development activities that take place outside of regular work hours
- e. Full or partial reimbursement of tuition for graduate courses
- f. Reimbursement for conference or workshop fees (including travel)
- g. Suitable space in the school building for working with other teachers
- h. An easily accessible library of resources and other professional materials for teachers
- i. Convenient Internet access
- j. Grants to support professional development
- k. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

15. Of all the supports and incentives listed in item Question 14, which are most important to you? (ON THE LINES BELOW, WRITE THE LETTERS CORRESPONDING TO TWO SUPPORTS AND INCENTIVES)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

16. Of the supports and incentives listed in Question 14 that are not available to you, which would be most helpful in enabling you to participate in professional development opportunities? (ON THE LINES BELOW, WRITE THE LETTERS CORRESPONDING TO TWO NEEDED SUPPORTS AND INCENTIVES)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

17. Indicate the extent to which the following statements are true of your school.  
(CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	True	Mostly True	Mostly Untrue	Untrue
a. The principal regularly participates in professional development activities with teachers.	1	2	3	4
b. The principal encourages teachers to experiment with new strategies in their classrooms.	1	2	3	4
c. Teachers receive adequate resources to implement new curriculum and instruction.	1	2	3	4
d. Teachers assess their professional development needs and receive training to meet those needs.	1	2	3	4
e. Teachers have regular opportunities to interact with teachers from other schools.	1	2	3	4
f. Teachers are genuinely interested in learning new approaches to teaching and staying current in their content areas.	1	2	3	4
g. Professional development is aligned with the school's improvement efforts.	1	2	3	4
h. Professional development is a routine part of teachers' work.	1	2	3	4

18. Considering the various forms of professional development in which you have participated in the last 12 months, name and briefly describe ONE activity that has been most valuable to you. (Note: Consider all types of professional development.)

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To the best of your knowledge, who sponsors this activity? \_\_\_\_\_

19. As part of your annual performance review or appraisal (whether it is formal or informal), have you written a goals-based evaluation plan? For example, have you written goals for your development in (1) content, (2) professional service, and (3) instruction, assessment and technology?

a. Yes      b. No (SKIP TO QUESTION 21)

20. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements about your goals-based evaluation plan? (CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. It guides my decisions about the professional development activities in which I will participate.	1	2	3	4
b. It is aligned with the priorities in our school renewal plan.	1	2	3	4
c. The process of developing the plan is helpful to me in thinking about my own professional learning.	1	2	3	4

21. Are you a member of an evaluation team under ADEPT?

a. Yes      b. No (SKIP TO QUESTION 23)

22. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your experience as an ADEPT evaluation team member? (CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
a. The evaluation process has helped improve the quality of teaching at my school.	1	2	3	4	5
b. My feedback has had an important effect on the performance of the teacher(s) I have evaluated.	1	2	3	4	5
c. I was adequately prepared to conduct evaluations for ADEPT.	1	2	3	4	5
d. I have generally been able to find enough time to complete my observations and provide good feedback.	1	2	3	4	5
e. It is difficult to evaluate other teachers at my school, because I am uncomfortable judging my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
f. Overall, benefits of ADEPT make the time and effort necessary to complete the process worthwhile.	1	2	3	4	5

23. Are you an mentor to an induction year teacher under ADEPT?

a. Yes      b. No (SKIP TO END OF SURVEY)

24. How often do you meet with the induction year teacher you are mentoring?

(CIRCLE ONE)

- a. More than once a week
- b. Weekly
- c. Every other week
- d. Monthly
- e. Less than once a month

25. What kinds of support do you provide to the induction year teacher you mentor?

(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- a. Regular discussion of instructional strategies
- b. Regular discussion of classroom management and discipline strategies
- c. Regular discussion of students and their needs and interests
- d. Observation and feedback in addition to what you do as an ADEPT evaluation team member
- e. Sharing of instructional materials
- f. Sharing of ideas for lessons
- g. Demonstration teaching
- h. Emotional support (e.g., a shoulder to cry on)
- i. Other (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

26. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your experience as an ADEPT mentor?

(CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ROW)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. My support as a mentor has had a significant positive effect on the performance of the teacher I am mentoring.	1	2	3	4
b. I have been adequately prepared to be an ADEPT mentor.	1	2	3	4
c. I have generally been able to find enough time to provide good support to the teacher I mentor.	1	2	3	4
d. It is difficult to be a mentor and a member of the teacher's ADEPT evaluation team as well.	1	2	3	4

THANK YOU

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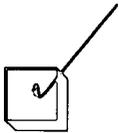


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