Question: **In what areas of professional development do teachers say they would like additional support and training?**

Response:

  In the Fall of 2007, the Department of Program Evaluation conducted a districtwide teacher survey. Surveys were received from 4,931 teachers, or approximately 85% of teachers in the district[1]. Most respondents had more than ten years of teaching experience, and the greatest percentage (26%) reported that they completed the University of Texas at Austin teacher preparation program. Table 1 summarizes the sample demographic information by level.

Table 1. 2007-2008 Austin ISD Teacher Survey Respondents

	Elementary	Middle	High	All
Years of Teaching Experience	**N=2,892**	**N=955**	**N=1,067**	**N=4,931**
Less than 1 year	7%	8%	8%	7%
1 to 5 years	28%	27%	29%	28%
6 to 10 years	21%	22%	18%	21%
11 to 20	23%	26%	23%	23%
More than 20	22%	17%	22%	21%
Type of Class				
General Education	48%	73%	77%	59%
Bilingual/ESL	34%	5%	2%	22%
Special Education	10%	13%	11%	11%
Bilingual Special Education	2%	0%	0%	1%
Other	6%	8%	10%	7%
Teacher Preparation Program[2]				
University of Texas	26%	25%	25%	26%
Texas State University	16%	16%	16%	16%
Region XIII ESC	11%	6%	9%	10%
Huston-Tillotson University	2%	2%	2%	2%
ITEACH Texas	1%	3%	4%	2%
St. Edwards University	3%	3%	2%	2%

  The survey asked teachers to identify areas of professional development in which they would like to receive more support and training. Tables 2 through 5 display the percentage of teachers who indicated that they would like more support and training in key areas. In each table, the data are displayed for all teachers and by years of teaching experience; the tables are sorted by the "all teachers" column.

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[1] Percentage based on PEIMS data, Fall 2008 (actual denominator: 5,835). Surveyed teachers included all campus-based classroom teachers (self-identified during the administration of the campus staff climate survey).
[2] Thirty-nine percent of teachers chose "Other." Less than 1% of respondents chose Austin Community College, Concordia University, Le Tourneau University, Region IV ESC, or TeachQuest.

Results indicate that the top ten areas of need are very similar across level and teacher years of experience, although the percentage of teachers choosing each item varies within groups. Teachers across levels of experience are especially interested in learning more about:

- Integrating technology
- Motivating students
- Designing classroom activities
- Differentiation
- Resources and materials
- Managing student behavior

Several training areas were more often identified by secondary teachers than elementary teachers, including "creating a classroom environment of rapport and respect" and "knowing my students." The latter in particular may be a challenge for secondary teachers who, unlike elementary teachers, do not spend a large part of their day with the same group of students. Elementary teachers also identified several key areas more often than secondary teachers: "organizing classroom physical space" and "assessment methods and criteria."

Not surprisingly, fewer veteran teachers expressed the desire for more professional development in general, however more than one third of teachers with more than 11 years of experience expressed interest in learning more about integrating technology into the classroom. A high percentage of novice teachers indicated that they would like more support and training in designing classroom activities and knowledge of resources and materials.

Table 2. Top Ten Areas in Which Secondary Teachers Would Like to Receive More Support and Training

	ALL	< 1	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 20	>20
		Years of Experience				
1. Integrating the use of technology with instruction	**31%**	23%	**32%**	29%	**32%**	**34%**
2. Motivating students	**30%**	**50%**	**35%**	26%	25%	24%
3. Designing classroom activities	23%	**40%**	**30%**	21%	17%	17%
4. Managing student behavior	22%	**45%**	28%	17%	18%	14%
5. Knowledge of resources and materials	21%	**36%**	26%	19%	16%	15%
6. Engaging students in learning	21%	**31%**	26%	20%	17%	15%
7. Differentiation (activities, groups, lesson structure)	20%	**33%**	29%	17%	15%	12%
8. Using district software systems (AIMS, etc.) to enter and access student performance data	16%	27%	16%	13%	13%	17%
9. Creating a classroom environment of rapport and respect	15%	23%	17%	14%	14%	10%
10. Knowing my students (academically, culturally, developmentally)	13%	17%	15%	12%	13%	11%

Note: Topics are sorted by "All Secondary" column. Areas with more than 30% of teachers indicating that they would like additional training are shown in **bold**.

Table 4. Additional Areas in Which Secondary Teachers Would Like to Receive More Support and Training

	ALL	< 1	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 20	>20
			Years of Experience			
Using questions and discussion techniques	13%	14%	16%	15%	13%	8%
Communicating with families/caregivers	13%	22%	17%	11%	12%	7%
Establishing a culture for learning	12%	24%	13%	12%	9%	9%
Using IPGs	11%	24%	15%	8%	6%	9%
Interpreting student performance data for instructional decision-making	11%	19%	12%	10%	8%	10%
Assessment methods and criteria	10%	16%	13%	8%	7%	7%
Establishing classroom procedures	9%	25%	12%	5%	6%	4%
Serving as an advocate for students	9%	12%	11%	8%	8%	6%
Organizing classroom physical space	8%	12%	11%	7%	7%	6%
Reflecting on teaching	8%	9%	8%	9%	8%	8%
Assessing student learning	8%	12%	9%	8%	6%	7%
Maintaining accurate records	8%	20%	11%	6%	4%	5%
Communicating clearly and accurately (directions and procedures)	7%	17%	7%	7%	6%	5%
Contributing to school growth and developing professionally	7%	12%	7%	8%	5%	8%
Demonstrating flexibility and responsibility (lesson adjustment)	6%	10%	6%	5%	4%	6%
Principles of Learning	4%	6%	4%	4%	3%	5%

Note: Topics are sorted by "All Secondary" column.

Table 3. Top Ten Areas in Which Elementary Teachers Would Like to Receive More Support and Training

	ALL	< 1	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 20	>20
			Years of Experience			
1. Integrating the use of technology with instruction	**35%**	27%	**33%**	**36%**	**39%**	**36%**
2. Differentiation (activities, groups, lesson structure)	25%	**40%**	**35%**	27%	19%	15%
3. Knowledge of resources and materials	23%	**45%**	**34%**	18%	14%	15%
4. Designing classroom activities	21%	**37%**	**32%**	19%	14%	12%
5. Motivating students	21%	23%	27%	25%	15%	14%
6. Managing student behavior	18%	**34%**	26%	15%	12%	11%
7. Organizing classroom physical space	14%	21%	19%	14%	12%	9%
8. Engaging students in learning	14%	21%	20%	14%	10%	9%
9. Assessment methods and criteria	14%	29%	19%	12%	10%	8%
10. Using district software systems (AIMS, etc.) to enter and access student performance data	13%	24%	12%	12%	14%	11%

Note: Topics are sorted by "All Elementary" column. Areas with more than 30% of teachers indicating that they would like additional training are shown in **bold**.

Table 4. Additional Areas in Which Elementary Teachers Would Like to Receive More Support and Training

	ALL EL	Years of Experience				
		<1	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 20	>20
Using questions and discussion techniques	13%	16%	19%	15%	8%	9%
Assessing student learning	13%	26%	17%	12%	10%	7%
Using IPGs	12%	26%	16%	10%	8%	9%
Maintaining accurate records	10%	20%	16%	9%	8%	5%
Creating a classroom environment of rapport and respect	10%	16%	13%	12%	8%	6%
Interpreting student performance data for instructional decision-making	9%	22%	13%	7%	6%	6%
Communicating with families/caregivers	9%	15%	10%	11%	6%	5%
Knowing my students (academically, culturally, developmentally)	8%	10%	10%	8%	7%	6%
Reflecting on teaching	7%	8%	8%	8%	8%	6%
Serving as an advocate for students	7%	7%	11%	10%	4%	4%
Communicating clearly and accurately (directions and procedures)	7%	14%	11%	6%	5%	4%
Establishing a culture for learning	7%	9%	10%	7%	6%	4%
Contributing to school growth and developing professionally	7%	6%	9%	7%	6%	5%
Establishing classroom procedures	6%	13%	10%	5%	4%	2%
Demonstrating flexibility and responsibility (lesson adjustment)	5%	6%	8%	6%	3%	2%
Principles of Learning	4%	3%	5%	3%	4%	2%

Note: Topics are sorted by "All Elementary" column.

Teachers also were given the opportunity to write comments on the survey. Of the 899 teachers who wrote comments, 141 (about 16%) made comments about professional development in Austin ISD. Comments varied in topic and in tone, but some common themes emerged, including the desire for:

- Higher quality professional development opportunities
- Fewer professional development requirements; instead some teachers would prefer more planning and/or reflection time
- More dyslexia training
- More content-specific training
- More research-based/best-practice training
- Training tailored to the needs of their campuses
- Classroom-ready lesson plans and/or materials to make the transition easier from training to implementation
- Better differentiation for new vs. experienced teachers
- Better compensation for attendance