

August 2016

Thank you for your request to our REL Reference Desk regarding **effective professional development (PD) models that extend content delivery over time.**

Ask REL Southwest is part of a collaborative Ask-A-REL reference desk service provided by the 10 regional educational laboratories (REL). By design, this service functions much in the same way as a technical reference library providing references, referrals, and brief responses in the form of citations for research-based education questions.

Please note that REL Southwest has not evaluated the resources themselves, but offers this list to you for your information only.

BACKGROUND

REL Southwest held a Governing Board meeting on May 2–4, 2016, in New Orleans, Louisiana. A needs-sensing focus group activity was conducted with Board members in attendance. Of the new needs identified by the group, five needs were submitted as Ask A REL questions. This response addresses one of those questions.

Following an established REL Southwest protocol, we conducted a search for research reports as well as descriptive briefs on effective PD models that extend content delivery over time, for use and dissemination at the September 2016 Governing Board meeting. The sources included federally funded organizations, additional research institutions, educational databases, and general Internet searches.

QUESTION

What is the impact of professional development (PD) models that extend content delivery over time?

Sources

Askell-Williams, H. & Murray-Harvey, R. (2016). Sustainable professional learning for early childhood educators: Lessons from an Australia-wide mental health promotion initiative, *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 14(2), 196-210.
<http://ecr.sagepub.com/content/14/2/196.abstract>.

From the abstract: “New policy initiatives, such as those concerned with promoting young children’s positive mental health, highlight the need for good quality professional education in the early childhood education and care sector. However, although a wealth of literature exists from the school sector, little is known about professional education in early childhood education and care settings. This article presents an analysis of early childhood education and care educators’ perspectives about their professional learning during an initiative to promote young children’s mental health in 111 early childhood

education and care centres in Australia. Questionnaires and feedback forms were collected from educators on four occasions over 2 years. In addition, programme facilitators rated the quality of implementation of the initiative in each centre. Thematic analysis indicated that the professional education was instrumental in building early childhood education and care educators' knowledge about children's social-emotional learning and mental health, increased educators' self-efficacy for mental health promotion and encouraged a more collegial and collaborative workplace. Hierarchical linear modelling supported the learning gains identified in the qualitative analysis, but showed that the effect sizes for positive change depended on the quality of programme implementation. The findings highlight important synergies between opportunities for professional learning and workplaces that are conducive to transformation and renewal. Recommendations from participants for improvement included the need to ensure the relevance of content to local contexts, more extended learning opportunities, translation of unfamiliar language and more accessible timetabling of professional learning sessions. Issues concerning the need to advocate for, and sustain, professional education in early childhood education and care settings are discussed."

Blitz, C. L. (2013). *Can online learning communities achieve the goals of traditional professional learning communities? What the literature says* (REL 2013–003). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Mid-Atlantic. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midatlantic/pdf/REL_2013013.pdf.

From the report summary: "This review of the literature on online PLCs responds to a request from district and school administrators in the Regional Educational Laboratory Mid-Atlantic Region for information on using online PLCs to engage their teachers in professional development. The review looked at advantages, challenges, and emerging best practices."

Garet, M. S., Porter, A. C., Desimone, L., Birman, B. F., & Kwang, S. Y. (2001). What makes professional development effective? Results from a national sample of teachers. *American Educational Research Association*, 38(4), 915–945. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3202507>.

From the abstract: "This study uses a national probability sample of 1,027 mathematics and science teachers to provide the first large-scale empirical comparison of effects of different characteristics of professional development on teachers' learning. Results, based on ordinary least squares regression, indicate three core features of professional development activities that have significant, positive effects on teachers' self-reported increases in knowledge and skills and changes in classroom practice: (a) focus on content knowledge; (b) opportunities for active learning; and (c) coherence with other learning activities. It is primarily through these core features that the following structural features significantly affect teacher learning: (a) the form of the activity (e.g., workshop vs. study group); (b) collective participation of teachers from the same school, grade, or subject; and (c) the duration of the activity."

Libler, R. (2010). Indiana State University professional development school partnership: Systemic, symbiotic, and solution-oriented. *School-University Partnerships*, 4(2), 20–30. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ969835>.

From the ERIC abstract: “The Indiana State University Professional Development Schools (ISU PDS) Partnership sprang from the convergence of two strong needs: (1) the need for real life practice in the way of extended clinical experiences for teacher education students in schools of practice; and (2) the need on the part of the schools in the community to have access to research on best practice, rejuvenation through contact with content area experts, and assistance with improving the learning environment for all students. This Partnership is guided by the overarching purpose of “linking renewal in schools to renewal in educator preparation.” To meet this purpose, the Partnership has four main goals: (1) increase learning for all students through creating enhanced learning environments where effective curricular, instructional, and organizational practices are used to ensure that all students reach their full potential as students and as persons; (2) provide optimal learning environments for preservice educators to learn the craft of teaching and learning to high and rigorous standards of performance in schools committed to restructuring and continuous professional development for faculty; (3) provide meaningful professional development for university and school faculty based on their needs and collaboratively developed by them; and (4) support scholarly inquiry and the advancement of knowledge in teaching and learning, especially through collaboratively designed programs of scholarship. The vision of the ISU PDS Partnership rests on three interlocking assumptions and beliefs. First, the partnership believes that reform and renewal activities must be systemic. Second, the partnership believes that a symbiotic relationship, built on trust and parity between its members and existing institutions, is necessary to achieve systemic change. Third, the partnership needs a critical study process to inform and guide its work. (Contains 2 figures.)”

Parsons, Allison Ward; Ankrum, Julie Winneur; Morewood, Aimee (2016). Professional development to promote teacher adaptability. *Theory Into Practice*, v55 n3 p250-258. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1105312>.

From the ERIC abstract: “Effective professional development (PD) follows adaptive teaching principles; it increases teacher understanding and instructional purpose, which ultimately supports and extends adaptive teaching. Through this article, we compare and contrast training models with educative models of PD (Duffy, 2004). We discuss characteristics of effective PD that enhance teachers' instructional adaptability, and explore potential barriers to the implementation of adaptive teaching, which may be addressed preemptively through PD.”

Seltzer, D. A., & Himley, O. T. (1995). A model for professional development and school improvement in rural schools. *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 11(1), 36–44. http://jrre.vmhost.psu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/11-1_4.pdf.

From the report abstract: “The model we describe provides a framework for rural educators to employ as they seek ways to improve their schools and meet the national goal of providing all teachers access to professional development opportunities.

Implementation strategies of our model include commitment of school teams; assistance based on the teams' assessment of their needs; a focus on teaching and learning strategies that promote meaningful connections; extended planning time for teams; recognition that change is a long-term process that requires long-term support; networking of teams across schools to promote collegial support; ownership of the professional development agenda; and process evaluations to guide future professional development opportunities.”

Yoon, K. S., Duncan, T., Lee, S. W.-Y., Scarloss, B., & Shapley, K. (2007). *Reviewing the evidence on how teacher professional development affects student achievement* (REL 2007–No. 033). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/rel_2007033_sum.pdf.

From the report summary: “Examining more than 1,300 studies identified as potentially addressing the effect of teacher professional development on student achievement in three key content areas, this report finds nine that meet What Works Clearinghouse evidence standards. That only nine meet standards attests to the paucity of rigorous studies that directly assess the effect of in-service teacher professional development on student achievement in mathematics, science, and reading and English/language arts.

Highlighting the problems of many studies of professional development, this report can help researchers avoid methodological pitfalls. Especially important is that researchers undertaking studies with quasi-experimental designs provide data on the baseline equivalence of the treatment and comparison groups. Future studies of the effect of professional development on both teachers and students would be particularly useful—studies more fully addressing professional development’s direct effect on teachers and its indirect effect on students.”

Additional Resources to Consult

Several states have adapted and/or adopted PD standards, which are described below and can be accessed using the links provided.

Alabama Professional Development Standards

<http://alex.state.al.us/leadership/Alabama%20Professional%20Development%20Standards.pdf>.

From the document: “The List of Standards for Effective Professional Development were adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education on June 13, 2002. These state standards are embedded in the NCLB definition of professional development in Title IX, Section 9101 (34). They should be used as a guide in developing an LEA Professional Development Plan and implementing activities under that plan.”

Florida Professional Development Standards

<http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/professional-dev/professional-dev-stards.stml>.

From the website: “District professional development activities in Florida are guided by Florida's Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol. This evaluation model assesses the local planning, learning, implementation, and evaluation of professional development activities according to standards modeled after the Learning Forward (formerly National Staff Development Council) standards as well as Florida statutory requirements. The Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol includes standards that serve to identify and recognize best practices as well as to identify local professional development systems in need of improvement.

The Florida Department of Education initiated the Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol in spring 2003 as a means to fulfill the requirements of Section 1012.98, Florida Statutes. This legislation sets forth that the purpose of professional development systems is to increase student achievement, enhance classroom instructional strategies that promote rigor and relevance throughout the curriculum, and prepare students for continuing education and the workforce. The standards were revised and updated in 2010 to reflect recent changes in law and current research and practice.

Florida's Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol provides the criteria for evaluating the quality of each district's professional development system. Systems are evaluated at the district, school and educator level in four essential elements of high quality professional development, or strands, which are incorporated into each level: planning, learning, implementing and evaluating. Judgments on 65 standards organized under these strands are made using a 4-point rating scale, with a midpoint of 2.5. A school district meets the adequacy provision when the average of the ratings for all of the standards is above the midpoint on the scale. District professional development systems are reviewed on a four-year cycle beginning with the third cycle in the 2010-2011 school year.”

Florida's Professional Development Standards can be accessed here:

<http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5636/urlt/0072404-protocostandards.pdf>.

Other resources at the site include access to PDF versions of the following:

- Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol
- Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol Reviewer's Guide
- Matrix of Professional Development Standards for Educator, School, and District levels
- Checklist for district level implementation of standards
- Checklist for school level implementation of standards
- Checklist for educator level implementation of standards
- Checklist for leadership development program review
- Teacher Professional Development Programs in Florida: 2008 Interim Project Report from the Florida House of Representatives

Iowa Professional Development Standards and Requirements

http://educate-old.iowa.gov/pdmtm/pdfs/part_3-i.pdf.

From the standards document: “Implementation of a school district’s career development plan shall meet the following standards:

1. Align with the Iowa teaching standards and criteria;
2. Deliver research-based instructional strategies aligned with the student achievement goals established by the district;
3. Deliver professional development training and learning opportunities that are targeted at instructional improvement and designed with the following components:
 - Student achievement data and analysis;
 - Theory;
 - Classroom demonstration and practice;
 - Observation and reflection;
 - Teacher collaboration and study of implementation; and
 - Integration of instructional technology, if applicable;
4. Include an evaluation component of professional development that documents the improvement in instructional practice and the effect on student learning; and
5. Support the professional development needs of district certified staff responsible for instruction.”

Maryland Teacher Professional Development Standards

http://mdk12.msde.maryland.gov/instruction/professional_development/teachers_standards.html.

From the website’s introduction: “Research, insights from practice, and common sense converge around the understanding that skilled teachers have a significant impact on student learning. Helping teachers develop the knowledge and skills they need begins with rigorous teacher training programs. Subsequently, effective professional development helps teachers continue enhancing their knowledge and skills throughout their careers.

Maryland’s Teacher Professional Development Standards are intended to guide efforts to improve professional development for all teachers. These standards call on teachers, principals and other school leaders, district leaders and staff, the Maryland State Department of Education, institutions of higher education, and cultural institutions and organizations¹ across the state to work together to ensure that professional development is of the highest quality and readily accessible to all teachers. These standards also acknowledge that teacher professional development encompasses a wide variety of learning activities. The list includes, but is certainly not limited to, teacher study groups, coaching and mentoring relationships, teacher networks, participation on school improvement teams and committees that develop curricula and assessments, workshops, and college and university courses.

When fully implemented, these standards and the related indicators can help improve the quality of professional development by:

- Providing a clear vision of high-quality professional development that recognizes local needs, priorities, and resources;
- Guiding planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating high-quality professional development, including both professional development programs and an entire professional development agenda;
- Supporting alignment of professional development with goals for improving student learning and state, district, and school policies and priorities;
- Informing allocation of resources for professional development; and
- Defining accountability for ensuring that professional development is of the highest quality and readily accessible to all teachers.”

Mississippi Standards for Professional Learning

<http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/ESE/SPL>

From the SEA website: “The Commission on School Accreditation approved the adoption of the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning, on April 18, 2012, as the state standards for professional development. These standards make explicit that the purpose of professional learning is for educators to develop the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions to help students perform at high levels. Additionally, the standards guide the design, implementation, and evaluation of professional learning, and allow for consistent, statewide implementation of a professional learning system (<https://learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning#.V4lr97ikWMM8>.)”

The Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning are:

Learning Communities: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.

Leadership: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.

Resources: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.

Data: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.

Learning Designs: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.

Implementation: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change

Outcomes: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

New Jersey Professional Development Standards

Adapted Learning Forward's Professional Learning Standards

(<https://learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning#.V4lr97ikWWM8.>)

described under the Mississippi Standards above

A PDF version of New Jersey's adapted Definition of Professional Development and Standards for Professional Learning can be accessed at

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/profdev/regs/def.pdf>

The state's Revised Professional Development Regulations and other related information can be found at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/profdev/regs>

The State-Required Professional Development Topics are at

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/profdev/topics/>

New Jersey's State Professional Learning Committee (SPLC) "is authorized by the State Board of Education (*N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-4.5*) to advise the Commissioner and the Department on professional development policies and other matters pertaining to the professional growth and development of all educators in service to improved outcomes for students. This committee replaces two former professional development advisory committees, the Professional Teaching Standards Board (PTSB) and the Professional Development Advisory Committee for School Leaders (PDAC), with the goal of enabling more coherent and aligned policies and guidelines for professional learning for all educators." The committee's mission and work and composition and membership can be accessed at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/profdev/spcl/>.

New York State Professional Development Standards

<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/pdf/pdstds.pdf>.

From the document's introduction: "In a commitment to raising the knowledge, skills, and opportunity of its citizens, New York State seeks to enhance students' cognitive, social, emotional and academic achievement throughout its schools. Given that research indicates that teacher quality is the single most powerful influence on student achievement, it is essential to ensure that teachers are provided with ongoing, high quality professional development to sustain and enhance their practice. Indeed, teacher professional development is an essential element of comprehensive school improvement. The professional development needs of other members of school community, including administrators and support personnel, must also be addressed to ensure a focus on continuous learning and to create the conditions necessary for closing the achievement gap and improving the achievement of all students. These standards provide guidance for achieving high quality professional development planning, design, delivery and assessment, and should serve as a foundation for all professional development in our schools."

North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board

<http://www.nd.gov/espb/profdev/>.

From the ND website: “The Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB) in 2009 endorsed the NSDC/Learning Forward definition for professional development and the professional development standards which can be found at:

<http://www.learningforward.org/index.cfm>.

The ESPB seeks the advice of teachers, administrators, school board members, teacher education professors, and other interested citizens in developing and updating codes of professional development. Professional development is accomplished, in part through licensure renewal. At the present time, a contracted teacher is required to complete 4 semester hours every five years.”

NOTE

Some states, as noted above, have either adopted or adapted the Forward Learning (formerly National Staff Development Council) Standards.

Forward Learning standards are documented in a book that was published in 2011.

Information about the book of standards can be accessed at

<https://lf.ps.membersuite.com/onlinestorefront/ViewMerchandiseDetails.aspx?contentTypeID=cbc968d7-00ce-cd37-6cd0-0b3b5f8f014c&categoryID=>

From the website description: “The book is the third revision since 1995, the standards define the essential elements of and conditions for professional learning if improvements in educator effectiveness and student learning are to be realized. As with past versions, the latest standards represent the work of many organizations and associations. In developing this version, Learning Forward and its partners examined the latest research and practice in professional learning to create a template for professional learning. Everyone who funds, plans, facilitates, participates in, and advocates for effective professional learning should engage in reading and discussion of the standards. Included in this book is an introduction describing the history and role of the standards. There are seven standards in this version; a complete explanation of each standard is included along with selected research citations. Appendices provide a crosswalk between the previous and current version as well as guidelines for how various stakeholder groups can make use of this document.”

METHODS

Search of Databases and Websites

- [Institute of Education Sciences \(IES\) website](http://www.ies.ed.gov) (<http://www.ies.ed.gov>)
- [ERIC database](http://www.eric.ed.gov) (www.eric.ed.gov)
- [Google Scholar](http://scholar.google.com) (scholar.google.com)
- Google (<https://www.google.com/>)
- Bing (<http://www.bing.com/>)

Keywords and Search Strings Used in the Searches

Professional development; professional development + educator effectiveness; effective professional development; professional development over time

Criteria for Inclusion

REL Southwest selected resources that provide research on effective PD models that extend content delivery over time. When REL Southwest staff reviewed the resources, we considered, among other things, three factors:

- 1. Date of Publication:** The search was limited to studies conducted since 2000.
- 2. Source and Funder of the Report/Brief/Article:** Priority was given to publications written in relevant, peer-reviewed journals or reports or produced by well-known research organizations.
- 3. Methodology:** Sources include literature reviews and commissioned reports.

Ask-A-REL is a service provided by a collaborative of the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Program, funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES). This response was prepared by REL Southwest, administered by SEDL, under contract ED-IES-12-C-0012 with IES. The content of this document does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.