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## Implementation of the Master Plan for Statewide Professional Staff Development for 2014-2015 An Evaluation Study

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

*Method of study.* Most data were collected via more than a thousand reports submitted by providers and approximately 3,600 responses to a survey from a random sample of participants in the sessions.

*Findings.* Regarding effectiveness, the PD Master Plan included slightly fewer topics (434) and participants (32,530), and slightly more sessions (1,132), than in the previous year. Providers' session reports showed that of the total participants, about 6,500 educators participated in PD lasting at least 30 hours, which is the duration shown by research to be the minimum needed to change teacher practice and impact student learning. The two Board Standards for Professional Learning that providers least often reported meeting were Standard 4 (Use of data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning) and 2 (Requires skillful leadership to develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning). Of five research-based PD practices, active learning and sufficient duration and timespan scored lowest. Regarding efficiency, decentralization of PD appears to be working, with the WVDE decreasing its offerings; still, the WVDE reported the greatest numbers for both sessions held and participants in attendance. The providers who exercised the greatest degree of collaboration were located in the WVDE, with CPD coming in second. Regarding impact of the Master Plan, all four of the Board's Goals for Professional Development received coverage, and the participant surveys showed a high level of general agreement—at least 71%—that the sessions they attended had been helpful in meeting Goals 1–3; however only 57% of participants in Goal 4-aligned sessions were found helpful in advancing toward that goal.

According to retrospective self-reports, the PD had large effects on educators' knowledge of the PD topic, and moderate effects on their practice and attitudes/beliefs.

*Limitations of study.* The response rate for this study was much lower than usual, due primarily to the WVDE switch to Outlook 365, which blocked messages from the online survey inviting educators to participate in the survey in late fall 2014. As noted in previous studies, the use of a retrospective pretest/posttest methodology to assess changes in knowledge, behavior and skills, and attitudes and beliefs poses some concerns.

*Recommendations* include (a) address research-based PD practices and Board Standards for Professional Learning that lagged behind others as described above; (b) promote the Board's Standards for Professional Learning at the school and district levels; and (c) adopt a model for PD providers that aligns with and supports research-based PD practices and local learning communities.

For more information, contact Patricia Cahape Hammer, Office of Research ([phammer@k12.wv.us](mailto:phammer@k12.wv.us)), or download the full report from the Office of Research website at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/research/reports2015.html>.

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