

Arlington Public Schools

# Professional Development Program Evaluation Report

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Prepared by the Office of Planning and Evaluation  
Response from the Professional Development Office

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May 2016

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Appendices are available at [www.apsva.us/evaluationreports](http://www.apsva.us/evaluationreports).

## SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

The Professional Development evaluation began in 2013-14 with the development of an evaluation design. A planning committee met regularly throughout the year to develop the evaluation questions that would guide data collection for this report. Committee members included staff from Planning and Evaluation, the Professional Development Office, other central offices, and schools; as well as a community member from the Budget Advisory Council. Data collection for the evaluation occurred during the 2014-15 school year and the fall of 2015. This evaluation employed various methodologies to collect data with which to examine the success of the APS Professional Development program. In particular, this report addresses the following three components outlined in Arlington Public Schools (APS) policy and procedures (45-3) for accountability and evaluation:

1. A description of the department, program, or service
2. Evaluation questions that ask
  - a. How effectively was the Professional Development program implemented?
  - b. What were the outcomes?
3. Recommendations

The executive summary and appendices are located online at [www.apsva.us/evaluationreports](http://www.apsva.us/evaluationreports).

*Professional Development Program Description - Prepared by the Office of Professional Development*

### APS Professional Learning Structure

This section describes professional development opportunities offered throughout APS. Many of these offerings are not coordinated through the Professional Development Office, but rather through each department, content office, or school. The Professional Development Office provides support in planning, implementing, and evaluating professional development for instructional staff. **Table 1** outlines each employee scale and which are supported by the Professional Development Office.

**Table 1: APS Employee Scales and Support from Professional Development Office**

| Scale | Description   | Number of Employees | Professional Development Office Support |
|-------|---|---------------------|---|
| A     | Instructional Assistants  | 675                 | Yes                                     |
| C     | Cafeteria   | 89                  | No                                      |
| D     | Bus Drivers   | 186                 | No                                      |
| E     | Technical and Administrative  | 210                 | Minimal                                 |
| G     | Clerical  | 293                 | No                                      |
| M     | Maintenance   | 321                 | No                                      |
| P     | Principal and Administrative  | 145                 | Yes                                     |
| T     | Teachers, Counselors, Librarians, Social Workers, Therapists, Psychologists | 2762                | Yes                                     |
| X     | Extended Day  | 251                 | No                                      |



The focus of the APS Professional Development Office is centered on providing support for **instructional staff**.

#### *Role of Advisory Council on Instruction in Determining Professional Development Focus*

Citizens provide recommendations about professional learning offerings through the Advisory Council on Instruction (ACI). The Content/Program Advisory Committees make recommendations to ACI. ACI votes on recommendations and presents them to the School Board. Each ACI committee report and each program evaluation provide a plethora of recommendations for additional professional learning. Staff responds to the ACI recommendations and plans next steps.

Supervisors and principals develop requests based on the need to include ACI recommendations. Funding is provided through redirection of funds or new resources. If new resources are needed, they become part of the Superintendent's proposed budget, on which the School Board takes action.

#### *Categories of Instructional Professional Learning*

The APS professional development offerings for instructional staff fall into three broad categories:

- **Centrally offered:** identified and offered based on district wide analysis of need
- **School-based:** identified and offered based on school wide areas of need
- **Self-initiated:** based on self-identified need

There are several systemic APS opportunities for professional development, including:

- Work days in August designated as teacher in-service –two days provided by central office and two days provided by schools
- Designated early release
  - Middle Schools- two days (school-based)
  - High Schools- three days (School-based)
  - Elementary Schools- five days- (two centrally and three school-based)
- Curriculum and program offices meet with secondary T-scale staff on the first Wednesday of each month after school
- Instructional offices with elementary lead teachers four times a year.

#### *Centrally Offered Professional Learning*

Program and content area offices provide professional learning to support the APS Strategic Plan and areas of need as identified through analysis of data.

#### *Role of Supervisors & Specialists*

- The supervisors are administrators responsible for content or program area.
- The specialists are T-scale staff in the office to support supervisor and teachers.
- Both supervisors and specialists provide professional learning in response to:
  - Program evaluation
  - Data analysis
  - Research-based instructional approaches in the specific content or program area
  - State and/or federal mandates

- Supervisors and specialists provide professional development through
  - Modeling in the classroom
  - Working with groups of teachers, school staffs
  - Teaching professional development courses
  - Leading curriculum projects
  - Train-the-trainer experiences with school-based specialists
  - Analyzing data specific to their content or program area

#### School-Based Professional Learning

Each school's lead instructional team analyzes data and determines the school focus based on need. The school team plans school-wide professional learning around the identified need(s).

#### Role of Principals and School-Based Instructional Teams

- Provide school-based leadership and support to address student needs in the context of the strategic goals and district initiatives
- Develop a calendar of offerings to support the school professional learning focus and secure providers to deliver professional development

#### Self-Initiated Professional Learning

Self-initiated professional development occurs when individuals identify their own learning needs and seek out available resources to meet those needs. The self-directed learner assumes responsibility for the planning, decision making and implementation of the learning. Self-initiated professional learning includes, but is not limited to:

- Coursework at universities
- Online coursework or professional learning networks/communities
- Conference attendance
- National Board Certification
- Professional presentations
- Professional organization membership
- Facilitator or trainer of trainers
- Professional readings
- Teacher research

#### APS Professional Development Office Program Overview

The Professional Development Office delivers professional learning for targeted groups and programs. The services coordinated by this office, focused on teachers, assistants, and administrators, include coordination of and support for the Mentor Program, the Career Advancement Program, Teacher Evaluation, and university partnerships. The office also organizes and delivers in-service programs, workshops, and courses. The Professional Development Office is committed to retaining high quality teachers in Arlington Public Schools through providing and supporting effective professional learning.

### *Goals and Objectives*

The vision statement for the APS Professional Development program is: Every APS educator engages in effective professional learning so every student achieves. The Professional Development Office works with teachers, school leaders, and district leaders to help them be as effective as possible, and to continually expand their knowledge and skills to implement the most effective educational practices.

The Professional Development Office operates within the Department of Instruction (DOI) to meet APS Strategic Plan and DOI goals.

The current strategic plan runs through 2016-17 and focuses on five goal areas:

**Goal 1:** Ensure that Every Student is Challenged and Engaged

**Goal 2:** Eliminate Achievement Gaps

**Goal 3:** Recruit, Retain and Develop High-Quality Staff

**Goal 4:** Provide Optimal Learning Environments

**Goal 5:** Meet the Needs of the Whole Child

In addition to, and in support of, the division goals, the Office of Professional Development also works toward meeting the following DOI core services:

- Establishing instructional best practices
- Designing the curriculum for implementation
- Selecting instructional resources
- Developing the Program of Studies
- Providing instructional support for schools
- Designing and delivering professional learning
- Monitoring curriculum and pedagogy implementation

### *Professional Development Office Key Services and Attributes of Success*

**Table 2** lists the key services provided by the Professional Development Office, as well as the attributes of success for each key service. The goal of professional learning is to increase student learning by impacting teacher practice. Teachers should use the strategies learned and knowledge gained through professional learning in their classroom instruction. Our program is successful when the needs of the students drive the professional learning offered to teachers. As staff engage in quality professional learning, efficacy and effectiveness increases as new behaviors are implemented. As staff share their successes and challenges through collaboration, relationships improve and the quality of teaching and learning increases.

**Table 2: Professional Development Office Key Services and Attributes of Success**

| Professional Development Office Key Service  | Major Services   | Attributes that define successful performance of the program  |
|--|--|---|
| <p><b>T-Scale Evaluation</b></p> <p>Provide support for evaluators and teachers in understanding the Teacher Performance Standards, and the T-Scale evaluation process</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Hire Modules</li> <li>• Screencasts and resources on teacher evaluation webpage and Blackboard</li> <li>• Variety of offerings to T-scale and P-scale as needed</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers and administrators accurately complete evaluation processes</li> <li>• Systematic reviews of evaluations by HR find consistently high quality evaluations across the school division.</li> </ul>                    |
| <p><b>Career Advancement Program (CAP Portfolio I)</b></p> <p>Provide teachers with a more in-depth understanding of, and assistance with, the expectations and components of the APS Knowledge and Skills based pay system for T-Scale staff</p> <p><b>CAP Portfolio III (National Board Certification)</b></p> <p>Provide teachers with a more in-depth understanding of, and assistance with, the expectations and components of the assessment process</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1-hour overviews for CAP I and NB</li> <li>• CAP Portfolio I Seminar</li> <li>• CAP Portfolio I Support Cohort</li> <li>• CAP Portfolio I Scorer Training</li> <li>• NB Seminar</li> <li>• NB Support Cohort</li> <li>• NB Renewal (Overview and Support Cohort)</li> <li>• NB Candidate Support Provider Training</li> <li>• State reporting for NB state incentive</li> <li>• Work with HR for salary increases for successful staff</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback indicates that teachers feel supported in the program and are able to complete the process.</li> <li>• Retention of teachers on CAP salary schedule is higher than teachers on the regular salary scale.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Mentor Program</b></p> <p>Equip veteran teachers with the knowledge and skills to provide each new hire consistent, ongoing support during their first year of employment in Arlington Public Schools</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentor Training (new mentors and refresher)</li> <li>• Individual support of new hires as necessary</li> <li>• Monitoring of Blackboard Mentor Course</li> <li>• State reporting in fall and summer</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New hire and mentor feedback indicate that new hires feel supported in meeting school and district requirements.</li> </ul>  |

| Professional Development Office Key Service  | Major Services  | Attributes that define successful performance of the program   |
|--|---|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with administrators to assign appropriate mentor matches</li> </ul>   |  |
| <p><b>New Hire Orientation</b></p> <p>Plan, implement, and evaluate the provision for orienting new T-Scale staff to APS</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with HR to communicate with newly hired teachers</li> <li>• Coordinate with departments and content offices to schedule and deliver orientation sessions and materials</li> <li>• Invite community liaisons (i.e. Credit Union and 403b vendors) to provide new hires with available resources</li> <li>• Work with school administrators to schedule new hire time in schools</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High level of attendance</li> <li>• Variety of offerings</li> <li>• Feedback shows a high level of satisfaction</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Electronic Registrar Online</b></p> <p>Oversee the management of and assistance with the system that allows employees to record, register, and receive credit for workshops, courses, and training offered within APS.</p> | <p>Serve as system-wide administrators for ERO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide training around the use of ERO (for teachers and providers)</li> <li>• Approve courses and sessions</li> <li>• Run reports</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to pull the data needed for each program on attendance, recertification points, levels of participation in PD by scale, hours of PD offered</li> <li>• Teachers are able to access a thorough record of professional development taken in APS.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Field Experience/Observation Placements</b></p> <p>Provide university students with appropriate classroom placements designed to give students guided and controlled experiences with</p>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with university personnel and school administrators to place university students with appropriate classroom placements</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide classroom experiences for university students and experiences for APS staff to learn and grow as they host prospective teachers</li> </ul>  |

| Professional Development Office Key Service   | Major Services   | Attributes that define successful performance of the program  |
|---|--|---|
| professionals in the elementary and secondary schools   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers indicate that they would like to work in APS after completing their field work</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Professional Development Planning and Evaluation</b></p> <p>Provide oversight and support for offices and schools in planning, implementing and evaluating professional development</p>   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional learning is entered accurately in to ERO.</li> <li>Professional learning providers are able to access evaluation data from ERO.</li> </ul>                              |
| <p><b>Instructional Lead Teachers (ILT)</b></p> <p>Provide oversight and support for the Instructional Lead Teachers which identifies classroom teachers interested in a leadership role, provides them with enhanced opportunities to learn and grow, and capitalizes on their skills and talents for the benefit of students.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly ILT meetings</li> <li>Monitoring of ILT work via mid-year and end of year reflection and submission of Goal Card</li> <li>Facilitation of ILTs in supporting their school with DOI areas of foci, e.g. PLCs and ATSS</li> <li>Supply schools with resources connected to the Dol areas of foci</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective analysis of school’s instructional data</li> <li>Schools understand Department of Instruction areas of foci</li> <li>Effective communication among stakeholders</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>P-Scale Evaluation</b></p> <p>Provide guidance and support for the P-Scale evaluation process in collaboration with HR</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain accurate resources for P-scale employees</li> <li>Deliver training as needed</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All P-scale staff have an end of year evaluation on file</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>System-wide Assistants’ In-service</b></p> <p>Plan, implement, and evaluate the provision for professional growth of A-Scale employees</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate the offerings of each department or office</li> <li>Compile a catalog of offerings</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High level of attendance</li> <li>Variety of offerings</li> <li>Feedback shows a high level of satisfaction</li> </ul>   |

| Professional Development Office Key Service   | Major Services   | Attributes that define successful performance of the program   |
|---|--|--|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track evaluations and provide feedback for subsequent sessions</li> </ul>   |  |
| <p><b>Support of County-wide Initiatives</b></p> <p>Provide county-wide professional learning and structures to support county-wide initiatives such as Professional Learning Communities, Cultural Competence, Professional Learning Days, Teacher Expectations Student Achievement (TESA), Understanding by Design, and Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) for program evaluation observations</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Festival of the Minds</li> <li>Cultural Competence</li> <li>Professional Learning Communities</li> <li>Adaptive Schools</li> <li>Cognitive Coaching</li> <li>Arlington Tiered Systems of Support (ATSS)</li> <li>Teacher Expectations Student Achievement (TESA)</li> <li>Understanding by Design (UbD)</li> <li>CLASS</li> <li>Developing current APS teachers in adding endorsements in high need areas</li> <li>Teachers for Tomorrow: Provides incentives for high school students to enter the field of education in the hopes they will return to teach in APS</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional learning is offered around key county-wide initiatives</li> <li>Feedback on professional learning shows high levels of satisfaction</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Substitute Orientation</b> In conjunction with HR, plan, implement, and evaluate the provision for orienting substitute teachers to APS</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with HR to schedule and deliver monthly orientation sessions for new substitutes</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All substitutes have knowledge of the policies and procedures of Arlington Public Schools.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Development of University Partnerships</b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with universities that will help us provide a diverse work force</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interns have a high rate of employment by APS.</li> </ul>   |

| Professional Development Office Key Service  | Major Services   | Attributes that define successful performance of the program  |
|--|--|---|
| <p>While the funding for this position is housed in Human Resources, the day-to-day work of this position is housed in the Professional Development Office to oversee and evaluate university partnerships</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster partnerships that target a variety of high need areas (i.e. ESL, SPED, Montessori, Counseling, STEAM, etc...)</li> <li>• Professional learning around job fair preparation (mock interviews, resume writing, and non-evaluative observations)</li> <li>• Maximize potential of early contracts in these high need areas and to increase the diversity of the work force in APS</li> <li>• Provide training for university students and cooperating teachers</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentor and intern feedback indicate the program prepares interns to be successful in the classroom.</li> </ul> |

*Requirements Impacting Professional Learning*

Federal Requirements

- Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) – Note: This will be superseded beginning, in part, on July 1, 2016 with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
- IDEA –EIS and RtI

Under the current ESEA, states and school districts have flexibility in using federal education funds. This allows districts to use funds for their particular needs, including teacher professional development. In addition, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ensures services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA states that in implementing coordinated early intervening services districts may implement activities that include

- (1) Professional development for teachers and other school staff to enable such personnel to deliver scientifically based academic and behavioral interventions, including scientifically based literacy instruction, and, where appropriate, instruction on the use of adaptive and instructional software; and



(2) Educational and behavioral evaluations, services, and supports, including scientifically based literacy instruction.

State Requirements

- Virginia Acts of Assembly – 2013 Session
- Chapter 650
- Section 22.1-253.13:5. Standard 5. Quality of classroom instruction and educational leadership.
- Approved March 20, 2013
- Virginia Licensure Renewal Updated May 10, 2013
- High-Quality Professional Development Criteria, April 2004

The Virginia Assembly states that each school board will provide guidance on high-quality professional development. Virginia Code § 22.1-253.13:5, Standard 5. Quality of classroom instruction and educational leadership<sup>1</sup>, includes the following requirements:

F. Schools and school divisions shall include as an integral component of their comprehensive plans required by § 22.1-253.13:6, high-quality professional development programs that support the recruitment, employment, and retention of qualified teachers and principals. Each school board shall require all instructional personnel to participate each year in these professional development programs.

G. Each local school board shall annually review its professional development program for quality, effectiveness, participation by instructional personnel, and relevancy to the instructional needs of teachers and the academic achievement needs of the students in the school division.

The following table summarizes the audiences and topics specified in the code.

**Table 3: Virginia Code Requirements for Professional Development by Audience**

| Audience   | Topic   |
|--|---|
| Administrative and supervisory personnel<br><i>principals, supervisors, and division superintendents</i> | The evaluation and documentation of teacher and administrator <i>principal</i> performance based on student academic progress and the skills and knowledge of such instructional or administrative personnel  |
| Administrative personnel<br><i>principals and supervisors</i>  | Increase proficiency in instructional leadership and management, including training in the evaluation and documentation of teacher and administrator <i>principal</i> performance based on student academic progress and the skills and knowledge of such instructional or administrative personnel |

<sup>1</sup> <http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter13.2/section22.1-253.13:5/>

| Audience   | Topic  |
|--|--|
| <i>Teachers, principals, administrators, superintendents</i> | <p>Use and documentation of performance standards and evaluation criteria based on student academic progress and skills</p> <p>Clarify roles and performance expectations and to facilitate the successful implementation of instructional programs that promote student achievement at the school and classroom levels</p>  |
| School board members   | personnel, curriculum, and current issues in education   |
| Instructional personnel                                      | <p>proficiency in the use of educational technology consistent with its comprehensive plan for educational technology</p> <p>in educational technology which is designed to facilitate integration of computer skills and related technology into the curricula</p>  |
| Teachers and principals                                      | <p>Provide with high-quality professional development programs each year in instructional content;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the preparation of tests and other assessment measures;</li> <li>• methods for assessing the progress of individual students, including Standards of Learning assessment materials or other criterion-referenced tests that match locally developed objectives;</li> <li>• instruction and remediation techniques in English, mathematics, science, and history and social science;</li> <li>• interpreting test data for instructional purposes;</li> <li>• technology applications to implement the Standards of Learning; and</li> <li>• effective classroom management</li> <li>• assist in acquiring the skills needed to work with gifted students, students with disabilities, and students who have been identified as having limited English proficiency</li> <li>• increase student achievement and expand the knowledge and skills students require to meet the standards for academic performance set by the Board of Education</li> </ul> |
| Teachers of the blind and visually impaired                  | Programs in Braille  |

More detail can be found in **Appendix B4**.

[Division Requirements](#)

- APS Strategic Plan

- Policy and PIP 35-7.4 – Professional Development
- PIP 35-5.9 Professional Leave
- PIP 35-5.15 Organizational Leave

Policy and PIP 35-8.3 – Contracts and Work Schedules

Best and Current Practices

*Professional Learning Principles and Guidelines*

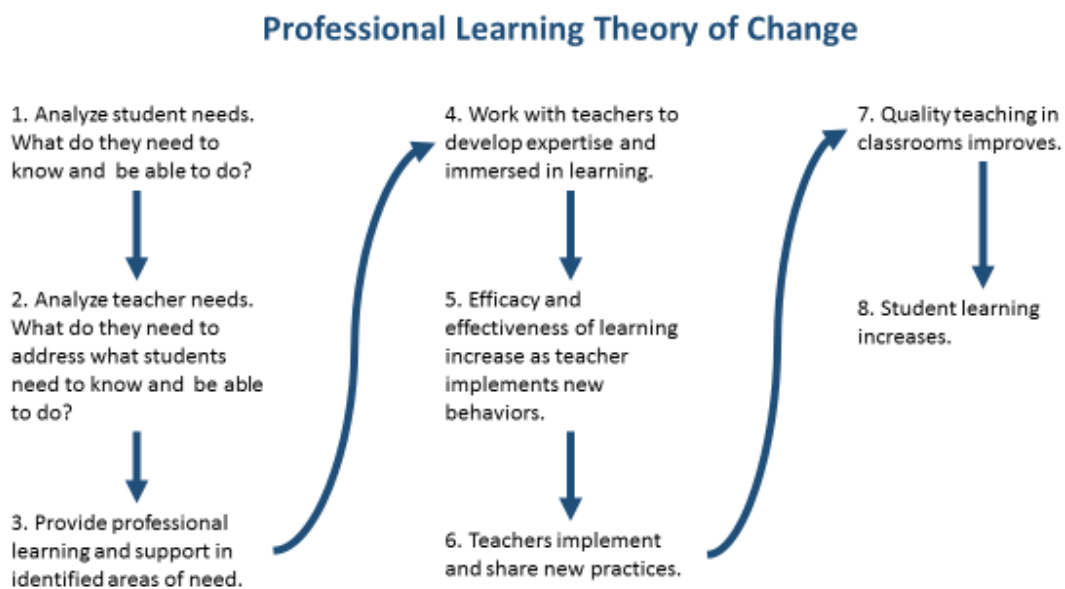
Effective professional learning is results-driven, standards-based, content-rich, student-centered, and job-embedded.

APS has results-driven and content-rich professional learning. Currently APS offices use student data to identify areas of need for professional learning as well as self-reporting of needs from instructional staff.

Through self-reporting in the ERO end of session evaluations and focus groups, participants report relevant professional learning and varied choices for researched-based best practices that have practical applications in the classroom.

Best practices in professional learning include the use of a Logic Model that specifies the flow of how that change will occur over time. The Professional Learning Theory of Change describes how professional learning starts with an analysis of student needs, to then identify teacher learning needs. As staff engage in effective professional learning, efficacy and effectiveness increase as new behaviors are implemented. As staff share their successes and challenges with new behaviors through collaboration and quality of teaching and learning increases.

**Figure 1: Professional Learning Theory of Change**



Learning Forward’s 7 Standards for Professional Learning<sup>2</sup> should act as a guide when planning professional learning. When one of the standards is missing in the cycle of professional learning, the desired result is less likely to be attained and results in educator confusion. The chart below is helpful in diagnosing which standard needs more focus based on the desired results of professional learning. If there are pockets of excellence, then learning communities should be looked at and strengthened. If there is resistance to utilizing what is being learned in professional learning, then the resources standard might need strengthening.

**Figure 2: Educator and Effectiveness Results When Only Some of the Learning Standards are Used**

| Learning Communities | Leadership | Resources | Data | Learning Designs | Implementation | Outcomes | Educator Effectiveness and Student Results |
|----------------------|------------|-----------|------|------------------|----------------|----------|--|
| ✗                    | ✓          | ✓         | ✓    | ✓                | ✓              | ✓        | Pockets of excellence                      |
| ✓                    | ✗          | ✓         | ✓    | ✓                | ✓              | ✓        | Lack of support                            |
| ✓                    | ✓          | ✗         | ✓    | ✓                | ✓              | ✓        | Resistance                                 |
| ✓                    | ✓          | ✓         | ✗    | ✓                | ✓              | ✓        | Lack of focus                              |
| ✓                    | ✓          | ✓         | ✓    | ✗                | ✓              | ✓        | Inadequate learning                        |
| ✓                    | ✓          | ✓         | ✓    | ✓                | ✗              | ✓        | Unsustained change                         |
| ✓                    | ✓          | ✓         | ✓    | ✓                | ✓              | ✗        | Misalignment of goals                      |

### Resources

The Office of Professional Development does not have a separate budget; all resources for the office come under the Department of Instruction. The office has three fulltime staff members and two part-time staff members, including 1.0 fulltime equivalent (FTE) positions for a supervisor, two specialists, and 0.5 (FTE) positions for an administrative assistant and specialist. For FY 2016, the estimated cost for staffing Professional Development is \$504,501.00, which includes an estimated rate of 20% for benefits. The primary responsibilities of these 5 employees are as follows:

<sup>2</sup> [learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning](http://learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning)

**Table 4: Professional Development Office Staff and Responsibilities**

| Employee   | Primary Responsibilities   |
|--|--|
| <p>Professional Development Supervisor<br/>(1.0 FTE)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support county-wide implementation of district initiatives               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Oversee the use of Online Professional Learning Catalog</li> <li>○ Design, coordinate, and assess system-wide professional development activities for teachers and assistants, including new teacher orientation, assistants’ in-service and elementary early release activities.</li> <li>○ In addition, technical or program supervision over teachers, teaching assistants, and other staff during activities and in-service sessions.</li> <li>○ Work with other curriculum supervisors to coordinate and assess county-wide and school or program specific professional development activities.</li> <li>○ Customize decentralized professional development activities in collaboration with program supervisors, principals, teachers, professional development committees, etc.</li> <li>○ Implement and supervise the Teacher Expectations Supporting Achievement (TESA) and National Board Certification programs.</li> <li>○ Facilitate the design of training materials for district staff and/or departmental usage, including brochures, slide shows, training manuals, and educational supplements, develops and delivers presentations on strategies to achieve school division initiatives and strategies.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Support the implementation of the teacher evaluation system through coordinating and training activities.</li> <li>• Maintain online areas for group collaboration (ILT, Cultural Competence Council, T-Scale and P-Scale Evaluation)</li> <li>• Mentor Program               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Direct supervision is exercised over teacher mentors and clerical/secretarial employees and other staff assigned to the Office of Professional Development.</li> <li>○ Implement and supervise the school-based mentor program in each school; responsibilities include assisting principals in recruiting appropriate mentors.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Field Experience               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In collaboration with Human Resources, establish and monitor procedures for placing field experience students from a variety of universities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Perform related duties as required.</li> </ul> |
| <p>Teacher Mentor Specialist<br/>(1.0 FTE)</p>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination of the Mentor Program:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Communicate with school administrator’s on mentor/mentee matches</li> <li>○ Enroll and manage all active mentors in Blackboard (partnership agreements, mentor journals)</li> <li>○ Read and respond to monthly mentor journals in a timely manner</li> <li>○ Provide initial and refresher training for all mentors</li> <li>○ Be available as a sounding board for all mentors</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Keep an updated list of all trained mentors</li> <li>○ Manage mentor course in ERO (enroll active mentors and mark attendance at the end of the mentoring to show points earned)</li> <li>○ Coordinate with principals about the needs of late hires</li> <li>○ Submit initial data collection and end of year state mentor report (October and June)</li> <li>● Coordination of New Hire Orientation (NHO) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Communicate with HR for latest new hire list/contact information</li> <li>○ Send communication to new hires about NHO and manage RSVPs</li> <li>○ Secure presenters for NHO (department and school level)</li> <li>○ Manage location for NHO and reserve all rooms</li> <li>○ Set agendas and other materials for NHO</li> <li>○ Manage evaluation of NHO</li> <li>○ Submit pay memo for attendees and presenters</li> <li>○ Plan and implement Teacher Evaluation Presentation</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Provide Substitute Orientation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement monthly orientation for all new substitutes on topics: Policies and Procedures, Safety, Classroom Management, Lesson Planning</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Maintain ERO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide training on the use of ERO</li> <li>○ Support individual offices in entering offerings in ERO</li> <li>○ Manage course/session proposals in ERO</li> <li>○ Enter school based sessions when appropriate</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Coordinate Field Experience Placements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Communicate with local and online universities about student field work</li> <li>○ Contact schools/programs to find placements for university students</li> <li>○ Confirm placements with university students via email</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <p>Teacher Evaluation Specialist<br/>(1.0 FTE)</p> | <p>The Teacher Evaluation Specialist provides support and professional learning to staff at all levels with a primary focus on experienced teachers. The Teacher Evaluation Specialist is responsible for organizing and providing sustained, site-based and county-wide professional learning in supporting staff in the Teacher Evaluation Processes and Career Advancement Program.</p> <p>The role of the Teacher Evaluation Specialist combines the responsibilities of teacher educator, staff developer, and program monitor. The work of the Teacher Evaluation Specialist is directed toward supporting APS staff in implementing APS Best Practices and alignment of instruction with the APS T-Scale Professional Standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Uses information and communication technology to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ enhance learning</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ collaborate with colleagues in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the delivery of instruction</li> <li>● Provides expert consultative services to staff with respect to the latest that technology can offer to enhance professional learning in the classroom and online.</li> <li>● Oversees support for CAP program which includes planning, supporting and evaluating the Teacher Evaluation Program and Career Advancement Program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Training for participants</li> <li>○ Training for CAP Portfolio I reviewers</li> <li>○ NBPTS</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Maintains Blackboard areas (CAP, NBPTS, T-Scale Evaluation, T-Scale Evaluation for New Hires)</li> <li>● Monitors and support the APS Online Professional Learning Catalog</li> </ul> |
| University Partnerships- Professional Development School Coordinator<br>(0.5 FTE in Human Resources) | This position is transitioning from an on-site coordinator is responsible for the day-to-day administration and supervision of the activities of one specific University Professional Development School partnership to one that oversees APS university partnerships overall, with the first steps this year focusing on new university partnerships that will bring APS a diverse applicant pool.   |
| Administrative Assistant<br>(0.5 FTE)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Performs the full range of advanced paraprofessional services tasks for the office</li> <li>● Maintains accounts and records for grants</li> <li>● Coordinates accounts for the office</li> <li>● Supports the district-wide use of Electronic Registration Online and Event Management System</li> <li>● Performs related work as required or assigned</li> </ul>   |

Annually, the Department of Instruction has been allocated funds for specific initiatives (i.e., Teacher Evaluation, Professional Learning Communities) which the Professional Development Office oversees.

**Mentors:** Each year-long mentor earns a stipend of 4.4% of BA, Step 1, totaling \$2,010 for the 2015-2016 school year. On average over the past three years the annual cost of mentors is \$193,884.00.

**Instructional Lead Teachers:** Each Instructional Lead Teacher (ILT) earns a stipend at 8.4% of BA, Step 1 equaling \$ 3,837 for the 2015-2016 school year. On average over the past three years the annual cost is \$132,955.83.

**Career Advancement Program (CAP) Support and Attainment:** We have had increased numbers of participants for each program in the past year that led to increased costs.

### **National Board Program**

The National Board is currently rolling out a new process. For FY 15, FY 16, and FY17, candidates will not find out if they achieved until fall of 2017.

FY15

Amount Spent: \$53565.34

In 2015 we had 10 candidates submit the first two components available for National Board Certification. This was a smaller number than normal due to the fact that only 2 of 4 components of the process were available.

In 2015, 5 teachers achieved National Board Certification (these were all retake candidates).

FY14

Amount Spent: \$43852.35

In 2014, 17 teachers attained NB Certification for a cost of 2,579.55 per successful candidate.

FY 13

Amount Spent: \$62,081

In 2013, 24 teachers attained NB Certification for a cost of \$2,586.71 per successful candidate

FY 12

Note that FY 12 was the last year that Virginia provided a subsidy to cover half the cost of National Board Certification. As a result, FY 12 and FY 11 have lower costs for APS as the state was covering half the cost of certification for candidates.

Amount Spent: \$37, 810.78

In 2012, 12 teachers attained National Board Certification for a cost of \$3,150.90 per successful candidate.

FY 11

Amount Spent: \$31, 882.70

In 2011 9 teachers attained National Board Certification for a cost of \$2898.43 per successful candidate.

### **CAP Portfolio I** (T-Scale payments for training and scoring portfolios as well as materials)

FY 15 - \$6135 (16 Candidates (9 successful) for a cost of \$681.67 per successful candidate)

FY 14 - \$ 4800 (16 Candidates (9 successful) for a cost of 533.33 per successful candidate)

FY 13 --\$2850.00 (11 candidates (5 successful) for a cost of \$259.09 per candidate or \$570 per successful candidate)



FY 12 --\$545.00 (2 candidates (1 successful) for a cost of \$272.5 per candidate or \$545.00 per successful candidate)

FY 11 --\$715.17 (3 candidates (all successful) for a cost of \$238.39 per candidate)

In addition to program costs, APS awards each teacher a skip step on the salary scale. That cost (roughly a 5% increase) varies based on where the teacher is currently located on the salary schedule.

Status of Recommendations Made in Previous Evaluations

This is the first comprehensive evaluation of the Professional Development program. An evaluation of the Mentor Program was conducted in 2006 and had 11 recommendations.

**Table 5: Status of Recommendations Made in Previous Evaluations**

| Recommendation   | Status   |
|--|--|
| Recommendations for Staff:   |  |
| 1. Provide the opportunity for “Refresher Training” at least two times during the year for those mentors who were trained more than two years prior to their mentoring year. | Since 2005, mentors who were trained more than two years prior to their mentoring year were offered “Refresher Training”. It is required for any active mentor who was trained more than 4 years prior to their mentoring year.                    |
| 2. Send out periodic newsletters to active mentors.  | Active mentors receive monthly emails from the specialist.   |
| 3. Provide mentoring calendars with tips and suggested activities to active mentors/contact mentors throughout the school year.  | Mentoring calendars with tips and suggested activities to active mentors/contact mentors throughout the school year are available through the mentor blackboard area, which is updated by the specialist.  |
| 4. Continue to make mentors/contact mentors accountable by periodically requiring additional documentation to show support given to mentees (beyond the Mentor Journal).     | Active mentors complete an initial mentor/mentee contract as well as monthly journals in Blackboard that the specialist reads and responds to as necessary. Contact mentors complete the APS Contact mentor goal card at mid-year and end of year. |
| Recommendation   | Status   |
| Recommendations requiring work with other departments:   |  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>5. Work with the Departments of Information and Personnel Services to ensure that APS has a consistent database of new hires with codes for the following: (1) years of experience, (2) new to APS, (3) transfer within APS, (4) re-hire.</p> | <p>APS Human Resources is tracking in STARS teachers' (1) years of experience and those (2) new to APS and shares this information via a static spreadsheet with the Professional Development Office to plan new hire orientation and communicate to evaluators teachers' evaluation types. A more ideal situation would be for the Professional Development Office to have easy access to this information as needed. There is no information communicated with the Professional Development Office on the transferring of staff and re-hire status of teachers.</p> |
| <p>6. Work with the Departments of Information and Personnel Services to ensure that APS has an accurate and updated list of all new hires prior to the August orientation.</p>  | <p>APS Human Resources is tracking in STARS teachers' (1) years of experience and those (2) new to APS and shares this information via a static spreadsheet with the Professional Development Office. A more ideal situation would be for the Professional Development Office to have easy access to this information as needed. Additional information at the elementary level as to what grade level a teacher is assigned is an identified need.</p>   |
| <p>7. Work with the Departments of Information and Personnel Services to ensure that new hires hired after January 15th are coded as eligible for a mentor the following school year.</p>  | <p>With the elimination of the contact mentor position, this continued to be an issue. Without the contact mentor's help, the Professional Development Office has no information on who was hired after Jan. 15th and sometimes they appear on the next year's new hire list, and sometimes not.</p>  |
| <p><b>Recommendation</b></p>   | <p><b>Status</b></p>  |
| <p>Recommendations for administrators and supervisors at the school level</p>  |   |
| <p>8. Ensure that non-classroom-based staff are assigned a mentor if it is deemed appropriate.</p>   | <p>The number of non-classroom based staff assigned a mentor over the past three years is 48. The specialist has worked closely with Student Services in the last few years to provide mentors to non-classroom based staff.</p>  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>9. Increase collaboration among administrators in the assignment of mentors when a new hire works in more than one school.</p>   | <p>Typically new hires are assigned one mentor and that is usually the school in which they work the most amount of time. If there are times in which two mentors are assigned, they split the stipend and it works well.</p> |
| <p>10. Ensure that the criteria for matching new hires and mentors are consistent from school to school.</p>  | <p>This continues to be a struggle in that administrators still assign who they want as mentors regardless of the criteria. Some are consistent, some are not in adhering to the criteria.</p>                                |
| <p>11. Increase collaboration between school-based administrators and supervisors on the assignment of mentors to resource teachers for the gifted, school psychologists, social workers, physical education teachers, music teachers, art teachers, etc.</p> | <p>Collaboration of those mentioned above has created successful matches and mentor support for new hires.</p>  |

## Methodology

### Evaluation Design and Questions

**Table 6** displays the Professional Development evaluation design. The planning committee that met throughout the 2013-14 school year to develop this design determined that, given the structure of professional development in APS, the scope of this evaluation must cover professional development in general and not just the services provided by the Office of Professional Development.

Table 6: Professional Development Evaluation Design

| Program/Service Objective  | Program/Service Question  | Data Source(s)  |
|--|---|---|
| Evaluation Question 1: <i>How effectively was the Professional Development program implemented?</i>  |   |   |
| <p><b>Office of Professional Development</b></p> <p>The Office of Professional Development provides support to educators at all stages of their career to foster continuous professional growth and ensure high quality teaching and learning across APS.</p> <p><b>District</b></p> <p>All Arlington Public Schools staff engage in meaningful professional learning for continuous improvement and student learning.</p> <p><b>School-Based</b></p> <p>Schools engage their staff in continuous professional learning to support student learning.</p> | <p>1a To what extent are staff across the district aware of professional development opportunities offered by the Office of Professional Development, by other offices, or by their school?</p> <p>1b To what extent do staff participate in professional development opportunities?</p> <p>1c What factors facilitate staff <b>participation</b> in professional development?</p> <p>1d What factors facilitate <b>delivery</b> of professional development?</p> <p>1e To what extent are there differentiated opportunities for professional learning that address staff’s varying needs?</p> <p>1f To what extent is professional development available to non-teaching staff? (including T-scale and other scales)</p> <p>1g How do staff decide which professional learning opportunities to pursue?</p> | <p>Existing Tools, Data Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic Registrar Online (ERO)</li> </ul> <p>Developed Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher survey</li> <li>• Staff survey</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> </ul> |
| <p>Professional learning offered throughout the county and at the school level aligns with best practices and addresses the 7 Professional</p>   | <p>2a To what extent are best practices evident in the <b>design and delivery</b> of professional learning?</p> <p>2b What types of purposeful follow-up activities are in place</p>  | <p>Existing Tools, Data Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ERO session evaluations</li> </ul> <p>Developed Tools:</p>  |

| Program/Service Objective   | Program/Service Question  | Data Source(s)  |
|---|---|---|
| <i>Evaluation Question 1: How effectively was the Professional Development program implemented?</i>   |   |   |
| Learning Standards (Learning Forward).  | <p>to ensure fidelity of implementation of professional learning?</p> <p>2c To what extent are staff who participate in professional learning able to implement what they have learned?</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations of delivery of professional development</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Staff survey</li> </ul>  |
| <p>The Office of Professional Development supports the Human Resources evaluation systems in order to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establish consistent goals and expectations for high quality teaching and leadership, and</li> <li>• support staff in meeting those goals</li> </ul> | <p>3a To what extent do T- and P-scale staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feel supported in the evaluation process?</li> <li>• Follow the evaluation process?</li> </ul>  | <p>Developed Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff survey</li> </ul>  |
| <p>The APS differentiated compensation program supports teachers in demonstrating high quality professional practice and leadership excellence that cultivates student achievement.</p>   | <p>4a To what extent do teachers participate in and successfully complete the differentiated compensation program?</p> <p>4b What factors facilitate participation in the differentiated compensation program?</p> <p>4c To what extent do participants in the differentiated compensation program report that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they are supported in the process?</li> <li>• the process fosters their professional growth?</li> </ul> | <p>Existing Tools, Data Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differentiated compensation program participation and completion data</li> </ul> <p>Developed Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff survey</li> </ul> |

| Program/Service Objective  | Program/Service Question   | Data Source(s)   |
|--|--|--|
| Evaluation Question 1: <i>How effectively was the Professional Development program implemented?</i>                                  |  |  |
| <p>Arlington Public Schools has a cohesive system of professional development aligned to overarching goals of the school system.</p> | <p>5a What is the level of coordination among schools, district-level offices offering professional learning, and the Office of Professional Development?</p> <p>5b What is the level of alignment among school-based professional learning, district-based professional learning, and school- and district-based goals?</p> <p>5c What is the level of continuity in professional learning from year to year?</p> <p>5d To what extent do professional learning opportunities align with teachers' and staff's self-determined professional learning needs?</p> | <p>Developed Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff survey</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> </ul>   |
| <p>Arlington Public Schools manages professional learning resources effectively.</p>   | <p>6a To what extent is reliable data accessible to staff providing professional development?</p> <p>6b Are professional development resources distributed equitably throughout APS?</p> <p>6c What is the total cost of professional development in APS?</p>  | <p>Existing Tools, Data Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget</li> </ul> <p>Developed Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff survey</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> </ul> |

| Program/Service Objective  | Program/Service Question  | Data Source(s)   |
|--|---|--|
| Evaluation Question 2: <i>What were the outcomes?</i>                                |   |  |
| Staff who participate in professional development demonstrate professional growth.   | 7a To what extent do teachers who participate in APS professional development demonstrate effective teaching practices? | Existing Tools, Data Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CLASS observations</li> </ul> Developed Tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff survey</li> </ul> |
| The APS differentiated compensation program fosters retention of high quality staff. | 8a What is the retention rate for teachers who have achieved CAP I or CAP III in comparison to those who have not?      | Existing Tools, Data Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher retention data</li> </ul>   |

### Study Measures

Data sources used to inform this evaluation are described in detail below.

#### *Background: Literature Review*

At the start of the planning process, APS commissioned a literature review to be conducted by Hanover Research (Hanover), exploring methods for evaluating professional development. This report is available in **Appendix B1**.

#### *Background: Review of K-12 Professional Development Structures*

APS commissioned another report from Hanover that was to be based on interviews with professional development offices in other K-12 public school systems comparable to APS. The purpose of this report was to develop an understanding of how other school districts structure and provide professional development. Ultimately, only two districts agreed to be interviewed and Hanover moved to more of a literature review format. This data was not used to inform the evaluation. The full report can be found in **Appendix B2**.

#### *Implementation: Electronic Registrar Online*

The Office of Planning and Evaluation used data from Electronic Registrar Online to gauge participation in professional development (**Appendix C1**) and staff feedback about professional development sessions they had attended (**Appendix E3**).

#### *Implementation: Career Advancement Program*

The Professional Development Office provided the Office of Planning and Evaluation with participation and achievement data for the Career Advancement Program. A summary of this data is available in **Appendix C2**.

#### *Outcomes: Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)*

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is an observation tool developed at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education to analyze the interactions among adults, students, and content.

CLASS observations were conducted across levels and content areas during nine weeks throughout the 2014-15 school year. Observations were conducted to inform the program evaluations for both Minority Achievement and Professional Development. For purposes of the Professional Development evaluation, CLASS results were matched to observed teachers' total hours of professional development in ERO for the school years 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 – the three years prior to the completed observation – and an analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between hours of professional development and CLASS scores. The domains and dimensions of the CLASS tool are described in detail in **Appendix D1**. **Appendix D2** describes the alignment between CLASS dimensions and APS best instructional practices. A summary of CLASS data used in this evaluation is available in **Appendix D3**.

#### *Implementation: Observations of Delivery of Professional Development*

An observation tool was developed by the Professional Development Office in conjunction with the Office of Planning and Evaluation. It was based on a professional development observation tool developed by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln<sup>3</sup> as well as the document *8 Essential Questions*<sup>4</sup>. The instrument was designed to assess the degree to which best practices were incorporated into the delivery of professional development sessions. Observations were conducted in the spring, summer, and fall of 2015. The full report on professional development observations is available in **Appendix D4**.

#### *Stakeholder Feedback: Staff Survey*

The Office of Planning and Evaluation worked with the Professional Development Office and the evaluation planning committee to develop a staff survey about professional development in APS. The survey was administered to all staff in the spring of 2015. Results were sent to Hanover for analysis. The full report is available in **Appendix E1**.

#### *Stakeholder Feedback: Focus Groups*

In the spring of 2015, the Office of Planning and Evaluation contracted with an external evaluator to conduct seven 90-minute focus groups focusing on professional development within APS. Participants were randomly selected by the Office of Planning and Evaluation and invited to participate. Groups were segmented such that each one represented a different population involved with professional development in APS. The stratification approach was designed so that three groups were focused on their experiences as professional development *participants* and four were focused on their experience as professional development *providers*. The full report is available in **Appendix E2**.

#### *Implementation: Budget*

The Budget and Finance Office provided the Office of Planning and Evaluation with detailed budget data outlining all budget items from all departments related to professional development. This information is available in **Appendix F1**.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.ceen.unomaha.edu/TEKBOTS/SPIRIT2/Assessments/](http://www.ceen.unomaha.edu/TEKBOTS/SPIRIT2/Assessments/)

<sup>4</sup> [blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning\\_forwards\\_pd\\_watch/2013/10/choosing\\_your\\_next\\_professional\\_learning\\_experience\\_7\\_essential\\_questions.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning_forwards_pd_watch/2013/10/choosing_your_next_professional_learning_experience_7_essential_questions.html)



*Outcomes: Teacher Retention*

The Human Resources Department provided the Office of Planning and Evaluation with data on teacher retention by salary schedule (Career Advancement Program or Regular). This data is outlined in **Appendix F2**.

*Implementation: Use of Substitutes*

The Human Resources Department provided the Office of Planning and Evaluation with data on the use of substitutes for professional leave. This data is outlined in **Appendix F3**.

## SECTION 2: FINDINGS

### Evaluation Question #1: How effectively was the Professional Development program implemented?

To address this question, the evaluation focused on several areas: availability and accessibility of professional development, quality of professional development, support from the Professional Development Office, and resources.

#### Availability and Accessibility of Professional Development

##### *Awareness of Professional Development Opportunities*

In the spring of 2015, all APS staff were invited to take an online survey about their experiences with professional development in APS. More than half of all respondents indicated they had learned about the professional development opportunities they had attended within the last five years via:

- APS communications (64%)
- A colleague (60%)
- Electronic Registrar Online/ERO (55%)
- School communications (54%)

Less commonly cited sources of information were:

- Principal/supervisor (47%)
- Communication from professional associations (46%)
- Online directory/internet search (33%)
- Prior PD program or activity (23%)
- Formal performance evaluation (4%)
- Other (5%)

Focus groups were conducted around the same time that the staff survey went out. The Office of Planning and Evaluation contracted with an external evaluator to conduct seven 90-minute focus groups focusing on professional development within APS. Some of the focus groups centered on the perspectives of instructional staff (A- and T-scale) as professional development participants, while others centered on the perspectives of instructional and administrative staff who provide professional development on a regular basis.

Focus group participants reported a high level of awareness of what professional development opportunities were available to them, while at the same time sharing that they frequently learn about opportunities through happenstance as the communication tends to be departmentalized. Most participants did not experience major challenges finding out about available professional development; they felt that Electronic Registrar Online (ERO) and other regular communication vehicles such as email met their communication needs well. Moreover, some professional development occurs on a set schedule or is on the calendar well before the school year begins; thus participants can plan for it well in advance.

Focus group participants at all levels indicated that they had missed information about professional development in the past or knew someone who had. Likewise, although the overriding message was that communication is generally effective, district-level professional development providers pointed to a few concerns. Specifically, even when word of an opportunity is conveyed through all available channels, some potential participants still indicate that they missed the information. And at the district level there is no direct way to group and communicate with subsets of people. For example, the Professional Development Office cannot directly contact all teachers of a single grade. Other groups cited drawbacks to ERO, noting its complex nature and the fact that sometimes professional development opportunities are entered into the system with short notice.

*I had a responsive classroom class that I took last week. It was great. I have to say, it was just by chance that I found out about it, because I was talking to someone in the coffee room, and they'd been talking to the principal. They'd been talking about the fact that it was a behavior-related responsive classroom class, and "Oh by the way, would you be interested in going?" I've got some real behavior issues [in my class], so I said, "Absolutely." It was a great class but I was surprised that I found out about this just in passing. When I looked for it on the ERO it wasn't listed. I typed in the date, it wasn't listed. I typed in the building, it wasn't listed. You had to type in the actual room to find it. (Elementary Participant)*

*I think you have to be trained on ERO. You got all these papers, when you go to teacher orientation [and ERO instructions are among the many papers]. You never look through them...you're never trained on these. You're expecting someone to tell you. ERO, it is kind of confusing. (Elementary Participant)*

There were perceptions that opportunities meant for some specific groups could benefit others, yet it is difficult to find out about opportunities without being part of the primary target audience.

*...It's very departmentalized. What I'm trying to say is that the [content area department] is just thinking about [that department's] teachers ... They're not thinking globally. I'm just saying. ...It's not that they don't want anyone to come. They have in their mind who they want ... who [the professional development] is targeted towards. (Elementary Participant)*

*It doesn't seem like there's a central way to find out other than [looking in different departments' ERO listings]. There's not like a central listing or calendar necessarily. I find that professional development in APS has so many scattered pieces, I think that there could be a little bit more alignment perhaps, because there's so much more available to us than we realize, and that we might have opportunities for.... If they had under the staff tab on the homepage, or if they just have a professional development link, like, "Here's everything that we have to offer..." (Secondary Participant)*

There was a nearly ubiquitous perception that principals filter information about professional development opportunities that their staff can access. Many factors were said to play roles in filtering. These ranged from staff-specific needs and wants (e.g., connecting staff to professional development suited to a current classroom situation or to their stated professional growth wishes) to practical matters (e.g., not having too many teachers away from the building at once, using less professional

development time for a teacher nearing retirement) to interpersonal factors (e.g., giving professional development opportunities to staff who help with extras like yearbook).

*I think also some of that is filtered by principals, depending on how many teachers they want out of the building at any time. I think you have to keep that in mind also. They might not necessarily advertise it, so they target certain teachers that they want. If they think you're experienced and you're okay, then you might not be on the top of their list. (Elementary Participant)*

*It's interesting. Early in my career, I was kind of in the forefront. Things were suggested to me, "You might want to go here [for professional development]." Now I'm that latter part of my career I don't get the suggestion, so I'm just out of the loop...It seems like it tends to go to more of the younger teachers...whether they want it or they don't. There are different points in their life and their careers. Sometimes you don't find out about things. (Elementary Participant)*

*This is now my 5th school in Arlington. It really does seem to be very much related to the principal. (Elementary Participant)*

The survey report is available in **Appendix E1**. The focus group report is available in **Appendix E2**.

#### *Participation in Professional Development*

In 2003-04, APS began using ERO to track teacher professional learning, to include registration and attendance. Over the years, APS began to include professional learning for P-, E-, and A-scale staff for events such as the annual Administrative Conference and instructional assistant professional learning days. Other professional learning, such as administrative technology training (STARS, Outlook, etc.), is not tracked in ERO. Examining ERO entries over time, it is important to recognize that the data for T-scale staff is the most accurate, while the data for other scales has likely increased in accuracy over time.

**Table 7** shows the average number of professional development hours by pay scale. The average number of professional development hours per person has decreased slightly for T-scale staff from 2011-12 (39.6 hours) to 2014-15 (35.4 hours). The average for A-scale staff has fluctuated from year to year between around 13 to almost 16. Participation hours have increased the most for P-scale staff, but this may be a reflection of increased use of ERO as much as increased participation in professional development.

**Table 7: Average Number of Professional Development Hours per Person, by Scale**

| Scale | 2011-12        |               | 2012-13        |               | 2013-14        |               | 2014-15        |               |
|-------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
|       | # Participants | Avg. PD Hours | # Participants | Avg. PD Hours | # Participants | Avg. PD Hours | # Participants | Avg. PD Hours |
| T     | 1,975          | 39.6          | 2116           | 38.8          | 2246           | 35.9          | 2260           | 35.4          |
| A     | 442            | 15.7          | 577            | 13.2          | 568            | 15.8          | 576            | 13.1          |
| E     | 62             | 18.8          | 69             | 22.1          | 74             | 23            | 60             | 11.9          |
| G     | 7              | 5.4           | 8              | 5.3           | 4              | *             | 5              | 7.0           |
| P     | 127            | 27.3          | 133            | 23.3          | 140            | 35.1          | 140            | 35.3          |

\*Sample size less than 5, not reported

**Table 8** shows the average number of professional development hours for school-based T-scale staff, by grade level. In all four years, the average number of professional development hours was higher for elementary teachers than for secondary teachers. With one exception, middle school teachers had a higher average than high school teachers.

**Table 8: Average Number of Professional Development Hours for School-Based T -Scale Staff, by Level**

| Level                | 2011-12        |               | 2012-13        |               | 2013-14        |               | 2014-15        |               |
|----------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
|                      | # Participants | Avg. PD Hours | # Participants | Avg. PD Hours | # Participants | Avg. PD Hours | # Participants | Avg. PD Hours |
| <b>Elementary</b>    | 1,088          | 48.0          | 1182           | 42.9          | 1186           | 40.2          | 1216           | 41.1          |
| <b>Middle School</b> | 327            | 32.0          | 338            | 35.3          | 402            | 38.9          | 401            | 32.4          |
| <b>High School</b>   | 410            | 28.5          | 430            | 35.6          | 505            | 26.2          | 494            | 26.6          |

**Table 9** lists the number of sessions delivered by each content area in ERO over four years. In interpreting this data it is important to recognize that offices may vary in how extensively they use ERO. Likewise, many offices – such as Title I – frequently offer sessions in conjunction with other offices that would be listed as the sponsor, or content area, in ERO.

Content areas with the most sessions include professional development (indicating sessions offered by the Professional Development Office, such as mentor training, teacher evaluation training, and Administrative Conference), special education, ESOL/HILT, English language arts, and instructional technology. Professional development in the area of Gifted Services has increased from 11 sessions in 2011-12 to 152 sessions in 2014-15. This category includes a variety of offerings, including sessions offered by the Gifted Services Supervisor as well as Resource Teachers for the Gifted (RTGs) at individual schools.

**Table 9: Number of Professional Development Sessions by Content Areas**

| PD Session Content Area         | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| <b>Professional Development</b> | 52      | 123     | 127     | 138     |
| <b>Special Education</b>        | 64      | 79      | 106     | 90      |
| <b>ESOL/HILT</b>                | 60      | 62      | 94      | 93      |
| <b>English/Language Arts</b>    | 51      | 75      | 60      | 99      |
| <b>Instructional Technology</b> | 62      | 34      | 73      | 109     |
| <b>Gifted Services</b>          | 11      | 26      | 35      | 152     |
| <b>Mathematics</b>              | 32      | 35      | 49      | 22      |
| <b>Title One</b>                | 2       | 6       | 66      | 59      |
| <b>World Languages</b>          | 40      | 33      | 31      | 25      |
| <b>Early Childhood</b>          | 28      | 27      | 33      | 39      |
| <b>Science</b>                  | 15      | 21      | 35      | 51      |
| <b>Student Services</b>         | 19      | 31      | 41      | 28      |
| <b>Art Education</b>            | 40      | 29      | 36      | 9       |
| <b>Health and PE</b>            | 17      | 16      | 17      | 21      |
| <b>Library Media Services</b>   | 30      | 20      | 3       | 14      |
| <b>Minority Achievement</b>     | 22      | 22      | 12      | 10      |

| PD Session Content Area                        | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| <b>Social Studies</b>                          | 16      | 12      | 17      | 17      |
| <b>SIOP</b>                                    | 8       | 4       | 12      | 7       |
| <b>Business/IT, Computer Science</b>           | 8       | 3       | 4       | 14      |
| <b>STEM</b>                                    | 6       | 9       | 4       | 0       |
| <b>Technology Education</b>                    | 0       | 0       | 3       | 0       |
| <b>Family and Consumer Sciences</b>            | 1       | 1       | 3       | 3       |
| <b>Language Services &amp; Resource Center</b> | 1       | 0       | 0       | 2       |

Among survey respondents, 94% reported that they had participated in professional development within the last five years. **Table 10** presents this data disaggregated by pay scale. Almost all instructional staff (A- and T-scale) and P-scale staff (principals and administrators) had participated in professional development, with percentages ranging from 97-98%. E-scale staff (technical and administrative) participated at a lower rate, 84%. Just under half of clerical staff (G-scale) reported having participated in professional development within the last five years. This was by far the lowest percentage.

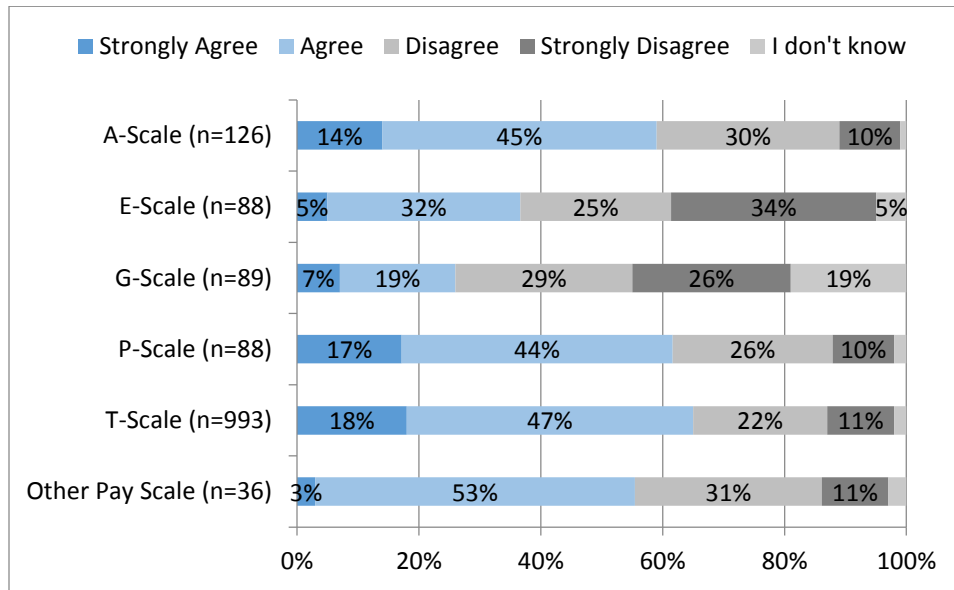
The “Other Pay Scales” category represents staff from C-, D-, X-, and M- scale respondents, which were aggregated due to low response rates for those staff types. More information about response rates is available on p. 3 of Appendix E1.

**Table 10: Percentage of Staff who Have Participated in Professional Development, by Scale**

| Pay Scale               | Percentage who Participated in PD within Last Five Years |
|-------------------------|--|
| A-Scale (n=126)         | 97%  |
| E-Scale (n=88)          | 84%  |
| G-Scale (n=92)          | 49%  |
| P-Scale (n=88)          | 98%  |
| T-Scale (n=995)         | 98%  |
| Other Pay Scales (n=36) | 81%  |

The survey also revealed differences among staff types and staff location in terms of perceptions of the availability of relevant professional development. **Figure 3** shows the level of agreement with the statement, “**There are enough professional development opportunities offered that are relevant to my position,**” disaggregated by pay scale. Responses to this question align with the proportions of staff who reported that they had participated in professional development within the last five years. A-, T-, and P-scale staff were the most likely to select *strongly agree* or *agree*, ranging from 59-65%, while E-scale (37%) and G-scale (26%) were the least likely. Fifty-six percent of staff on other pay scales selected these responses.

**Figure 3: There are enough professional development opportunities offered that are relevant to my position (All Staff, by Pay Scale)**



The survey included an open-ended question for staff on pay scales other than T-scale or P-scale. **Table 11** provides a summary of responses to the question, “**Please share your thoughts about PD for your staff type in APS. We are interested in hearing your perspective on availability and quality of PD, or any other comments that you’d like to share.**” Most staff who responded to the question indicated that there is a **lack of relevant professional development for their position** (58%). Around a quarter cited a **lack of time**, and 15% cited a **lack of funding for participation in external professional development**.

**Table 11: Please share your thoughts about PD for your staff type in APS. We are interested in hearing your perspective on availability and quality of PD, or any other comments that you’d like to share. (Non-T/P-Scale Staff)**

| Theme                            | N   | % of Total Responses | Sample Responses   |
|----------------------------------|-----|----------------------|--|
| Lack of Relevant PD for Position | 111 | 58%                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There should be more professional development for assistants.</li> <li>• Most PD is unrelated to my work.</li> <li>• It would be nice to have more free PD offered through APS, but the skills I need are very specialized so it's probably not feasible.</li> <li>• There is no Professional Development available in-house unless you are T/P scale.</li> </ul> |
| Lack of Protected Time for PD    | 43  | 23%                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is not enough time in the school year to participate in PD as often as I would like.</li> <li>• My position is the only one of its kind at APS, so finding PD opportunities are rare and hard to get to since I have trouble getting away.</li> </ul>   |

| Theme                           | N  | % of Total Responses | Sample Responses   |
|---------------------------------|----|----------------------|--|
| Lack of Funding for External PD | 28 | 15%                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The PD that I have attended that has been most meaningful has been from outside organizations and not from within the APS system. This PD is either paid for out of pocket, on a weekend or in the evening.</li> <li>There is little to no APS sponsored PD for my scale as it relates to my position.</li> </ul> |
| Satisfaction with PD            | 26 | 14%                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional Development opportunities are available and have been pretty useful for the most part.</li> <li>PD quality and availability are good.</li> </ul>   |
| Dissatisfaction with PD Quality | 14 | 7%                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most PD are repetitive and have little to do with veteran staff members, yet we are forced to attend.</li> </ul>  |
| Other                           | 7  | 4%                   | --   |

Disaggregating the same question by **staff location** reveals that school-based staff are more likely than central office-based staff to agree that there are enough relevant professional development opportunities. Sixty-two percent of school-based respondents selected *strongly agree* or *agree*, compared to 45 percent of central office-based respondents.

The full summary of ERO participation data is available in **Appendix C1**. The staff survey report is in **Appendix E1**.

### Types of Professional Development

By far, the most common **source of professional development** for staff is their own school or department. Ninety-two percent of respondents reported that within the last five years they had participated in professional development offered by their school or department. This was followed by a central content office at 78%. Other sources of professional development are listed below.

- 92% - My school/department (e.g. cultural competence, PLCs, IA)
- 78% - A central content office (e.g. Social Studies, ELA, Special Education, etc.)
- 71% - Self-taught (e.g. action research, reading professional journals)
- 61% - Coach, specialist, mentor, etc.
- 57% - Higher education institutions (e.g., courses for college or graduate credit)
- 52% - Entities outside of APS, but not higher education institutions (e.g. North TIER, Kennedy Center, PBS)
- 20% - Other

The most common **delivery formats** for professional development are courses/workshops (88%) and collaboration with colleagues (86%).

- 88% - Courses/workshops
- 86% - Collaboration with colleague(s) (other than observations)

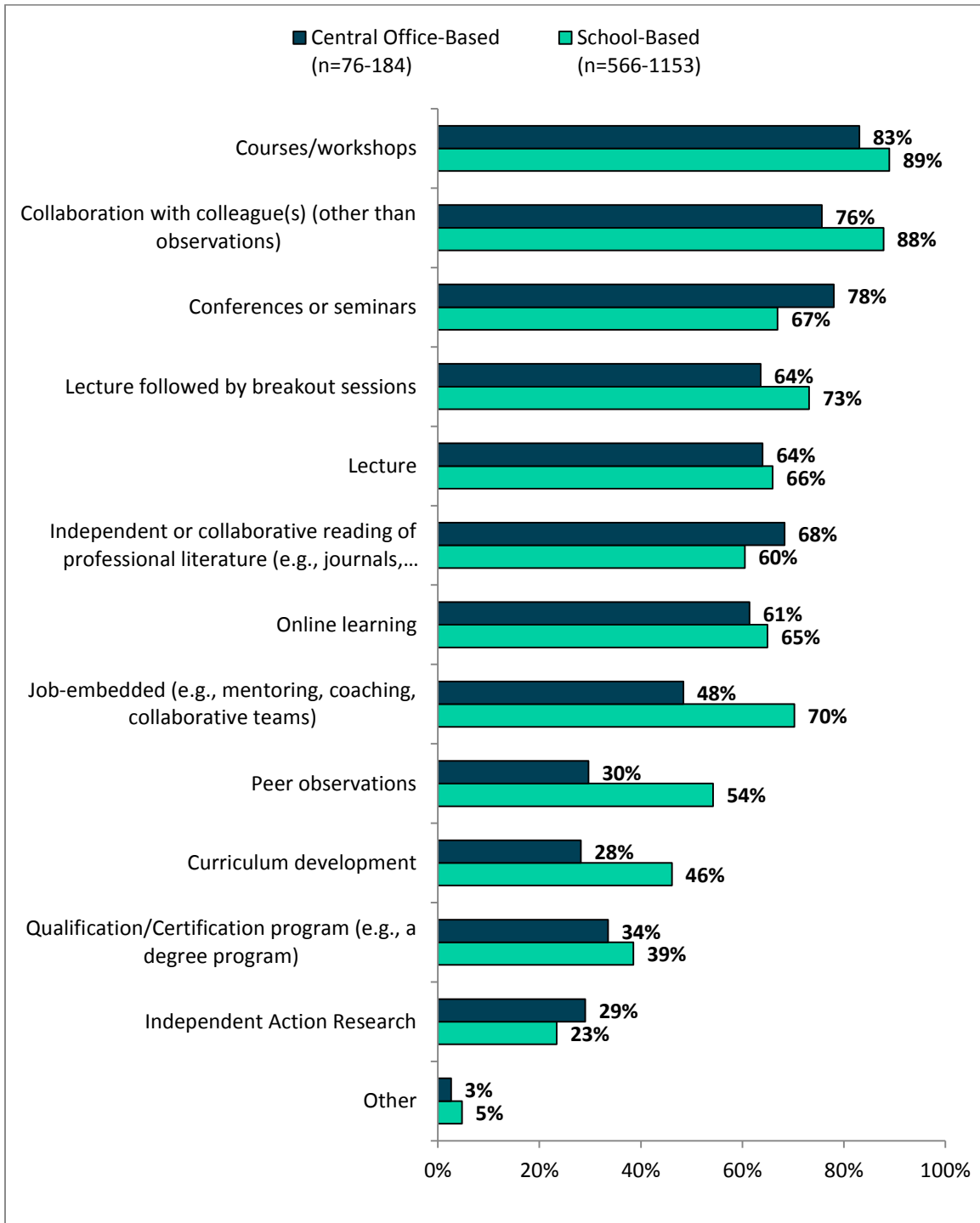


- 72% - Lecture followed by breakout sessions
- 68% - Conferences or seminars
- 67% - Job-Embedded (e.g., mentoring, coaching, collaborative teams)
- 66% - Lecture
- 65% - Online learning
- 62% - Independent or collaborative reading of professional literature (e.g., journals, evidence-based papers, thesis papers)
- 51% - Peer observations
- 44% - Curriculum development
- 38% - Qualification/Certification program (e.g., a degree program)
- 24% - Independent Action Research
- 5% - Other

Among school-based teaching staff (T-scale), some differences emerged between teachers and other T-scale staff (e.g., librarians, counselors, etc.). Other T-scale staff were considerably more likely to attend **conferences or seminars** (87% vs 67%), and more likely to engage in **independent or collaborative reading of professional literature** (77% vs 61%). Teachers were more likely to engage in **peer observations** (63% vs 49%) and **curriculum development** (54% vs 39%).

Differences also emerged between school-based staff and central office-based staff. **Figure 4** shows the percentage of school-based and central office staff reporting that they had participated in specified professional development delivery formats. School-based staff were far more likely to have engaged in **peer observations** (54% vs 30%), **job-embedded** professional development (70% vs 48%), and **curriculum development** (46% vs 28%). Central office staff were more likely to have attended **conferences or seminars** (78% vs 67%) and **independent or collaborative reading of professional literature** (68% vs 60%).

**Figure 4: In the last five years, did you participate in any of the following professional development delivery formats? (All Staff by Location)**

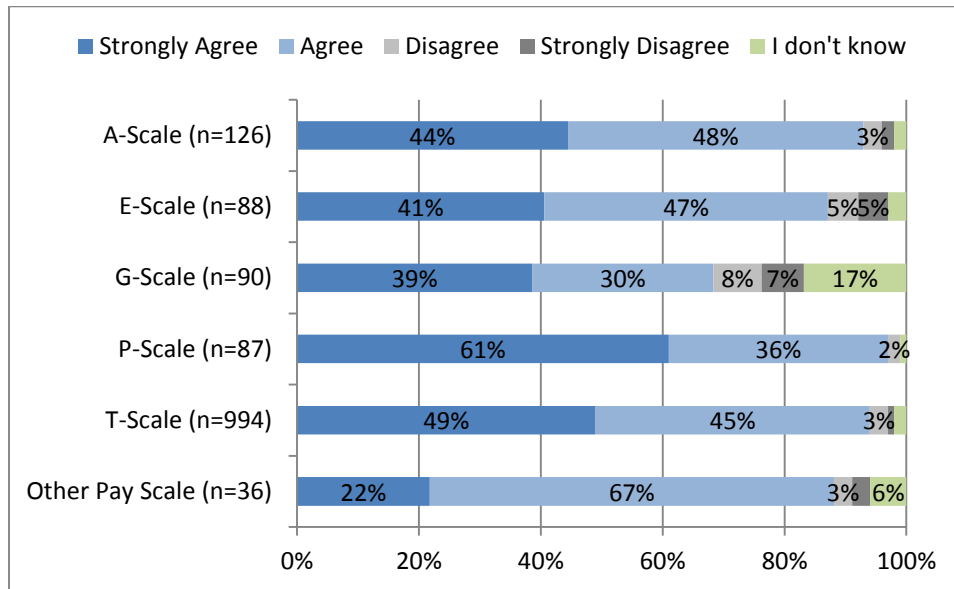


The full survey report is available in **Appendix E1**.

*Facilitation, Motivation, and Barriers to Participation in Professional Development*

Almost all survey respondents (92%) expressed agreement with the statement, “**My principal/supervisor supports participation in professional development.**” Figure 5 disaggregates these responses by pay scale. G- and E-scale staff, while still mostly positive, were the most likely to express disagreement (10-15%). G-scale staff also selected the response *I don’t know* 17% of the time.

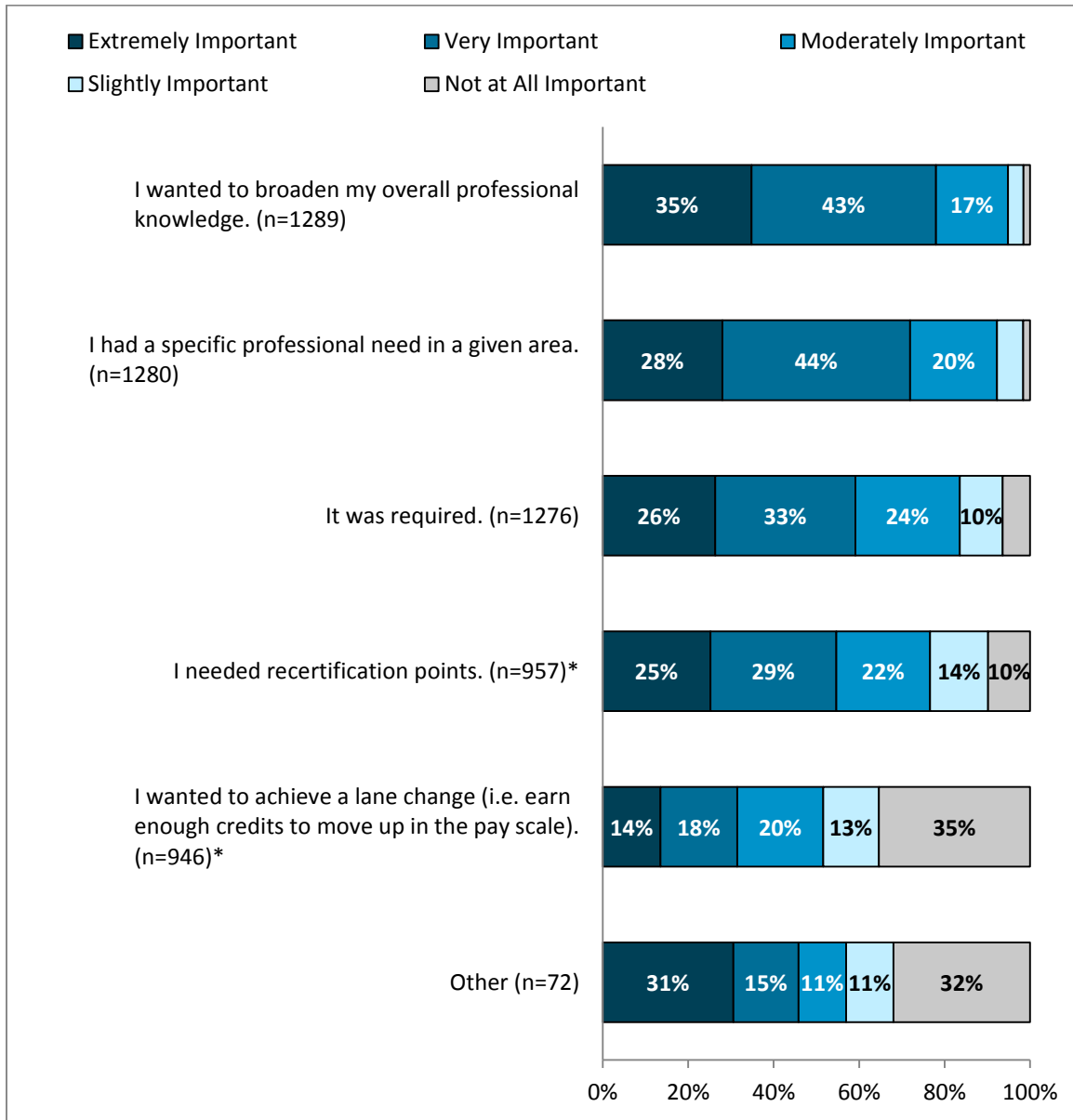
**Figure 5: My principal/supervisor supports participation in professional development. (All Staff, by Pay Scale)**



Most staff (76%) also agreed with the statement, “**Central offices support my participation in professional development.**” Disaggregating responses by pay scale reveals a similar pattern as with “my principal/supervisor.” G- and E-scale staff were the most likely to express disagreement (22-23%). G-scale staff were again the most likely to select *I don’t know* (33%).

The survey also revealed multiple sources of motivation that influence staff when selecting which professional development to participate in. Figure 6 shows responses to the question, “**Please rate the importance of each factor when you selected professional development programs over the previous five years.**” The most important motivation was a desire to **broaden professional knowledge**, with 78% of staff indicating this was *extremely or very important*. This was followed closely by **I had a specific professional need in a given area** (72%). Administrative factors also played a strong role. Fifty-nine percent of respondents reported that they had selected professional development because **it was required**, and 54% of T-scale respondents reported that they had selected professional development because they **needed recertification points**.

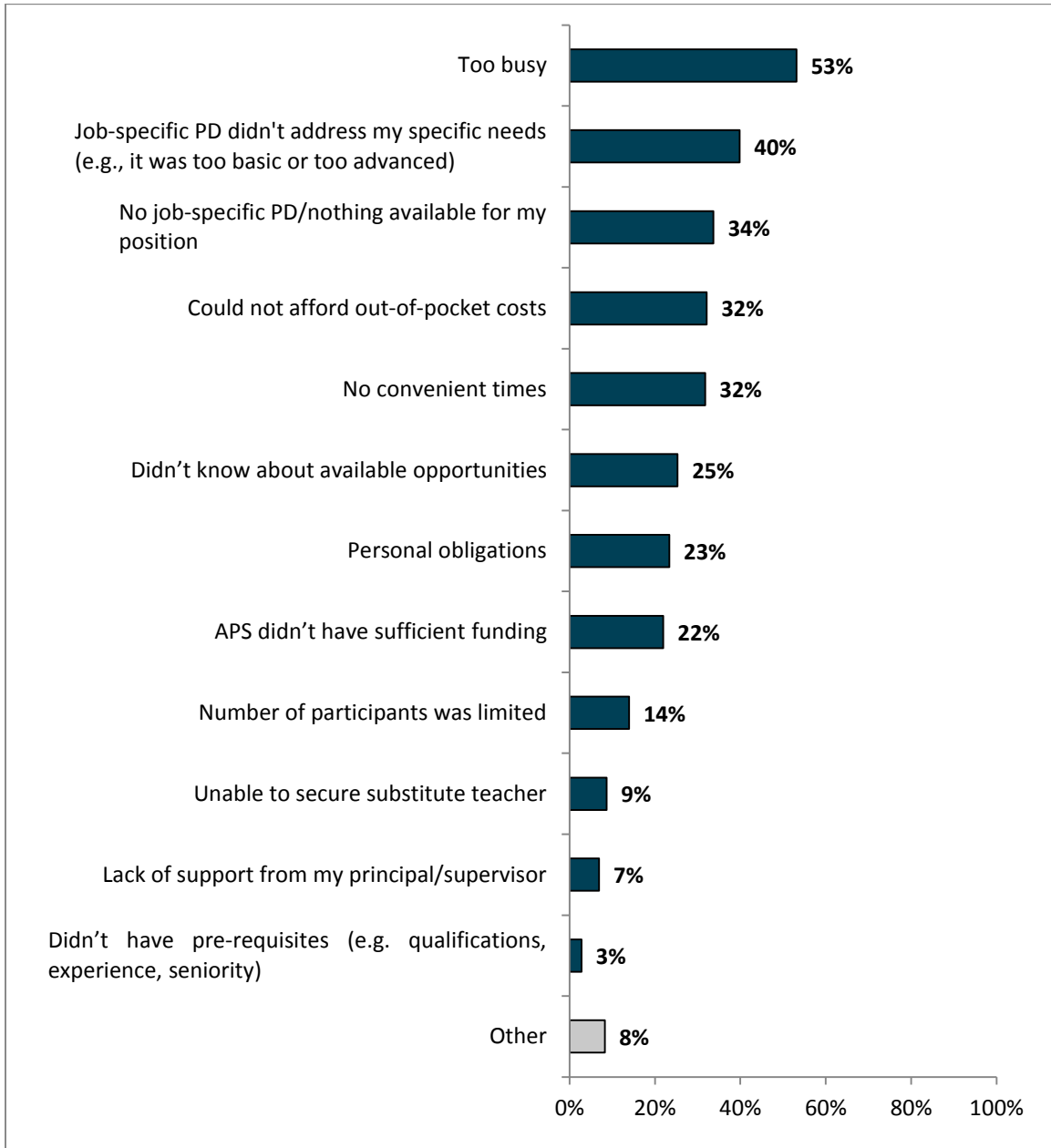
**Figure 6: Please rate the importance of each factor when you selected professional development programs over the previous five years. (All Staff)**



\*Statement was only shown to T-scale respondents.

Figure 7 shows responses to the question, “In the last five years, what obstacles have you encountered to participating in professional development?” The most common reason, selected by 53% of respondents, was being **too busy**. This was followed by **job-specific professional development didn’t address my specific needs (e.g., it was too basic or too advanced)** (40%) and **no job-specific PD/nothing available for my position** (34%). A quarter of all respondents listed **didn’t know about available opportunities** as a barrier. This may echo focus group feedback that participants generally felt aware of what opportunities are available while also noting that they had missed opportunities in the past or they had found out about opportunities through happenstance.

Figure 7: In the last five years, what obstacles have you encountered to participating in professional development? (All Staff)



These barriers to participation in professional development break out differently depending on staff type, level, and location.

- Elementary teachers were less likely to select **too busy** as a barrier (54%) than middle and high school teachers (69-70%).
- Between 50-60% of A-, E-, and G-scale staff reported that there was **nothing available for their position**, compared to around a quarter of T- and P-scale staff.

- Conversely, T- and P-scale staff were more likely to select **too busy** (60%) than A- or G-scale staff (17% and 28%), respectively. But E-scale staff were more aligned with T- and P-scale staff on this barrier, selecting it 51% of the time.
- Other school-based T-scale staff were more likely (40%) than teachers (25%) to report that there was **nothing available for their position**.
- Similarly, central office-based staff were more likely (43%) than school-based staff (32%) to report that there was **nothing available for their position**.

In focus group discussions around barriers to participation in professional development, there was virtually no agreement as to what a good time for professional development is. Every possible time—whether during the school day, summertime, weekends—has major advantages and major drawbacks. A few small-scale solutions were mentioned. Some elementary and secondary T-scale staff members were involved in once-weekly evening online chats, which seemed to work well for them—both in terms of timing and value. And, some departments have opted to hold meetings less often, but for longer duration, which was regarded as helpful (e.g., instead of meeting monthly for one hour, meeting every two months for two hours). This idea aligns with findings explored later in the report: Observations of professional development sessions were almost universally scored higher for longer sessions than for shorter sessions (for more information, see Observations of Professional Development on page 47).

*One of my coworkers is going to SIOP training and she's [frustrated because of snow days and rescheduling]. She's just like, "Ahh, I need to be in my classroom." It's hard because you want to get that training... (Elementary Participant)*

*...I hear all the time, I don't want to do that [professional development opportunity] because I don't want to get a sub because it's so much work to write plans...(Central Office Administrator)*

*It's not optimal to have people come at the end of a workday and really expect them to be engaged...And, no other profession that I know of expects people to do professional learning at the end of a day. (Central Office Administrator)*

*Years ago, we were asked not to do professional development and learning during the school day because it takes away from instructional time. It's very difficult for a teacher to be asked to be out of the building, to find a sub, to prepare for that sub, and then to catch up...I really wish that concept [of no professional development during school day] would come back because with everything we lose in instructional time—be it a snow day, be it an assembly, test days....or science fair... I'm not knocking these. But I feel...those teachers need to be in the classroom. (Central Office Administrator)*

*I think the calendar is an area of concern. If we want teachers not to be pulled out of classrooms and not to do it at the end of the day, then we have to build in these days during the year that we actually get access to teachers. Right now, we don't really have very much access. (Central Office Administrator)*

The survey report is available in **Appendix E1**, and the focus group report is available in **Appendix E2**.

### *Facilitation and Barriers to Delivery of Professional Development*

About a quarter of survey respondents indicated that they provide professional development within APS at least four times a year. These respondents were asked a series of questions related to their experiences as providers of professional development.

While a larger proportion of central office-based respondents indicated that they provide professional development (35% of all central office-based staff vs 21% of all school-based staff), a much larger proportion of professional development providers were school-based. Eighty percent of respondents who indicated they regularly provide professional development were school-based, while just a quarter of them were central office-based<sup>5</sup>.

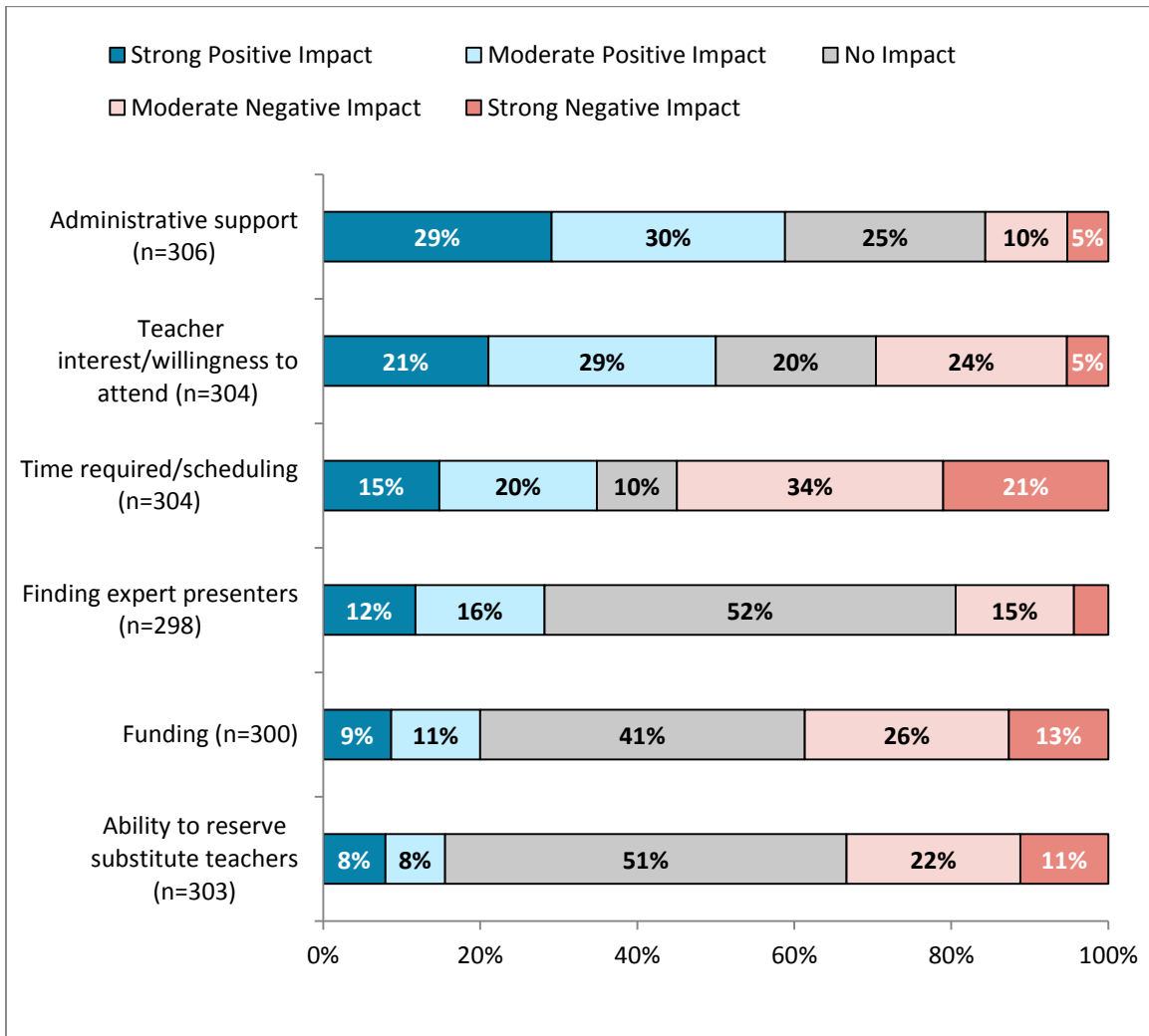
School-based providers were slightly more likely to perceive that they are **able to provide the necessary level and amount of professional development**. Three-quarters of school-based respondents indicated that they *agree* or *strongly agree* with this statement, while 69% of central office-based respondents selected these responses.

**Figure 8** displays responses to the question, “**To what extent do the following factors impact your ability to provide the optimal level and amount of professional development?**” **Administrative support** was generally perceived as having a positive impact, with 59% of providers selecting *strong positive impact* or *moderate positive impact*. Half of providers perceived **teacher interest/willingness to attend** as having a positive impact, while 29% perceived this as having a negative impact. By far, the factor most likely to be seen as having a negative impact was **time required/scheduling** (55%).

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<sup>5</sup> These numbers do not total 100% because some respondents were both central- and school-based.

**Figure 8: To what extent do the following factors impact your ability to provide the optimal level and amount of professional development? (All Providers)**



In all cases where there were differences between school-based and central office-based providers, central-office based were more likely to see a factor as having a negative impact. The largest differences were:

- 49% of central office-based providers reported that the **ability to reserve substitute teachers** had a negative impact, compared to 30% of school-based providers.
- 50% of central office-based providers reported that **funding** and **administrative support** had a negative impact, compared to 35% of school-based providers.

This greater sense among central office-based providers that factors have a negative impact is likely the result of structures that have been put in place to ease the process of providing professional development for school-based staff. Central office-based professional learning providers are generally supervisors and specialists in the Departments of Instruction and Student Services and Special Education. They typically provide professional learning during the day, with substitutes provided, or after school, which may include compensation. School-based professional learning providers are



generally staff in a school building (teachers, lead teachers, administrators, school-based specialists) that provide professional learning during the day in school teams, during school planned professional learning time/meetings, or before/after school.

For centrally-offered professional learning opportunities, the Professional Development Office, in collaboration with the Departments of Student Services and Special Education and Instruction, has created a process to control for the number of substitutes needed as well as the scheduling of opportunities. As offices propose sessions in ERO, the teacher development specialist not only monitors for data entry issues (session numbers and course codes), but also limits Monday and Friday offerings to a maximum of ten substitutes and Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday offerings to a maximum of 60 substitutes. In addition, the Professional Development Office creates a lead teacher meeting calendar in which those meetings take priority for space, substitutes, and time.

The full survey report is available in **Appendix E1**.

### *Availability of Differentiated Professional Development Opportunities*

Prior sections of this report have shown that there are substantial differences among staff types in terms of their access to and experiences with professional development in APS:

- Elementary teachers consistently had a higher number of professional development hours in ERO than secondary teachers. (Page 30)
- Over five years, almost all A-, T-, and P-scale staff had participated in professional development, while E-scale staff participated at a lower rate (84%) and just under half of G-scale staff had participated in professional development. (Page 31)
- A-, T-, and P-scale staff were the most likely to agree that there is enough professional development relevant to their position, ranging from 59-65%, while E-scale (37%) and G-scale (26%) were the least likely. (Page 32)
- Between 50-60% of A-, E-, and G-scale staff cited the lack of professional development available for their position as a barrier to their participation, compared to around a quarter of T- and P-scale staff. (Page 38)
- Other school-based T-scale staff were more likely (40%) than teachers (25%) to cite the lack of professional development available for their position as a barrier to their participation. (Page 38)
- Similarly, central office-based staff were more likely (43%) than school-based staff (32%) to cite the lack of professional development available for their position as a barrier to their participation. (Page 38)

Further feedback from stakeholders reveals additional concerns about the availability of differentiated professional development opportunities.

### *Staff Perceptions of How Well Professional Development Meets their Needs*

#### *Staff Survey*

**Figure 9** and **Figure 10** show responses to two questions about whether respondents' needs were addressed by the professional development they had participated in:

- Please indicate how often PD **offered by the following entities** addressed your professional needs.
- Please indicate how often the following **PD delivery formats** addressed your professional needs.

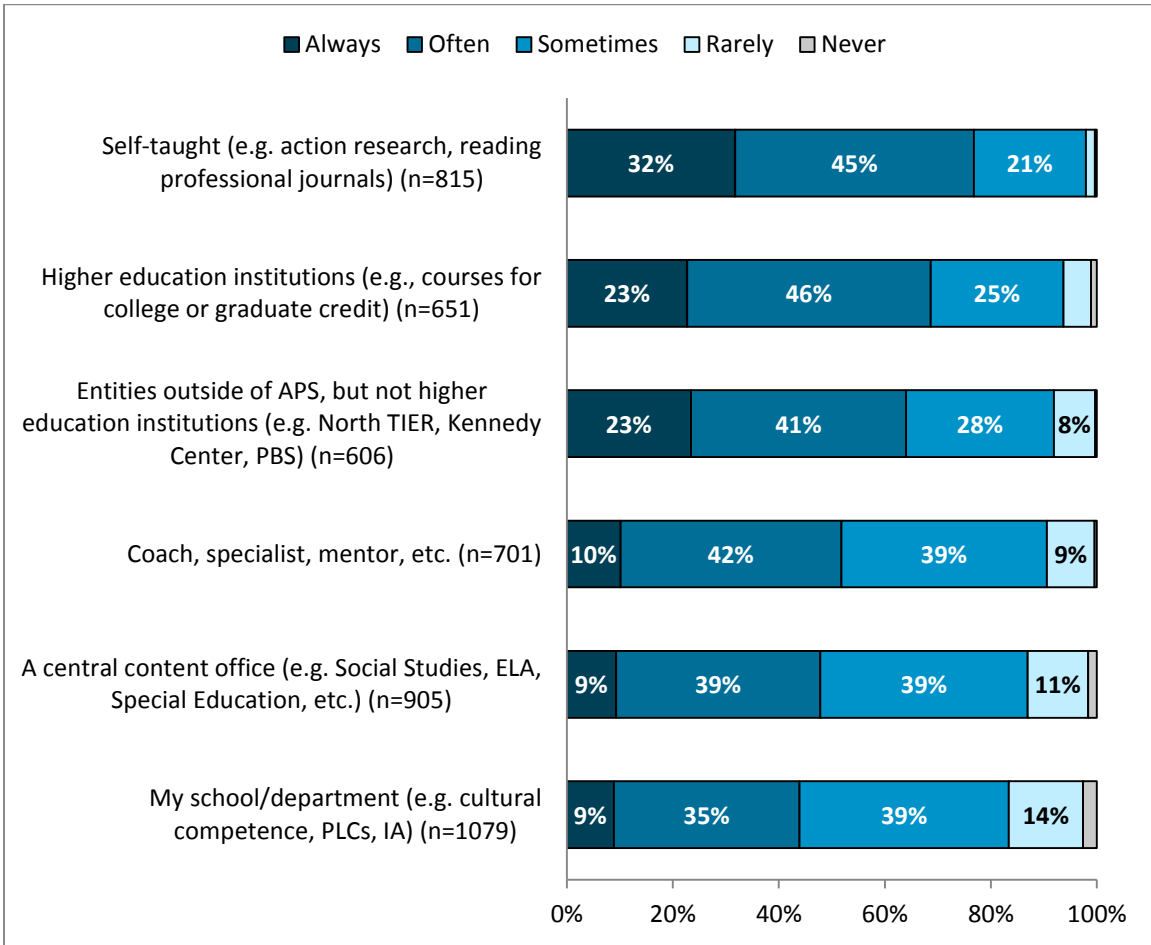
Respondents were only asked to rate these entities and formats if they had previously indicated they had participated in such types of professional development. The three entities most commonly cited as having addressed participants' needs *always* or *often* were all entities that lend themselves to customization to an individual's needs: **self-taught** (77%), **higher education institutions** (69%), and **entities outside of APS, but not higher education institutions** (64%).

**Self-taught** professional development was also one of the most commonly participated in entities (71%), but **higher education institutions** and **entities outside of APS, but not higher education institutions** were two of the least commonly participated in (57% and 52% respectively).

Delivery formats most commonly cited as having addressed participants' needs *always* or *often* were **collaboration with colleague** (72%) and **qualification/certification program** (69%). **Collaboration with colleague** was also one of the most common delivery formats, with 86% of respondents reporting that they had participated in this type of professional development.

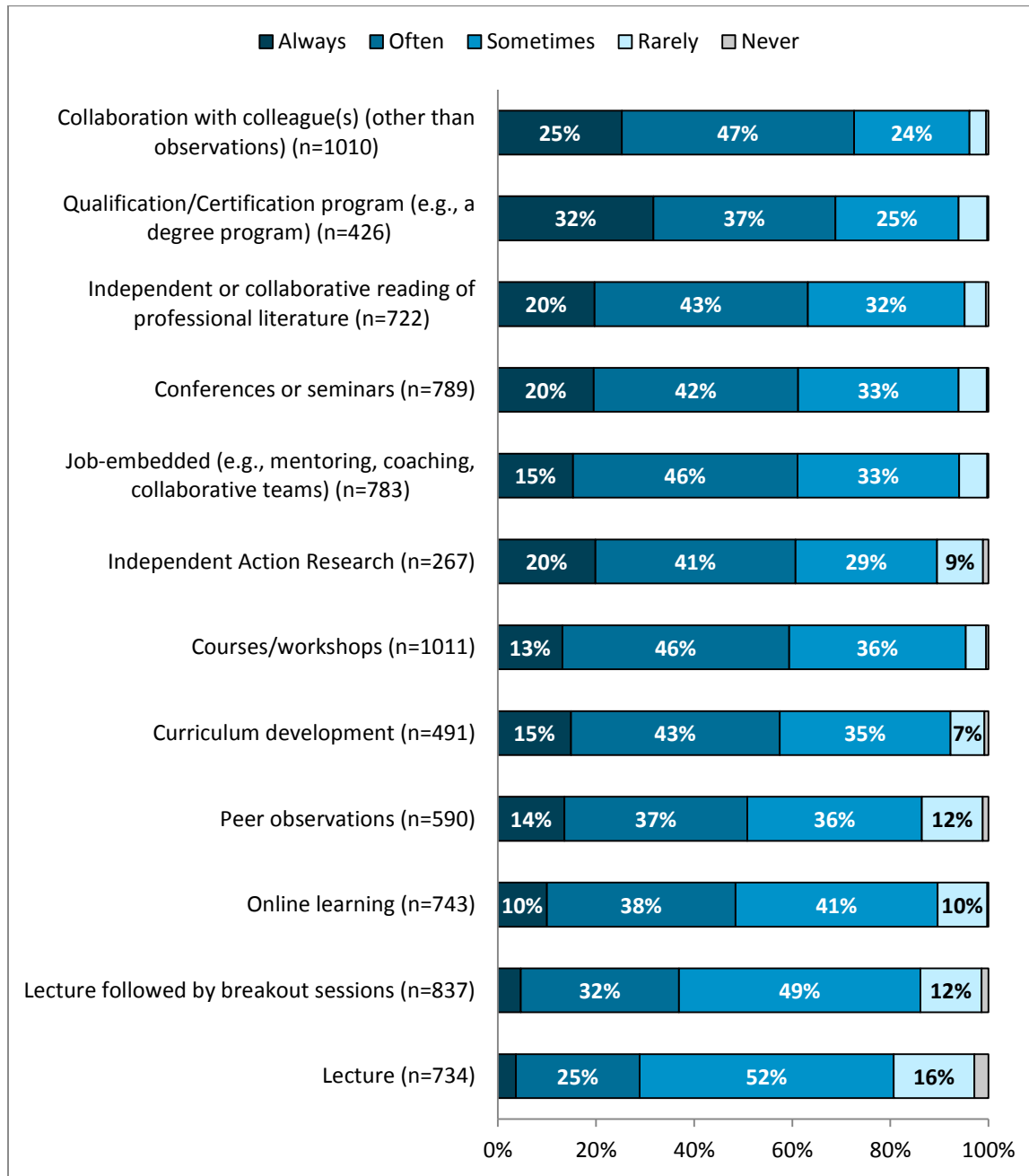
The formats least likely to have addressed participants' needs were **lecture followed by breakout session** (37%) and **lecture** (29%). These two formats were also among the most common delivery formats; 72% of respondents had participated in professional development delivered by **lecture followed by breakout session**, and 66% had participated in professional development delivered by **lecture**. More information about participation levels for professional development entities and formats can be found on page 33.

**Figure 9: Please indicate how often PD offered by the following entities addressed your professional needs. (All Staff)**



Note: Question asked only if respondents indicated they had participated in PD offered by each entity.

**Figure 10: Please indicate how often the following PD delivery formats addressed your professional needs. (All Staff)**



Note:

Note: Question asked only if respondents indicated they had participated in PD via each delivery format.

The full survey report is available in **Appendix E1**.

### Focus Groups

Focus group conversations, which were limited to A-, T-, and P-scale staff, also addressed the importance of offering differentiated opportunities in order to facilitate participation and increase the value of professional development. In a conversation about the qualities of professional development

that had or had not worked well for participants, the theme of **choice** was prominent. Participants were positive about opportunities they had had to choose which professional development to participate in based on their own needs, and almost all pointed to negative experiences they had had with professional development that was not relevant to them.

Participants expressed enthusiasm for conference-style professional development and especially for Festival of the Minds, an annual four-day professional learning conference that occurs during the first week of summer vacation. Participation in the conference is voluntary and staff are free to choose which sessions to attend. Staff register for morning, afternoon, all-day, or multiple-day sessions. Most of the presenters are APS staff. Participants at both elementary and secondary levels consistently singled out Festival of the Minds in positive ways.

In addition to the district-wide Festival of the Minds, the conference model has been used successfully at the individual building level and among a collective of schools. Both professional development participants and providers appreciated the amount of choice the model offers.

*One thing that's done recently in my school and in the science department...they put eight different professional development choices and then we picked which of the eight we wanted to do. In science the last three county meetings they did it that way as well. They got six or seven different presenters and then we picked. That made it so much better. (Secondary Participant)*

Professional development that comes to be organically—in other words, professional development that teachers or schools develop or undertake in response to their own perceived needs—was clearly seen as valuable.

On the flip side, it was very common for focus group participants to indicate they had attended a professional development session in the past in which the content was not a good match for that audience or it had not been tailored to them. This particular concern was a strong theme—especially among professional development participants. Providers, likewise, acknowledged that at times this happens—for example, particular professional development is required across the school system or a class is designed for core subject teachers but it must also be taken by people in other roles. Among professional development participants, there was a sense that the presenters more likely to *not* adapt professional development to their audience very well are those from outside contractors.

*...That's one problem we're having with cultural competency. [In the last training, the facilitator was] talking about...“Are you treating the white students and [minority students differently]?” My class has no white students....And, I agree with the content and the level too, it's hard sometimes when they're talking about elementary school topics and what you need is high school. (Secondary Participant)*

*I think what we just went through this at [school] and we sat down in the cafeteria and we were all going through this training and it's clear to us that the facilitator having this conversation for this 3-hour long session did not research our school, did not look at our demographics of our school and assumed that every single person in the building were the first year teacher who has never taught any ESOL kid in their life. (School-Based, professional development)*

A-Scale employees in the focus group had particularly acute feelings on the topic of attending professional development which is not directly relevant to them. All members of the group said that they generally did not find available professional development tailored to their career needs and to them as an audience, or that professional development experiences available to them are repetitive.

*Last year, all assistants met at TJ and the whole discussion was about autism. And, yes, there were people sitting there doing whatever they could to stay awake because it was everyone... [To be fair] I think it was required by the state. But, for people who work with children with autism, it was back to basics. They know all that stuff. (A-Scale, participant)*

*On our last early release they made us all go and it was about grading, the gradebook and working with Synergy which I don't even have access to. (A-Scale, participant)*

*Even as a kindergarten assistant, I've tried to look for something for me and I'll say "Ok, that one is for VPI," "That's for special ed.," "That's for Montessori." What am I supposed to sign up for? (A-Scale, participant)*

A-Scale staff members and professional development professionals in another focus group provided examples of APS professional development that worked well for A-Scale staff members. One case used a PLC. And, in another, the administrator learned staff members' professional development needs at monthly meetings and met them—arranging English language training through the Professional Development Office, providing an opportunity to observe responsive classroom and attend a responsive classroom workshop, enabling a staff member to learn Word.

Staff members at the district level were keenly aware of issues related to tailoring professional development. Their challenges in this regard are related to:

- Managing differences among their department's view of staff needs, staff members' own perceptions of their needs, school leadership plans and needs, and district leadership plans and needs, and
- The need to establish a baseline shared understanding on some subjects, which means that some staff members must attend sessions on topics they may already know well.

The full focus group report is available in **Appendix E2**.

## Quality of Professional Development

### *Observations of Professional Development*

For purposes of this evaluation, an observation instrument was developed to assess the degree to which best practices were incorporated into professional development sessions and trainings in APS. The Professional Development Observation Tool was developed by the Professional Development Office in conjunction with the Office of Planning and Evaluation. It was based on a professional development observation tool developed by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln<sup>6</sup> as well as the document *8 Essential*

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<sup>6</sup> [www.ceen.unomaha.edu/TEKBOTS/SPIRIT2/Assessments/](http://www.ceen.unomaha.edu/TEKBOTS/SPIRIT2/Assessments/)

Questions<sup>7</sup>. In total, 121 observations of professional development occurred over the spring, summer, and fall of 2015.

The observation tool contained 24 items that assessed the presence of best practices in the delivery of professional development. Of those 24 items, 14 asked observers to further assign a rating of effectiveness. In addition, observers assigned professional development sessions an overall rating at the conclusion of their observation.

**Table 12** shows the percentage of all observations that received each overall rating. The largest group of observations (40%) were rated as level 3 – *accomplished, effective professional development*. Just over a quarter of observations were rated as either level 4 – *exemplary* – or level 2 – *beginning stages of effective professional development*.

**Table 12: Overall rating of professional development session/training (n=121)**

| Level   | Percentage of Observations |
|---|----------------------------|
| Level 1: Ineffective professional development                   | 7%                         |
| Level 2: Beginning stages of effective professional development | 26%                        |
| Level 3: Accomplished, effective professional development       | 40%                        |
| Level 4: Exemplary professional development                     | 28%                        |

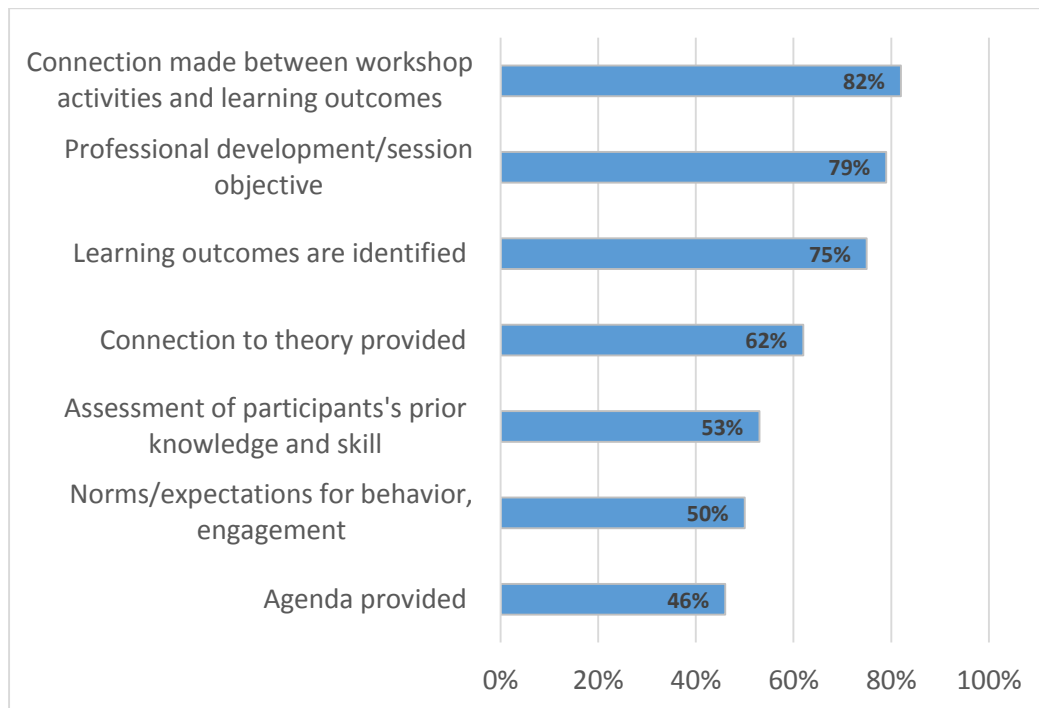
### Opening

**Figure 11** displays the percentage of observations that included specified practices during the **opening** of a professional development session.

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<sup>7</sup>[blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning\\_forwards\\_pd\\_watch/2013/10/choosing\\_your\\_next\\_professional\\_learning\\_experience\\_7\\_essential\\_questions.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning_forwards_pd_watch/2013/10/choosing_your_next_professional_learning_experience_7_essential_questions.html)

**Figure 11: Percent of observations that included the following strategies/practices during the opening (n=116-120)**



Differences emerge when results are disaggregated by session type:

- Without exception, countywide sessions were more likely to include these practices than school-based sessions.
- Generally, the longer the duration of the session, the more likely it was to include these practices. Sessions that lasted between four and 8 hours included **connection to theory** 86% of the time, compared to 57-58% of the time for shorter sessions. Longer sessions were also far more likely to include **norms/expectations for behavior and engagement** (74% vs 30% of 0-2 hour sessions and 60% of 2-4 hour sessions).
- Sessions intended for administrators and central staff were more likely to include the **session objective** (100% vs 73% of sessions intended for teachers) and **connection to theory** (77% vs 58%). Sessions intended for teachers were more likely to include an **agenda** (51% vs 29%), an **assessment of participants' prior knowledge and skill** (59% vs 35%), and **norms/expectations for behavior and engagement** (52% vs 35%).
- Fewer differences emerged between sessions presented by APS staff and sessions presented by non-APS staff, but sessions with an outside provider were more likely to include an **agenda** (63% vs 40%) and **connection to theory** (83% vs 56%)

### Collaboration and Learning

**Figure 12** displays the percentage of observed professional development sessions that included specified practices related to **collaboration and learning**.

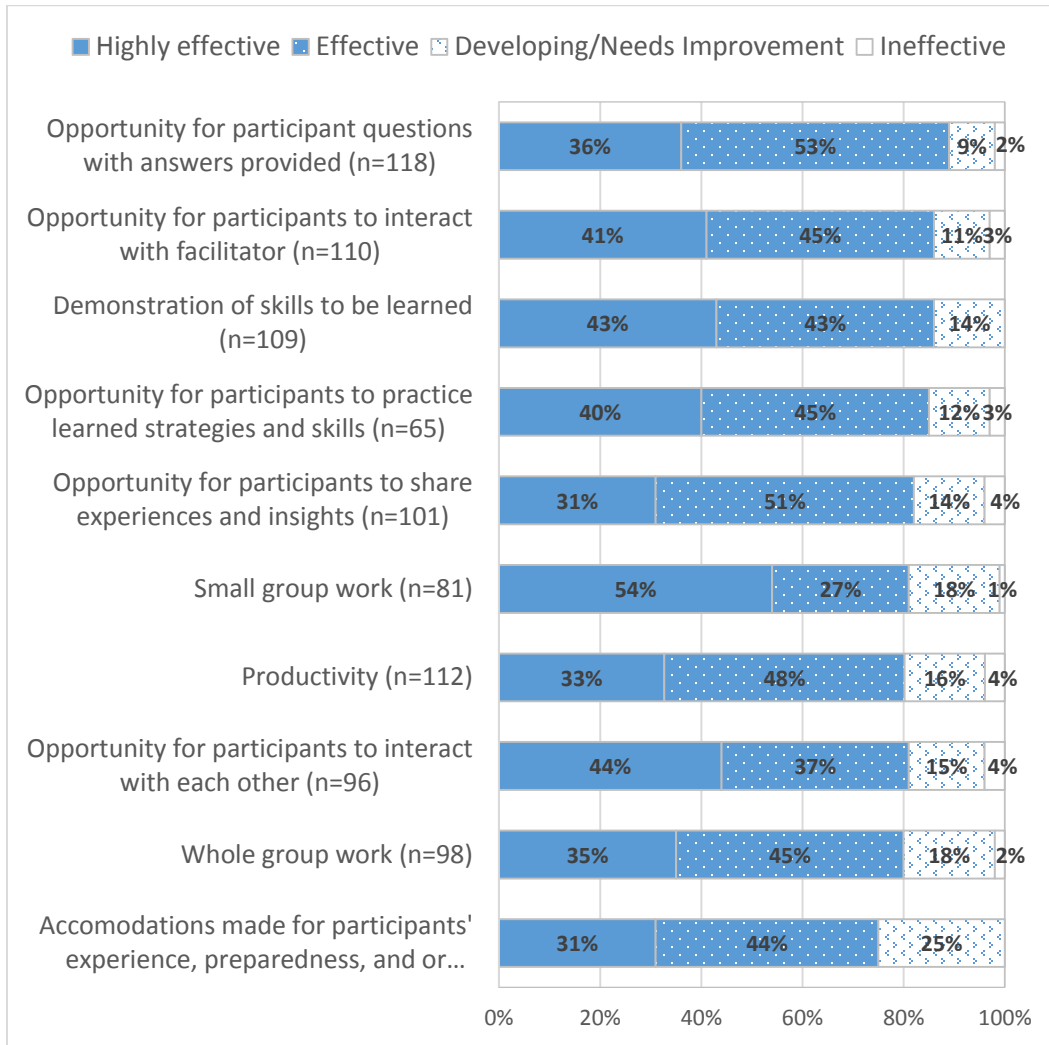


**Figure 12: Percent of observations that included the following aspects of collaboration and learning (n=120-121)**



For elements of collaboration and learning, observers rated the effectiveness of each practice if they had already indicated that “yes” it was a present element in the session. **Figure 13** shows the ratings for each specified element of collaboration and learning. Generally, if an element was present, it was rated as either *effective* or *highly effective*. The element most likely to be rated effective/highly effective was **opportunity for participant questions with answers provided** (89%). The least likely to be rated effective was **accommodations made for participants’ experience, preparedness, or learning styles**, with 25% of observations rated as *developing/needs improvement*.

Figure 13: Level of effectiveness for identified aspects of collaboration and learning



Differences emerge when results are disaggregated by session type:

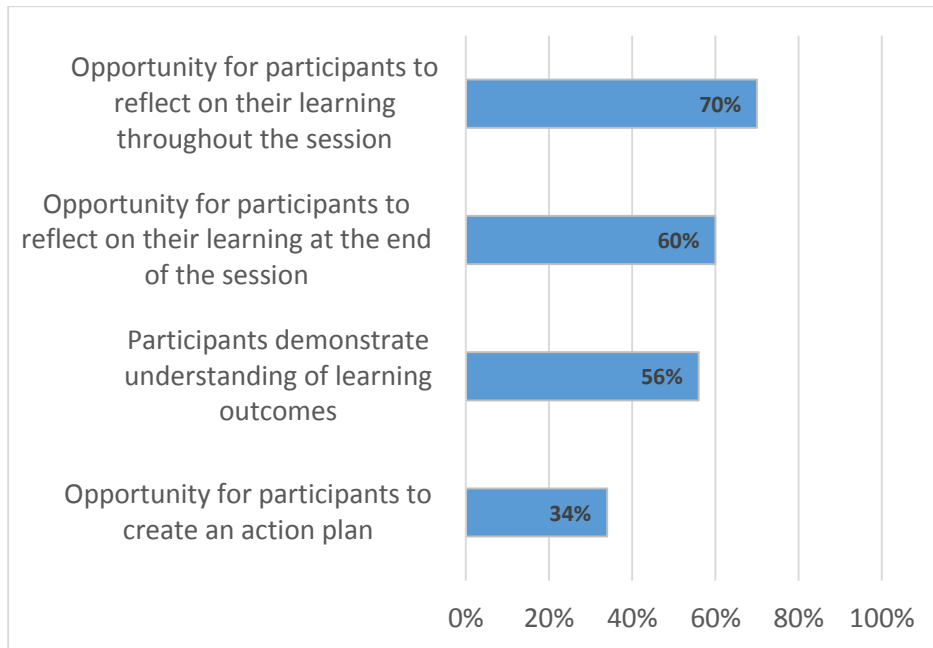
- Countywide sessions were far more likely to include an **opportunity for participants to share experiences and insights** (87% vs 56%), but school-based sessions that included such an opportunity were more likely to be rated *highly effective* or *effective* in that area (100% vs 80%). School-based sessions were more likely to include an **opportunity for participants to practice learned strategies and skills** (81% vs 70%) and **accommodations made for participants** (60% vs 50%).
- Longer-lasting sessions were more likely to include all practices related to collaboration and learning, but in many cases the large difference was between the shortest sessions (0-2 hours) and the two categories of longer sessions, with little to no difference between the two longer categories. For many practices - **whole group work**, **opportunity for participants to share experiences and insights**, **opportunity for participants to interact with facilitator**, **opportunity for participants to practice learned strategies and skills**, and **productivity** - there was virtually no difference between sessions lasting two to four hours, and those lasting four to eight hours.

- Longer-lasting sessions were also more likely to be rated *highly effective* or *effective*, and in these cases, there was a difference between the two higher-duration categories. **Opportunity for participants to practice learned strategies and skills** was rated *highly effective* or *effective* in 76%, 87%, and 95% of observations for sessions lasting 0-2 hours, 2-4 hours, and 4-8 hours, respectively; and **whole group work** received these ratings in 69%, 83%, and 91% of observations.
- Sessions intended for administrators and central staff were far less likely to include an **opportunity for participants to practice learned strategies and skills** (44%) than sessions intended for teachers (78%). They were also less likely to include **accommodations made for participants** (39% vs 57%).
- Sessions intended for administrators and central staff were also generally less likely to be rated *highly effective* or *effective*, particularly in the areas of **accommodations made for participants** (57% vs 80%), **whole group work** (64% vs 82%), and **opportunity for participants to interact with each other** (67% vs 85%).
- Sessions presented by APS staff were less likely to include an **opportunity for participants to interact with each other** (73%) than sessions presented by an outside presenter (90%). They were also less likely to include **whole group work** (79% vs 100%).

### Reflection and Closing

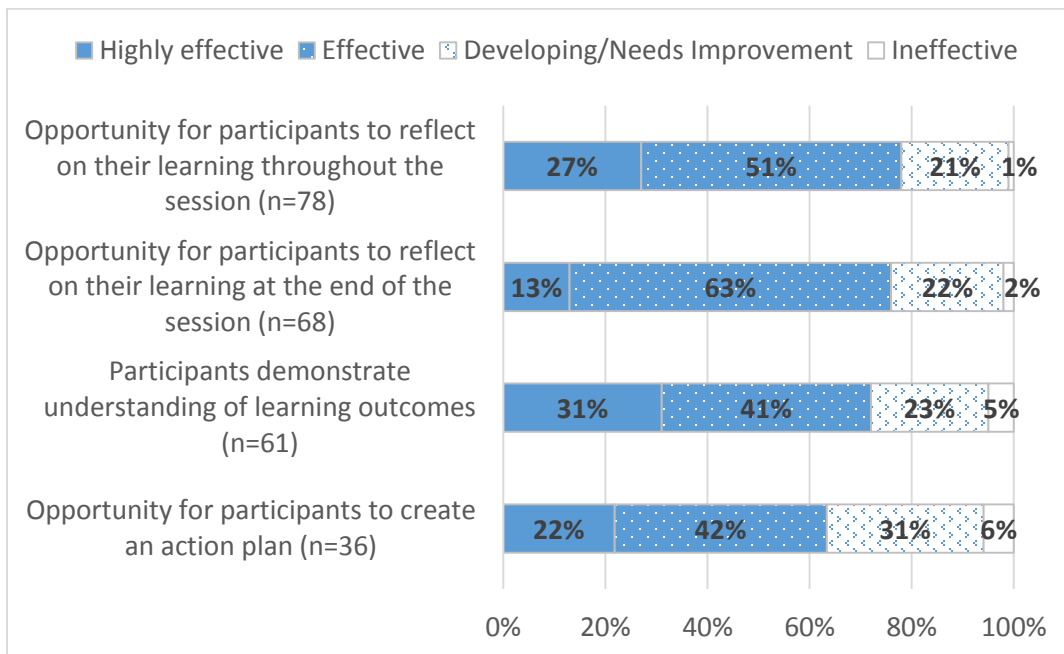
**Figure 14** displays the percentage of observed professional development sessions that included specified practices related to **reflection and closing**. While the *opening* and *collaboration and learning* sections of the observations each included several elements that were observed in almost all observed sessions, no practice related to *reflection and closing* was observed in more than 70% of observations. The most frequently observed element was **opportunity for participants to reflect on their learning throughout the session** (70%). The least observed, **opportunity for participants to create an action plan**, was observed in only 34% of observations.

**Figure 14: Percent of observations that included the following opportunities for reflection and closing (n=119-121)**



For elements of reflection and closing, observers rated the effectiveness of each practice if they had already indicated that “yes” it was a present element in the session. **Figure 15** shows the ratings for each specified element of reflection and closing. Between 72-78% of the first three elements were rated as either *effective* or *highly effective*, but only 64% of observations were rated as *effective/highly effective* for the element of **opportunity for participants to provide an action plan**.

**Figure 15: Level of effectiveness for identified aspects of reflection and closing**



Differences emerge when results are disaggregated by session type:

- Countywide sessions were more likely to include an **opportunity for participants to reflect on their learning at the end of the session** (62%) than school-based sessions (44%). They were also more likely to include **participants demonstrating understanding of learning outcomes** (58% vs 44%), and to be rated *highly effective* or *effective* in this area (75% vs 50%).
- As with all other sections of the observation, the longer the professional development session, the more likely it was to include any given element. There was just one exception to this pattern, with a slightly larger percentage of sessions lasting 0-2 hours including an **opportunity for participants to create an action plan** (31%) than sessions lasting two to four hours (24%).
- Longer-lasting sessions were also more likely to be rated *highly effective* or *effective*, particularly in the areas of **opportunity for participants to reflect on their learning throughout the session** (62%, 83%, and 86% in sessions lasting 0-2 hours, 2-4 hours, and 4-8 hours, respectively), and **opportunity for participants to reflect on their learning at the end of the session** (63%, 81%, and 89%, respectively).
- Sessions intended for teachers were more likely than sessions intended for administrators and central staff to include all elements of reflection and closing, with one exception. Both types of sessions were equally likely to include **participants demonstrating understanding of learning outcomes**. Sessions for administrators and central staff were more likely to be rated *highly effective* or *effective* for those sessions that included an **opportunity for participants to reflect on their learning at the end of the session** (100% vs. 76%).
- Sessions presented by an outside presenter were more likely to include an **opportunity for participants to reflect on their learning throughout the session** (80%) than sessions presented by an APS presenter (64%), but less likely to include an **opportunity for participants to create an action plan** (20% vs 35%).

The full report on observations of professional development can be found in **Appendix D4**.

#### *Staff Perceptions of Professional Development Quality*

##### *ERO Evaluations*

Beginning in the fall of 2011, all participants in professional development sessions that have been entered in Electronic Registrar Online (ERO) are required to complete a standard evaluation of the session upon being marked attended. Once a participant is marked attended, they may sign in to ERO and submit their evaluation electronically. Upon doing so, they will receive the assigned recertification points on their transcript. If participants do not complete the evaluation, the points for the activity will not appear in their transcript.

The implementation of a required evaluation was the result of an item from the Department of Instruction's action plan during the 2010-2011 school year, to implement a system-wide process for measuring the outcomes of professional learning. The rationale was that a system-wide evaluation would provide feedback on professional learning offerings both to the instructor and at a districtwide level. Tying the submission of an evaluation to the assignment of recertification points would ensure a greater response rate for each survey.

The ERO evaluation consists of seven multiple-choice questions followed by an optional comment field. The questions were designed around Guskey's five levels for evaluating effective professional development<sup>8</sup>. Since each level builds on those that come before, success at the lowest level is usually necessary for success at higher levels:

1. Participant's reactions
2. Participants' learning
3. Organization support and change
4. Participants' use of new knowledge/skills
5. Student learning outcomes

The timeframe for submitting the evaluation is open-ended and existing evaluations are available for completion at any time. In some instances, participants may wait and do all pending evaluations at one time. In addition, many E- and some P-scale staff do not have licensure requirements and do not need to earn recertification points; these staff may not have the same motivation to fill out the survey. These factors may affect the validity of some responses.

ERO survey responses are generally very positive. An analysis of survey responses between 2011-12 and 2014-15 shows high rates of agreement with the following statements:

- The presenter was knowledgeable. (95-97% *agree* or *strongly agree*)
- The presenter effectively facilitated the offering. (93-95% *agree* or *strongly agree*)

The full report on ERO surveys is in **Appendix E3**.

#### [Spring 2015 Survey](#)

The spring 2015 staff survey included several questions addressing whether or not the professional development that respondents had participated in over the last five years had:

- Included elements considered to be best practices in the delivery of professional development, or
- Resulted in outcomes associated with high-quality professional development.

**Figure 16** and **Figure 17** includes responses to questions asked of *school-based T-scale staff*. Only 43% of these respondents felt that their professional development had included **opportunities to work productively with colleagues from other schools**, and just over half felt that their professional development had **included enough time to think carefully about, try, and evaluate new ideas**. Sixty percent felt that their professional development had **improved student outcomes**.

Figure 17 show responses to these survey questions. **Figure 16** shows responses to questions asked of *all staff*. Respondents were positive and generally expressed agreement that the professional development they had participated in had **improved their knowledge/skills** (87% *strongly agree* or *agree*), **increased their effectiveness as a teacher/in their job** (78%), and **is likely to have a positive and lasting impact on their career goals** (72%).

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<sup>8</sup> 5 Levels of Professional Development Guskey, T.R, (2000) Evaluating Professional Development. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press

**Figure 16: In the last five years, the PD I have participated in...(All Staff)**

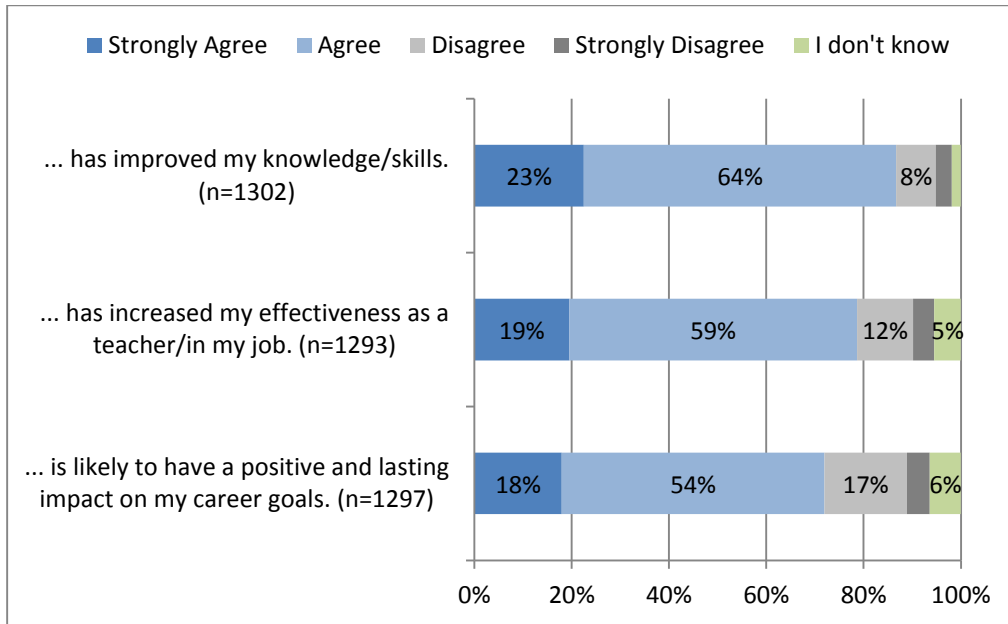
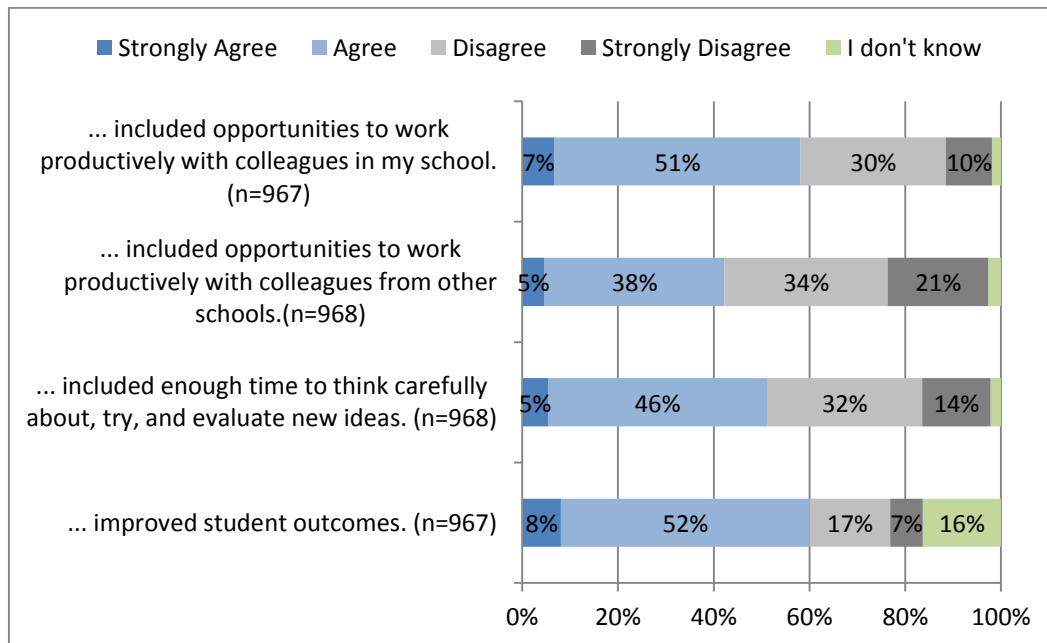


Figure 17 includes responses to questions asked of *school-based T-scale staff*. Only 43% of these respondents felt that their professional development had included **opportunities to work productively with colleagues from other schools**, and just over half felt that their professional development had **included enough time to think carefully about, try, and evaluate new ideas**. Sixty percent felt that their professional development had **improved student outcomes**.

**Figure 17: Overall, my professional development experiences in the last five years have...(School-based T-Scale Staff)**



The full staff survey report is in **Appendix E1**.

## Focus groups

A document summarizing Learning Forward's 7 Standards for Professional Learning<sup>9</sup> was shared with all focus group participants. Participants were asked to comment on which stood out to them as strengths or weaknesses of professional development in APS. The seven standards are:

1. **Learning Communities**—working in communities which are committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.
2. **Leadership**—having skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.
3. **Resources**—prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.
4. **Data**—using a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate.
5. **Learning Designs**—integrating theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.
6. **Implementation**—applying research on change and sustaining support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.
7. **Outcomes**—aligning outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

A few patterns emerged. **Leadership, resources, and learning designs** were regarded as strengths. **Data collection** was seen as a weakness as was **implementation**, to a lesser degree.

*[Learning Designs] I do think we try to deliver professional development in a way that's going to engage learners. It's not "sit and get"...the people I work with are committed to delivering professional development that they would like to receive that is based on adult learning theory. (Central Office Administrator)*

*...I think [leadership] is a strength. I think that when they really want to implement something like the PLC, or the teacher evaluation program. I think the Professional Development Office really supports it and have stepped up...the leadership part of it, I think is there. (Elementary Participant)*

*Not only do we have knowledgeable leaders, but I do think that a lot of our professional development opportunities lead teachers to become leaders in their own school. (Central Office Administrator)*

*We look at data....it's there in pockets, we could be more consistent across the board. (Central Office Administrator)*

*I think they can improve the data collection of professional development. If you want certain things to happen, that would be a really powerful thing to show how effective something was to get more people to do it. (Elementary Participant)*

*I don't see the sustained support for implementation. (Elementary Participant)*

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<sup>9</sup> [learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning](https://learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning)

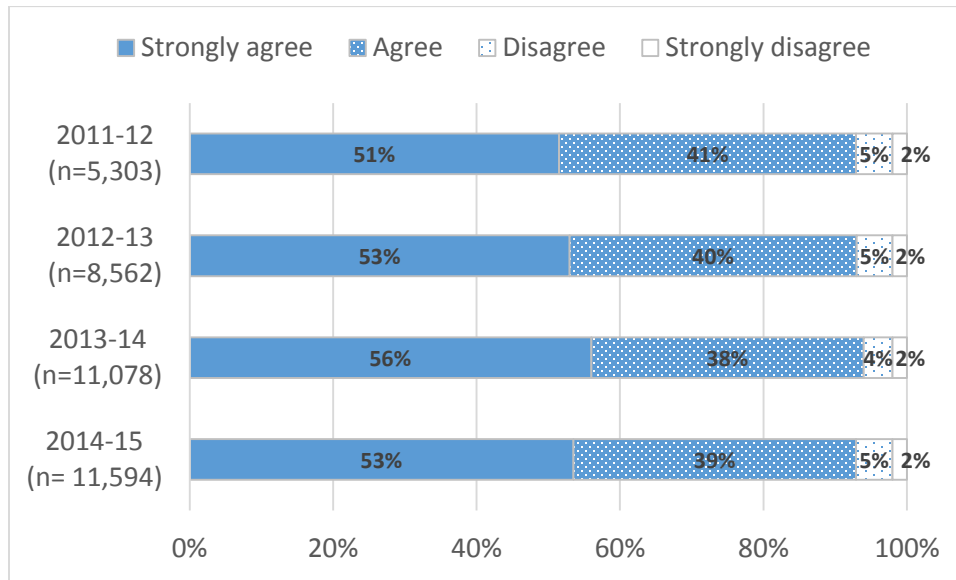


The full focus group report is available in **Appendix E2**.

*Follow-up and Implementation of Professional Development*

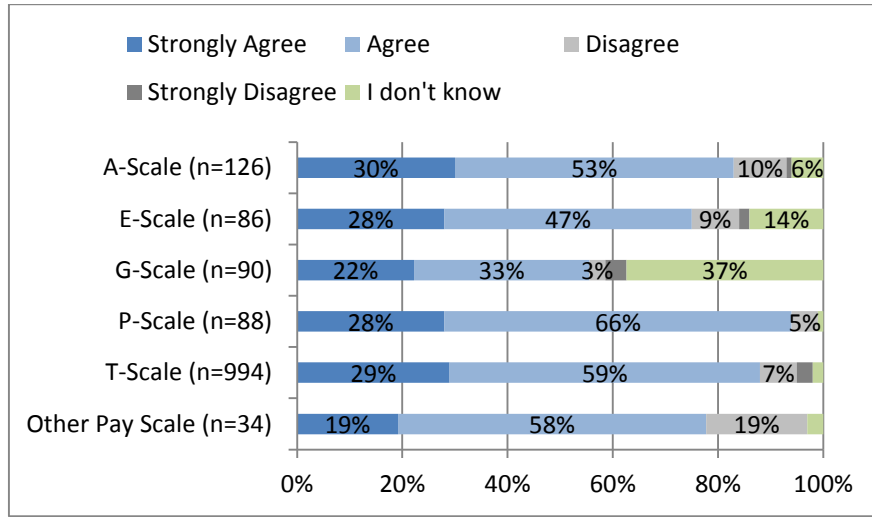
While implementation of professional development was seen as a relative weakness in the focus group discussions, session evaluations in ERO indicate that a large majority of participants *intend* to implement strategies learned through professional development. **Figure 18** shows that, from 2011-12 through 2014-15, between 92-94% of survey respondents indicated that they *strongly agree* or *agree* with the statement, “**I plan to implement strategies from this professional development offering.**”

**Figure 18: I plan to implement strategies from this professional development offering.**



The spring 2015 staff survey shows a lower, but still high, percentage of staff indicating agreement with the statement, “**Overall, I feel confident in my ability to implement what I have learned during professional development.**” Eighty-four percent of respondents indicated that they *strongly agree* or *agree* with this statement. **Figure 19** disaggregates responses to this question by pay scale. G-scale staff, and to a lesser extent, E-scale staff, stand out as being less likely to feel confident in their ability to implement what they have learned. More than a third of G-scale respondents selected *I don’t know* for this survey question. Eleven percent of E-scale staff indicated that they *strongly disagree* or *disagree*, and 14% selected *I don’t know*.

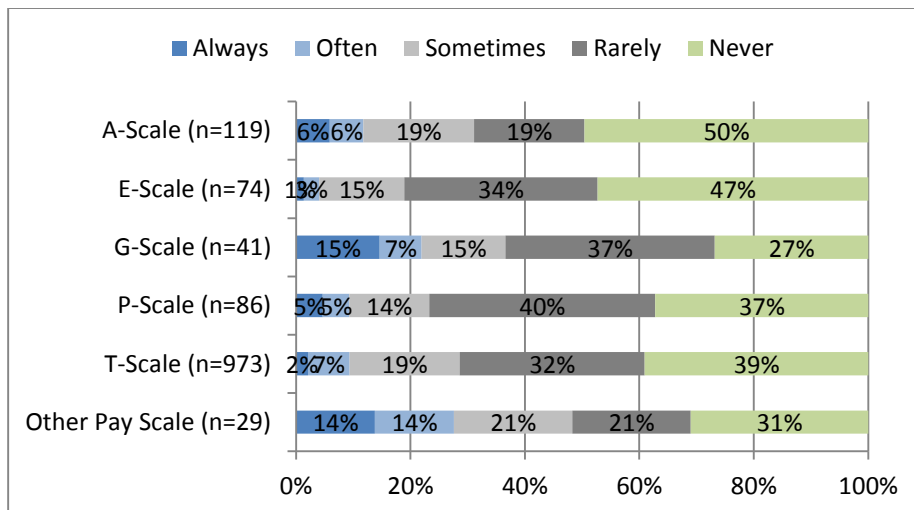
**Figure 19: Overall, I feel confident in my ability to implement what I have learned during professional development (All Staff, by Pay Scale).**



Other survey responses indicate that structures are not always in place to ensure implementation. Forty percent of respondents indicated that, in the last five years, a professional development provider had *never* contacted them following the session to ensure they were implementing what they had learned. Another 32% indicated that this had *rarely* happened.

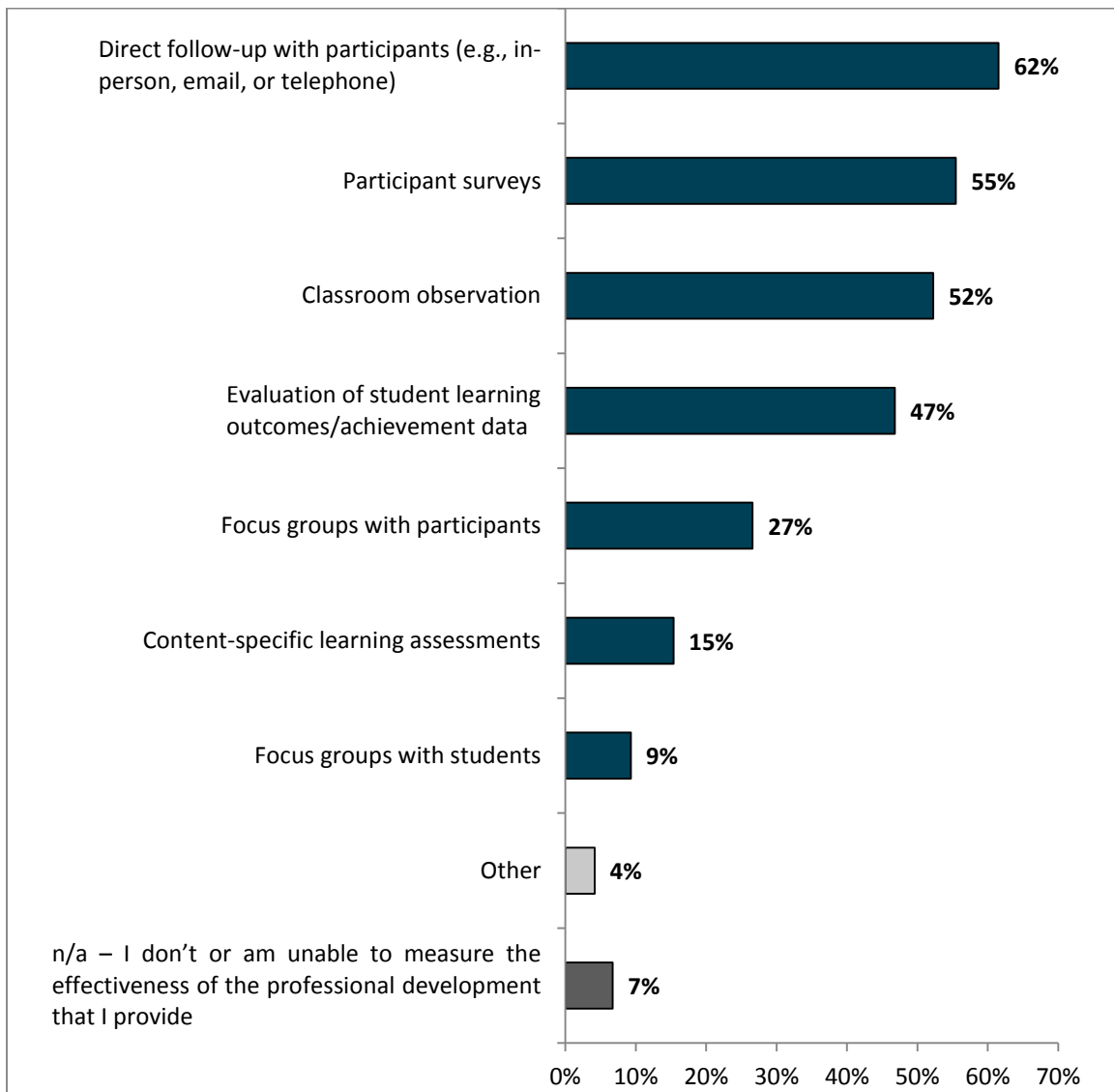
Follow-up after a professional development session is even less common for central office-based staff than for school-based staff. Half of all central office-based respondents reported that a professional development provider had *never* contacted them after a session, compared to 39% of school-based respondents. There are also differences among pay scales, as shown in **Figure 20**. G-scale staff are the most likely to report that their professional development provider *always* or *often* contacts them after the training (22%). E-scale and A-scale staff are the most likely to report that their professional development provider *never* contacts them after the training (47% and 50%, respectively).

**Figure 20: In the last five years, how often did your PD provider contact you following the training session to ensure you were implementing what you learned? (All Staff, by Pay Scale)**



The same survey asked staff who regularly provide professional development to indicate which tools or methods they use to ensure the effectiveness of the professional development they provide. Sixty-two percent indicated that they engage in **direct follow-up with participants**; this was the most common response. **Figure 21** shows that other commonly cited methods were **participant surveys** (55%), **classroom observations** (52%), and **evaluation of student learning outcomes/achievement data** (47%). Only seven percent of providers indicated that they do not or are unable to measure the effectiveness of the professional development they provide.

**Figure 21: Tools/Methods Used to Measure Effectiveness of Professional Development You Provide (All Providers)**



(n=312)

Note: Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

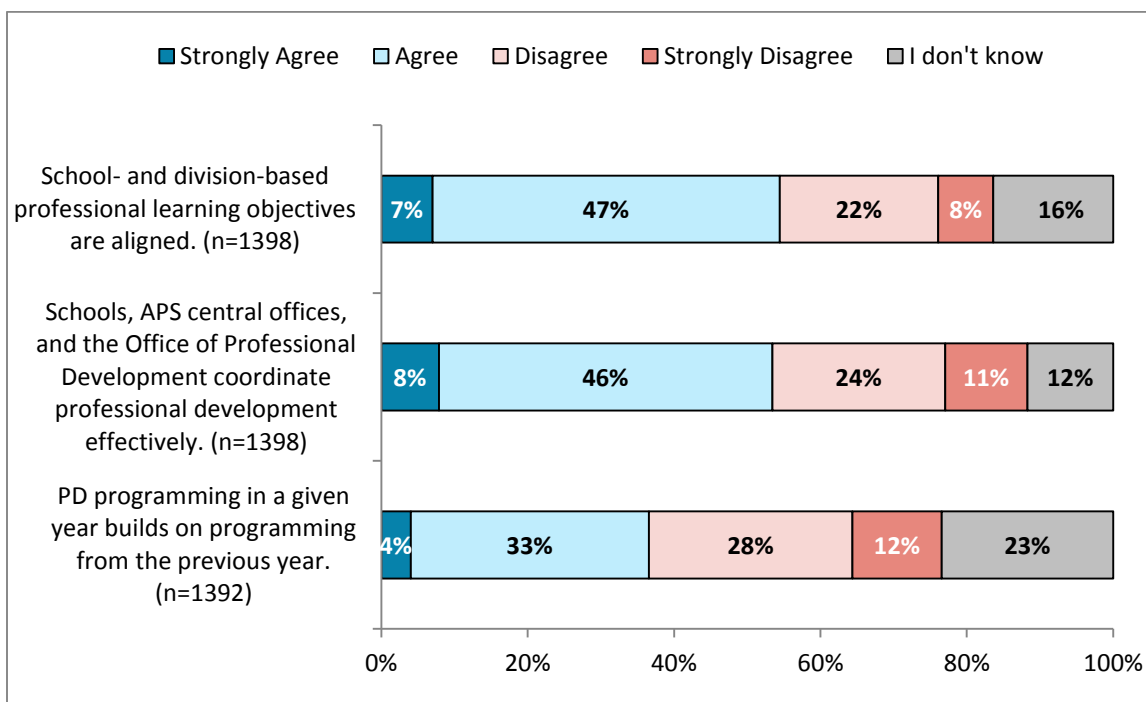
Further information is available in **Appendix E2** (focus groups), **E3** (ERO Surveys), and **E1** (staff survey).

*Coordination, Alignment, and Cohesiveness of Professional Development*

**Figure 22** shows staff responses to a series of questions regarding the consistency of professional development offered by different entities within APS and over multiple school years.

Just over half of all respondents selected *strongly agree* or *agree* with the statements, “**School- and division-based professional learning objectives are aligned**” and “**Schools, APS central offices, and the Office of Professional Development coordinate professional development effectively.**” Only 37% of respondents agreed that “**PD programming in a given year builds on programming from the previous year.**”

**Figure 22: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the continuity of professional learning at APS (All Staff)**



Focus group discussions reiterated this sense that there is a lack of consistency from year to year. Among many participants, there was a sense of ongoing, repeated change that felt burdensome. School-based professional development providers and professional development participants, especially, said that their motivation to embrace or learn new ways was diminished by the knowledge that other new ways were certain to come soon. They wished for more time to work with new approaches before moving to something new. The term **shiny new thing** came up in most groups.

APS’s long-term use of History Alive! was singled out as a good example of commitment that benefits student learning. In addition, particular approaches that have been adopted by APS such as Understanding by Design (UBD), Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) were valued themselves. Thus, the difficulty people expressed was not about these approaches, but about change.

*I feel like cultural competency for me as a human being and as a teacher interacting with students has been really, really valuable. It's like a shift of mindset into a new way of thinking....[But, if you] have a different focus every year, then you get just so far until you start something new. It doesn't follow through in a way that really creates change. I think it's probably because there are a lot of [intriguing] things and people are like, "Oh shiny. This will be great; this is going to solve the problem." (School-Based Provider, Instructional Staff)*

*Because there have been so many initiatives over the years...sometimes there are people who [dismiss them], "Oh this is just the latest and greatest." (School-Based Provider, Administrator)*

*Well, I think what I find most frustrating with professional development is it seems to be fairly piecemeal. You grab onto one thing. I mean, the county grabs onto one thing, then they drop that and they pick something else. (Elementary Participant)*

In thinking about the topic of shiny new things, district-based administrators wondered aloud whether staff members' sense of ever-present change may be amplified by two factors:

- The ongoing churn of curriculum and textbook adoption that occurs alongside adoption of higher level approaches, and
- Communication needs, such as better district-level framing of the rhyme and reason for new adoptions of any kind and better completing the feedback loop to share reflections on past changes.

In addition, district-based administrators raised the matter of supporting staff in becoming generally agile and adaptive given today's larger context of fast-paced, ongoing change.

*While we try not to jump on the shiny new things, we can't teach the way we did 20 years ago. But, [in communicating] we haven't put this in a visual or frame or box to help people see how it's all connected. We [who work in professional development] understand it because we're kind of in the middle of it. [But, not everyone has the benefit of that perspective.] (Central Office Administrator)*

Focus group discussions also uncovered a sense among professional development participants that there is no guiding purpose to the professional development that is offered, and that there is a lack of coordination between district-level and school-level staff. Although district-based administrators were able to articulate the factors that influence what professional development offerings are made and to whom, many professional development participants specifically said that they do not know how these determinations are made and that they wish for more input.

*I know [in the past] we've been talking to the administrators prior to early releases where we're going to have professional development [to ask how the professional development time will be used]. [The answer will be], "We haven't determined that yet" or "that will be coming up" or "we're not sure." They even struggle with how this is going to work. (Secondary Participant)*

*A lot of times I feel like...the purpose is seldom there. What's the purpose for us being in the library? Is it just mandatory we have to go for 3 hours because it's a half day and we're*

*mandated to go? I sometimes think that the bigger idea, the purpose of the why and the outcomes that they are not planned. (School-Based Provider, Instructional Staff)*

*In other words it's all down flow (from central office to schools and staff), not a whole lot of up flow (from schools and staff to central office). (Secondary Participant)*

In the first discussion group of professional development participants, a teacher mentioned that he was wondering how the two new additional professional development days that would open the 2015-16 school year would be used. Subsequent groups were asked about this topic and they agreed that they did not know what to expect.

*If [the additional dates for professional development] were amazing, exciting I would be happy, but if it's not then teachers want to be in their classrooms getting ready for the school year. (Secondary Participant)*

*I guarantee it [professional development providers] don't know yet what's going to go on. (Secondary Participant)*

District-level staff noted the challenges of coordinating with school-based professional development. They said that they have little window into how schools identify their own needs and how they use professional development for staff members' professional growth. In fact, for this evaluation the Professional Development Office wished to identify observation opportunities at schools for the Office of Planning and Evaluation, but did not have ready access to a list of specific school-based sessions to share.

The survey report is available in **Appendix E1**, and the focus group report is available in **Appendix E2**.

### Support from the Professional Development Office

In 2006, the Professional Development Office consolidated two 0.5 positions (Teacher Development Specialist and Instructional Lead Teacher Coordinator) into one 1.0 position (Teacher Evaluation Specialist). This was done to address several areas of need, one being the creation of a differentiated compensation program for T-Scale staff.

This formalized the collaboration with Human Resources, which oversees policy and implementation around staff evaluations, and defined the role of the Professional Development Office as a support for teachers and evaluators in understanding the evaluation process. The Professional Development Office's goal around staff evaluation is that staff will be knowledgeable about the process. The Professional Development Office also collaborates with Human Resources to identify areas of need for planning and implementing professional learning about the evaluation process for teachers, evaluators, and P-Scale staff.

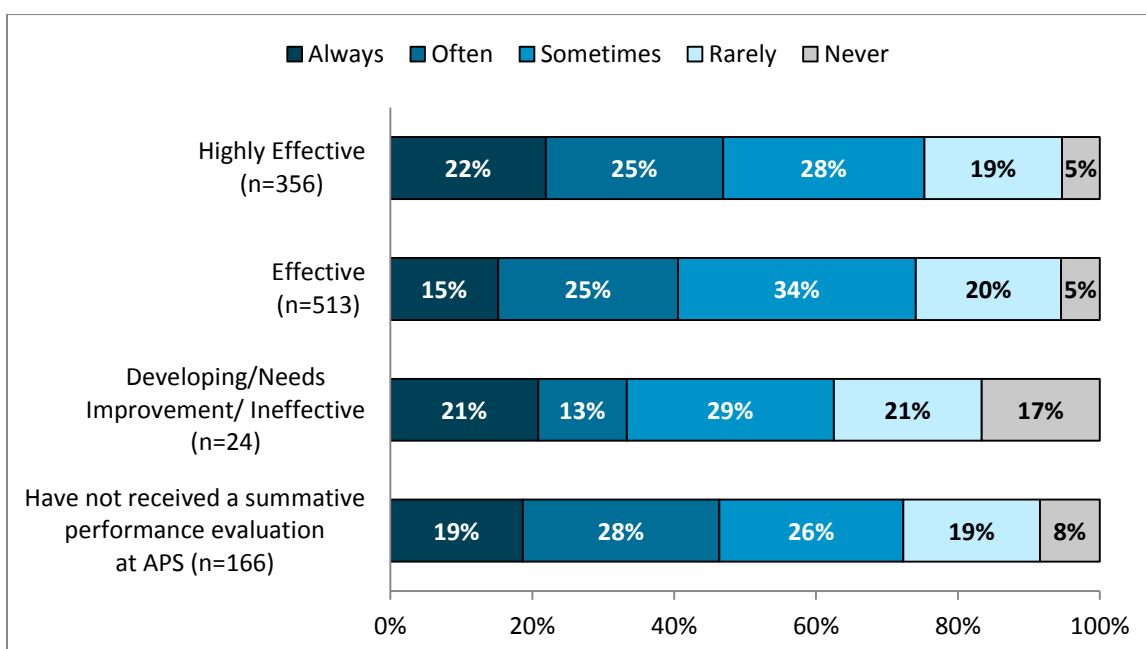
### Teacher and Administrator Evaluations

Respondents who identified themselves as T- or P-scale employees on the staff survey were asked a series of questions about their experiences with the T- and P-scale evaluation system. Forty-three percent of respondents indicated that their formal evaluation *always or often includes feedback that they can use to improve their job performance*. Just six percent reported that this *never* occurs. A large

majority reported that they *strongly agree* (39%) or *agree* (47%) with the statement, “**I believe my rating on my last performance evaluation was accurate.**”

Respondents were also asked to provide their rating on their most recent summative evaluation at APS<sup>10</sup>. Responses were then disaggregated by the self-reported ratings. **Figure 23** shows responses to the question, “**How frequently does your formal evaluation include feedback that you can use to improve your job performance?**” by rating. Staff who had received a rating of **developing/needs improvement** or **ineffective** were the most likely to report that their evaluation *never* included useful feedback (17%), although they were just as likely as other groups to indicate that this *always* happens (21%).

**Figure 23: How frequently does your formal evaluation include feedback that you can use to improve your job performance? (All T- and P-Scale Staff, by Rating)**

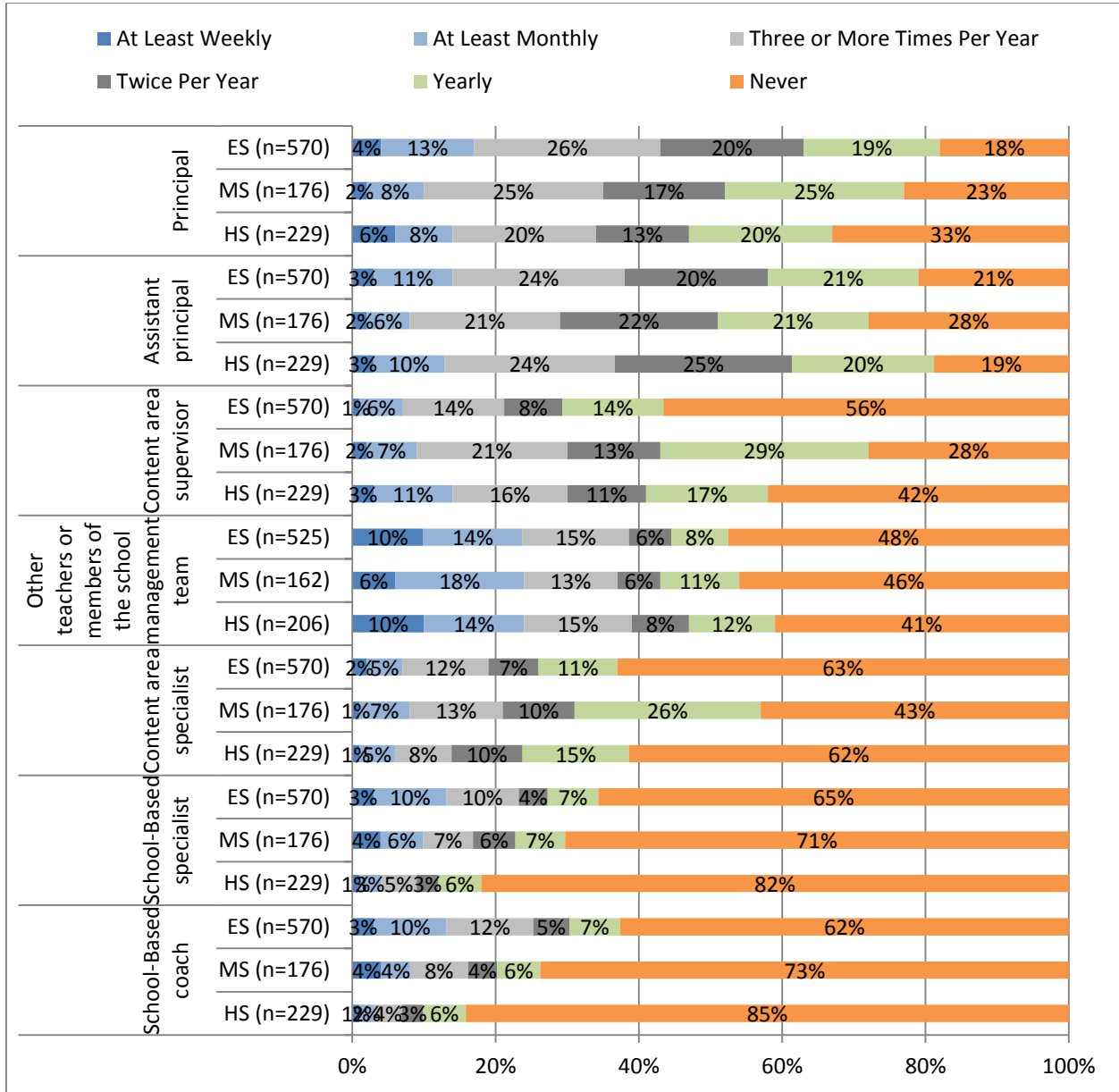


School-based T-scale respondents were asked, “**In the last five years, how often per year have you received appraisal and/or feedback from the following people about your work in this school outside of your formal evaluation process?**” Responses are displayed in **Figure 24**, disaggregated by level. Respondents received feedback most frequently from their **principal** or **assistant principal**, although a third of high school staff reported that they *never* receive feedback from their principal, compared to 18% and 23% of elementary and middle school staff, respectively. Elementary respondents were far less likely to receive frequent feedback from a **content area supervisor** than secondary respondents, with

<sup>10</sup> Given the sensitivity of this question, an introductory statement was included to describe the purpose of this data collection (to assess how effective the formal evaluation process is) and to provide a link to information about how the online survey management tool used by the Office of Planning and Evaluation ensures anonymity. After the survey closed, responses to this question were compared with the actual data from Human Resources and the percentages were largely comparable. While differences of up to 16 percentage points exist between the survey responses and the HR data for P-scale staff, the overall breakdown of ratings is very similar. It is reasonable to believe that these differences are due to sampling, since not all staff responded to the survey, rather than misreporting.

56% reporting that they *never* receive this type of feedback, compared to 28% and 42% of middle and high school respondents, respectively. Feedback from **school-based coaches** and **specialists** is more frequent at the elementary level, followed by middle school and then high school.

**Figure 24: School-based T-scale staff: In the last five years, how often per year have you received appraisal and/or feedback from the following people about your work in this school outside of your formal evaluation process? (by Grade Level)**





## Performance Standards

Both the T-scale and P-scale evaluation systems are based on seven performance standards. T-scale and P-Scale standards are listed in **Table 13**. These performance standards are outlined in the APS Teacher Evaluation Handbook<sup>11</sup> and the APS Administrator (P-Scale) Evaluation Handbook<sup>12</sup>.

**Table 13: Performance Standards for T-Scale and P-Scale Evaluation System**

| T-Scale: Teacher Performance Standards   | T-Scale: Educational Specialist Performance Standards   | P-Scale Performance Standards   |
|--|---|---|
| <p><b>1: Professional Knowledge</b><br/>The teacher demonstrates an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, and the developmental needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.</p>  | <p><b>1: Knowledge of the Learning Community</b><br/>The educational specialist identifies and addresses the needs of the targeted learning community by demonstrating respect for individual differences and understanding of cultures, backgrounds, and learning needs.</p> | <p><b>1: Leadership</b><br/>The administrator fosters the success of all stakeholders by facilitating the development, communication, implementation, and evaluation of a shared vision that leads to school improvement or department effectiveness.</p> |
| <p><b>2: Instructional Planning</b><br/>The teacher plans using the Virginia Standards of Learning, the division’s curriculum, effective strategies, resources, and data to meet the needs of all students.</p>  | <p><b>2: Program Planning and Management</b><br/>The educational specialist effectively plans, coordinates, and implements programs and services consistent with established guidelines, policies, and procedures.</p>  | <p><b>2: Climate</b><br/>The administrator effectively promotes the success of all stakeholders by consistently advocating for and sustaining an academically rigorous, positive and safe climate.</p>  |
| <p><b>3: Instructional Delivery</b><br/>The teacher effectively engages students in learning by using a variety of instructional strategies in order to meet individual learning needs.</p>  | <p><b>3: Program Services</b><br/>The educational specialist uses knowledge of subject/field/technology to implement services and to provide support for the targeted learning community consistent with established standards and guidelines.</p>                            | <p><b>3: Human Resources Management</b><br/>The administrator fosters effective human resources management by assisting with selection, induction, support, evaluation, and retention of a quality workforce</p>  |
| <p><b>4: Assessment of and for Student Learning</b><br/>The teacher systematically gathers, analyzes, and uses all relevant data to measure student academic progress, guide instructional content and delivery methods, and provide timely feedback to both</p> | <p><b>4: Assessment</b><br/>The educational specialist gathers, analyzes, and uses data to determine learner needs, to measure learner or program progress, to guide instruction, and to provide timely feedback to learners, parents/guardians, and staff.</p>               | <p><b>4: Organizational Management</b><br/>The administrator is effective at organizational management and decision-making, coordinating operations and utilizing established resources.</p>  |

<sup>11</sup> [www.apsva.us/Page/30629](http://www.apsva.us/Page/30629)

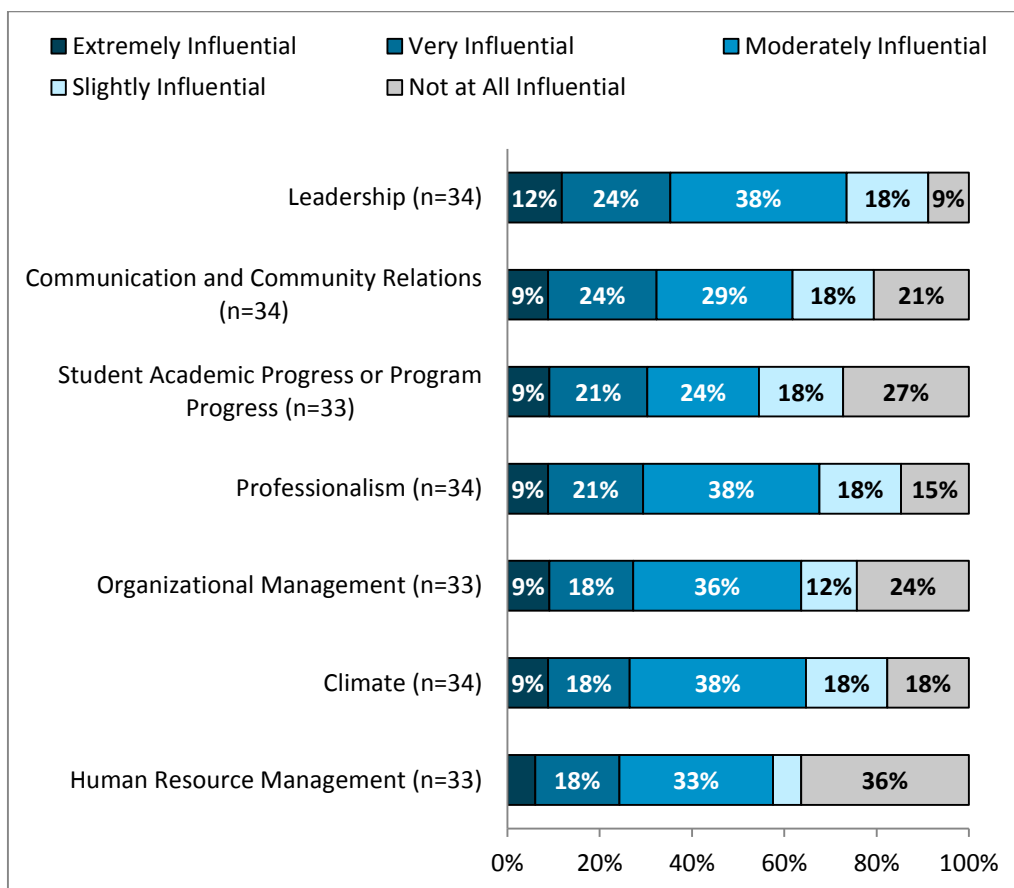
<sup>12</sup> <http://www.apsva.us/Page/22452>

| T-Scale: Teacher Performance Standards   | T-Scale: Educational Specialist Performance Standards  | P-Scale Performance Standards   |
|--|--|---|
| students and parents/guardians throughout the school year.   |  |   |
| <b>5: Learning Environment</b><br>The teacher uses resources, routines, and procedures to provide a respectful, positive, safe, student-centered environment that is conducive to learning.  | <b>5: Communication and Collaboration</b><br>The educational specialist communicates and collaborates effectively with learners, parents/guardians, staff, and the community to support learner learning and well-being.   | <b>5: Communication and Community Relations</b><br>The administrator is effective at organizational management and decision-making, coordinating operations and utilizing established resources.                                |
| <b>6: Professionalism</b><br>The teacher maintains a commitment to professional ethics, communicates effectively, and takes responsibility for and participates in professional growth that results in enhanced student learning. Teachers collaborate with peers and exhibit professionalism in working with students, parents/guardians, and colleagues. | <b>6: Professionalism</b><br>The educational specialist maintains a commitment to professional ethics, demonstrates professional expertise, and participates in professional growth. Educational specialists collaborate with peers and exhibit professionalism in working with students, parents/guardians, and colleagues. | <b>6: Professionalism</b><br>The administrator fosters the success of all stakeholders by demonstrating professional standards and ethics, engaging in continuous professional development, and contributing to the profession. |
| <b>7: Student Academic Progress</b><br>The work of the teacher results in acceptable, measurable, and appropriate student academic progress.   | <b>7: Learner/Program Progress</b><br>The work of the educational specialist results in acceptable and measurable learner or program progress based on established standards, division goals, and/or school goals.   | <b>7: Student Academic Progress or Program Process (where applicable)</b><br>The administrator's leadership results in acceptable, measurable student academic progress and /or program progress based on established standards |

T-scale and P-scale staff evaluations include a rating for each of the performance standards listed above. In the staff survey, staff on both pay scales indicated that the formal and informal appraisal and/or feedback they receive has an influence on their practice in these areas, although this is less consistent for P-scale respondents. Around a third of all T-scale respondents indicated that their appraisal/feedback is *extremely* or *very* influential in all of the performance standard areas listed above, and around half indicated it is *moderately* or *slightly* influential.

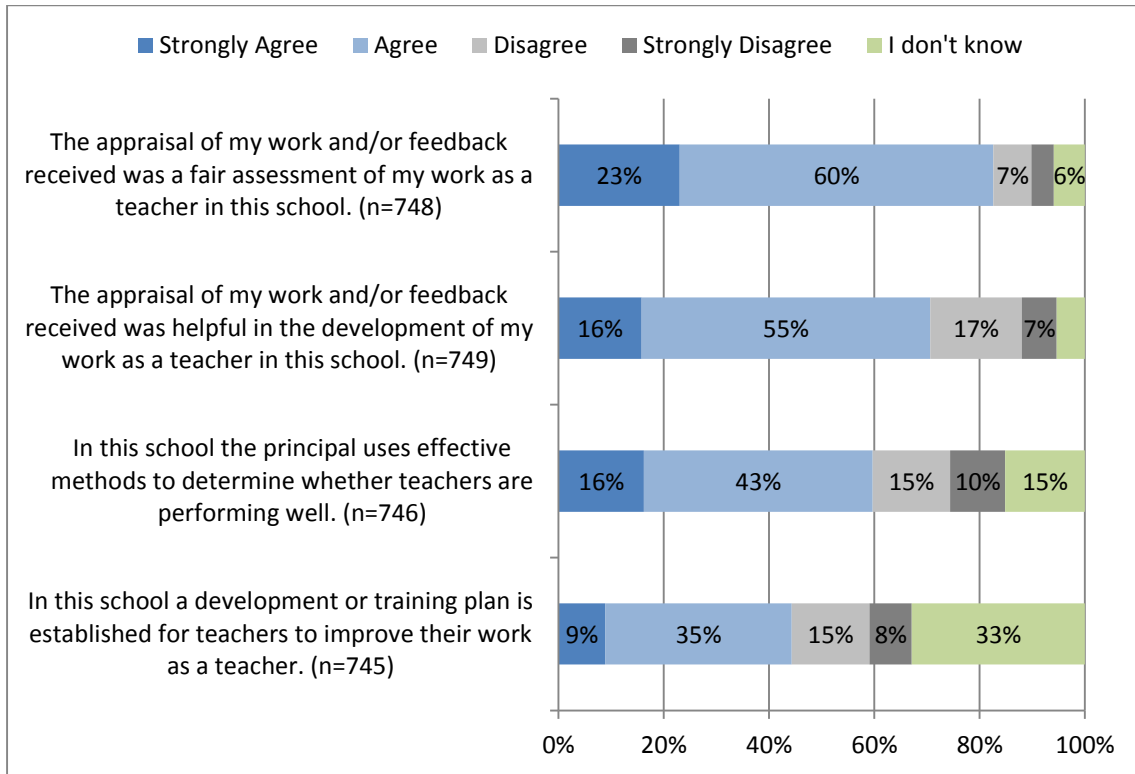
**Figure 25** shows responses from P-scale staff to the same question, using the P-scale performance standards. P-scale respondents were least likely to report that appraisal/feedback they had received had been influential in the area of **human resources management**, with 36% reporting that their feedback was *not at all influential* in this area. Around a quarter also selected *not at all influential* in the areas of **organizational management** and **student academic progress or program progress**.

**Figure 25: P-Scale Staff: In the last five years, how influential has the appraisal and/or feedback you have received (both formal and informal) been on your practice in each of the following areas?**



Teachers were asked for their level of agreement with a series of questions about their own most recent evaluation and the evaluation system at their school. Responses are displayed in **Figure 26**. Teachers were generally positive about their own evaluations; 71% selected *strongly agree* or *agree* for the statement, “**The appraisal of my work and/or feedback received was helpful in the development of my work as a teacher in this school,**” and 83% selected these responses for, “**The appraisal of my work and/or feedback received was a fair assessment of my work as a teacher in this school.**” Teachers were less apt to agree that their **principal uses effective methods to determine whether teachers are performing well** (60%). Fewer than half agreed that **in their school a development or training plan is established for teachers to improve their work as a teacher**, and a third selected *I don’t know* for this statement.

**Figure 26: Teachers: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements**



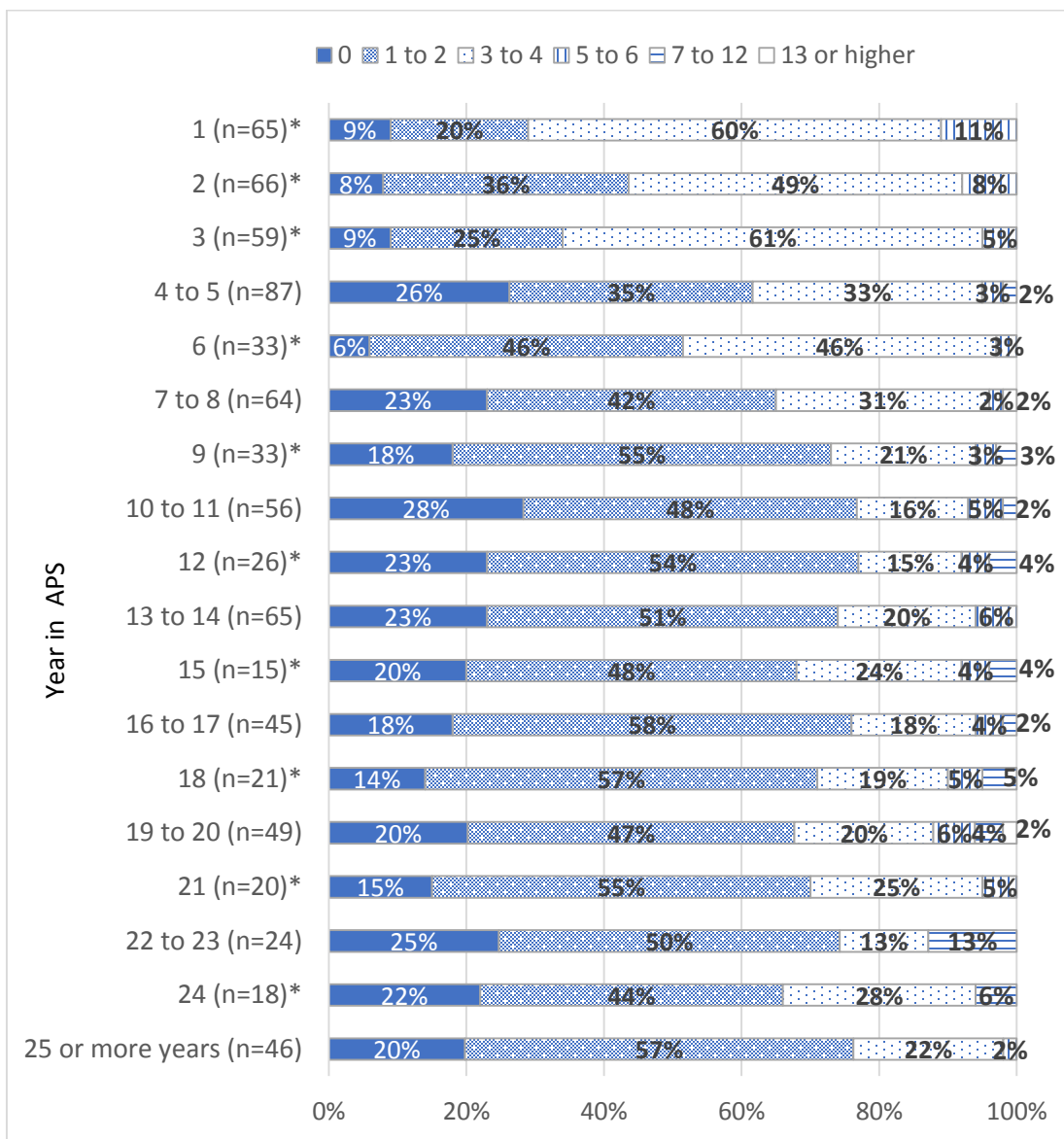
School-based T-scale staff reported the number of times they had been observed by their evaluator and received feedback during the previous school year. This included both announced and unannounced observations. The average number of observations reported was 2.2, although this included 20% of respondents reporting zero observations. Error! Reference source not found. **Figure 27** shows how many times teachers reported having been observed during the previous school year, by years in APS. Teachers are required to be observed during their **summative evaluation years**, which include probationary years (years 1, 2, and 3), and every third year thereafter. Probationary teachers are required to be observed three times, and other teachers in their summative evaluation years are required to be observed at least once.

Years marked with an asterisk are years in which an observation is required<sup>13</sup>. Survey responses show that, even in summative evaluation years, some proportion of teachers reported zero observations. This ranges from 8-9% of teachers in their probationary years and then dips to just six percent in year 6. In subsequent summative evaluation years, between 14-23% of teachers indicated they had never been observed.

<sup>13</sup> The **Years in APS** axis represents one year less than what teacher respondents indicated in their survey responses. For example, if a teacher indicated that he/she had seven years of experience in APS on the survey, his/her number of observations would be included in the 6-year category in this graph. This is because the survey asked for respondents' years of experience, **including the current school year**, but asked respondents to note the number of times they had been observed **during the previous school year**.

In addition to those who were never observed, a high proportion of probationary teachers reported being observed just once or twice, fewer than the required three times. This ranged from 20% of all first-year APS teachers to 36% of all second-year APS teachers.

**Figure 27: T-Scale Staff: Number of times observed by evaluator and received feedback (announced and unannounced) last school year (2013-14) (by Years in APS)**



The full survey report is available in **Appendix E1**.

*Differentiated Compensation Program*

*Participation in the Career Advancement Program*

The Career Advancement Program (CAP) is a knowledge- and skills-based differentiated compensation program that rewards full time T-Scale staff that demonstrate and document high quality professional practice and leadership that cultivates student achievement. Two major goals of the program are to

retain highly qualified staff, and to provide teachers periodic opportunities throughout their career to increase their earning potential.

Participation in CAP is voluntary and requires the completion of one or two portfolio opportunities, designed to challenge and engage T-scale staff in a rigorous process of enhancing their knowledge and skills through substantive professional development and experiences. **CAP portfolio I** is locally developed and **CAP portfolio III** is the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification for teachers and counselors. Teachers receive credit for portfolio III whether they achieve it in APS or elsewhere.

In addition, T-scale staff who are not eligible to pursue National Board certification through NBPTS (school psychologists, speech and language pathologists, audiologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, or social workers) are able to participate in CAP III through external certification programs identified by the Department of Student Services. Employees in these positions who achieve the designated certification are added to the CAP pay scale, but do not receive professional learning or support in that process from the Professional Development Office.

Teachers who achieve either of the portfolios are moved to the CAP salary schedule, which gives them the equivalent of an additional step on the pay scale, or a 5-7.5% higher salary if they are on longevity steps. Teachers remain on the CAP salary schedule for the duration of their career in APS, and they receive a bump for each portfolio they complete.

For purposes of this evaluation, the Office of Professional Development provided the Office of Planning and Evaluation with CAP I and III participation data from 2010-11 through the current school year. Data included in this analysis includes staff who participated in the CAP program **within APS** and who received support for that process from the Professional Development Office. It does **not** include staff who achieved CAP portfolio III outside of APS.

#### Participation in CAP Portfolio I (Local Portfolio)

**Table 14** shows the number of T-scale staff who have participated in the CAP Portfolio I process from 2010-11 through the current school year. The largest group of participants comes from the elementary level, although those participants are from only 11 out of 22-23<sup>14</sup> elementary schools.

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<sup>14</sup> A new elementary school opened in 2015-16.

**Table 14: Teacher Participation in CAP Portfolio I since 2010-11, by School Level**

| Level                     | Number of Schools/Sites with Participating Teachers | Number of Participating Teachers per School                              |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Elementary                | 11  | 1 (7 schools)<br>3 (2 schools)<br>4 (2 schools)<br><br>21 teachers total |
| Middle School             | 5   | 1 (1 school)<br>3 (2 schools)<br>4 (2 schools)<br><br>15 teachers total  |
| Comprehensive High School | 3   | 2 (1 school)<br>3 (1 school)<br>7 (1 school)<br><br>12 teachers total    |
| Program                   | 4   | 1 (3 schools)<br>2 (1 school)<br><br>5 teachers total                    |
| Central Office            | 3   | 13 T-scale staff total   |

**Table 15** shows the status of all CAP Portfolio I submissions from 2010-11 through 2014-15 (the most recent year when a complete portfolio could have been submitted and evaluated). Just under half of all staff who submitted a portfolio achieved on their first attempt, and another six percent achieved after their second attempt.

**Table 15: Status of CAP I Submissions, 2010-11 through 2014-15**

| Status                                      | N  | %   |
|---|----|-----|
| Initiated and withdrew                      | 7  | 14% |
| Submitted and did not achieve, one attempt  | 7  | 14% |
| Submitted and did not achieve, two attempts | 5  | 10% |
| Achieved First Attempt                      | 24 | 48% |
| Achieved Second Attempt                     | 3  | 6%  |
| In Process Year 2                           | 4  | 8%  |
| Total                                       | 50 | n/a |

Participation in CAP Portfolio III (National Board Certification)

**Table 16** shows the number of T-scale staff who have participated in the APS-supported CAP Portfolio III process from 2010-11 through the current school year. Again, the largest group of participants comes from the elementary level, and the number of elementary schools with participants is higher than for CAP Portfolio I.

**Table 16: Teacher Participation in CAP Portfolio III since 2010-11, by School Level**

| Level                     | Number of Schools with Participating Teachers | Number of Participating Teachers per School  |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Elementary                | 18  | 1 (5 schools)<br>2 (3 schools)<br>4 (3 schools)<br>5 (2 schools)<br>6 (1 school)<br>7 (1 school)<br>8 (1 school)<br>9 (1 school)<br>10 (1 school)<br><br>73 teachers total |
| Middle School             | 4   | 2 (1 school)<br>6 (1 school)<br>8 (2 schools)<br><br>24 teachers total   |
| Comprehensive High School | 3   | 4 (1 school)<br>17 (1 school)<br>21 (1 school)<br><br>42 teachers total  |
| Program                   | 3   | 1 (1 school)<br>2 (1 school)<br>3 (1 school)<br><br>6 teachers total   |



**Table 17** shows the status of all APS-supported CAP Portfolio III submissions from 2010-11 through 2014-15 (the most recent year when a complete portfolio could have been submitted and evaluated). Sixty-three percent of all staff who submitted a portfolio have achieved.

**Table 17: Status of CAP III Submissions, 2010-11 through 2014-15**

| Status                        | N   | %   |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Initiated and withdrew *      | 25  | 21% |
| Submitted and did not achieve | 10  | 8%  |
| Achieved                      | 75  | 63% |
| In Process                    | 10  | 8%  |
| Total                         | 120 |     |

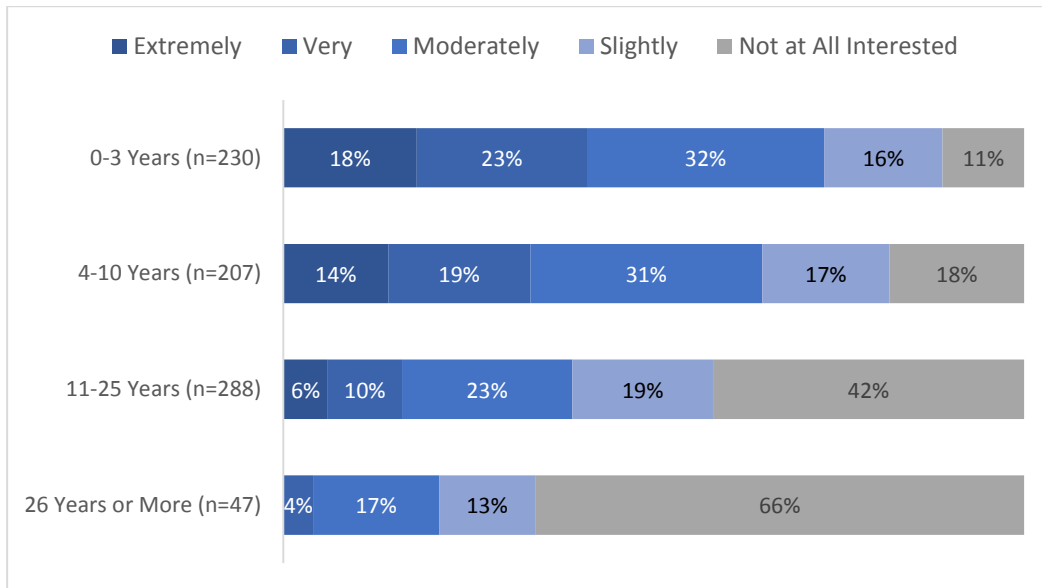
\*This category includes one staff member who left APS after initiating the process.

The full report on CAP participation can be found in **Appendix C2**.

#### Motivation to Participate in Career Advancement Program

Among survey respondents who had not participated in CAP, only 28% were *extremely* or *very* interested in participating in the future. An almost identical percentage (27%) were *not at all interested*. **Figure 28** disaggregates these responses by years of experience in APS, clearly showing that the longer respondents have worked at APS, the less interested they are in participating in CAP. Two-thirds of respondents with 26 or more years in APS are *not at all interested*, compared to only 11% of those with just 0-3 years in APS.

**Figure 28: CAP Non-Participants: What is your level of interest in participating in one of the APS differentiated compensation programs? (by Year at APS)**

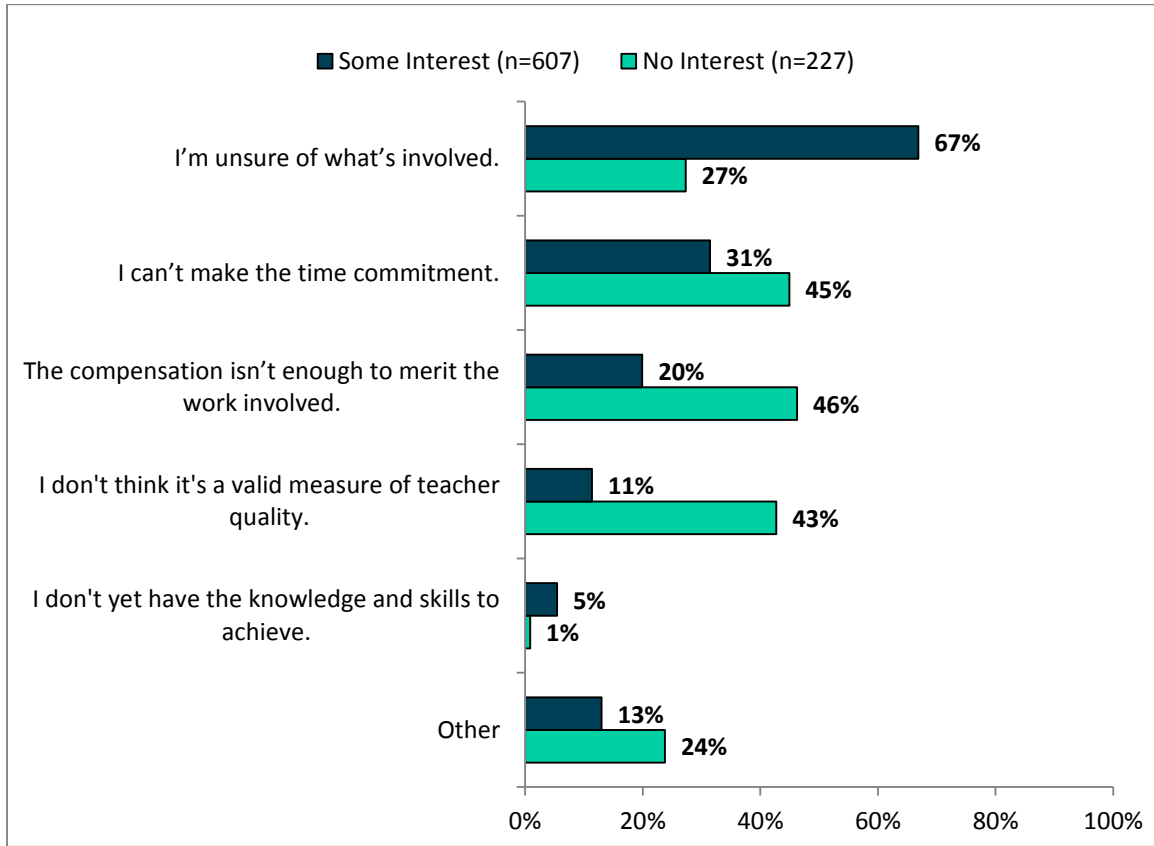


Non-participants were also asked the following questions regarding their lack of participation or their lack of interest in participating to date:

- Respondents who expressed an interest in participating: What factors have **prevented you from participating** in one of the APS differentiated compensation programs to date?
- Respondents who expressed no interest in participating: What factors **influence your lack of interest in participating** in one of the APS differentiated compensation programs?

**Figure 29** shows responses to these questions both for staff who had some interest in future CAP participation and staff who had no interest. Those with some interest were far more likely to indicate that they were **unsure of what’s involved**, while those with no interest were more likely to cite the **time commitment, not enough compensation to merit the work involved, and I don’t think it’s a valid measure of teacher quality**.

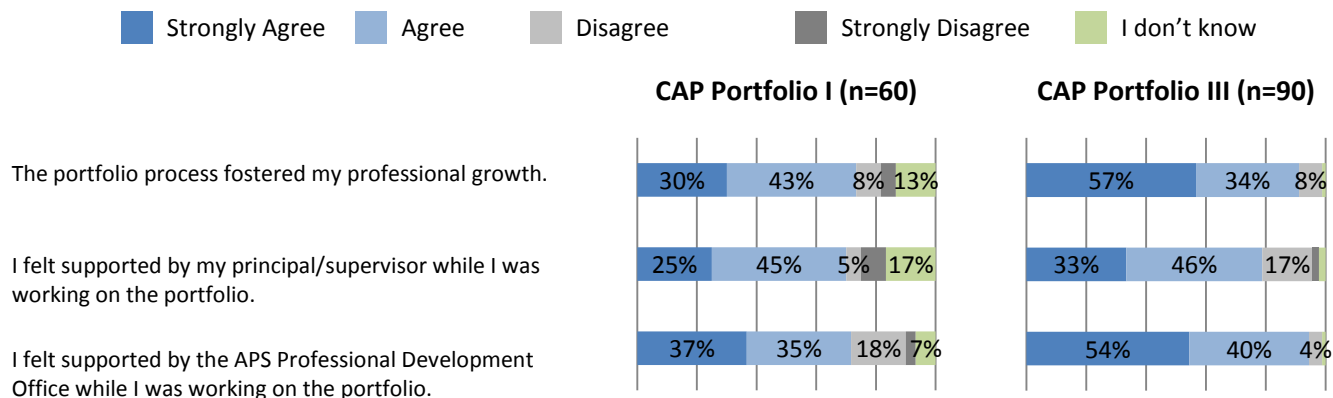
**Figure 29: Factors Preventing Participation or Interest in Differentiated Compensation Program Participation (T-Scale Staff, by Level of Interest in Participating)**



[Support for the CAP Process](#)

Survey respondents who indicated that they had participated in either CAP Portfolio I or CAP Portfolio III were asked a series of questions regarding the portfolio process. Responses are displayed in **Figure 30**. Participants for both portfolios indicated a high level of agreement that the **process fostered their professional growth** and that they **felt supported** by their principal or supervisor, and by the Office of Professional Development while working on the portfolio, but the rate of agreement was slightly lower for CAP Portfolio I than for CAP Portfolio III. In particular, CAP Portfolio III participants agreed that they felt supported by the Professional Development Office at a rate 23 percentage points higher than CAP Portfolio I participants, and they agreed that the portfolio process fostered their professional growth at a rate 18 percentage points higher than CAP Portfolio I participants.

**Figure 30: CAP Participants: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the CAP portfolio I/CAP portfolio III**



In focus group discussions, elementary and secondary professional development participants shared a strong sense that National Board Certification is well-supported at APS—financially, by peers, and at the district level.

*I'm actually assisting with facilitating the cohort for National Board Certification this year, but I also got certified a couple of years ago as well. It's a really well-supported program within Arlington County and I really appreciate that kind of support. It wasn't just financial support. There is a person who will respond to you almost immediately and come and help you.*  
(Secondary participant)

*...It's a really large undertaking and it's great that they actually value that and provide both financial and academic, and moral support for the process because it's basically a master's in a year.* (Secondary participant)

The survey report is available in **Appendix E1** and the focus group report is available in **Appendix E2**.

## Resources

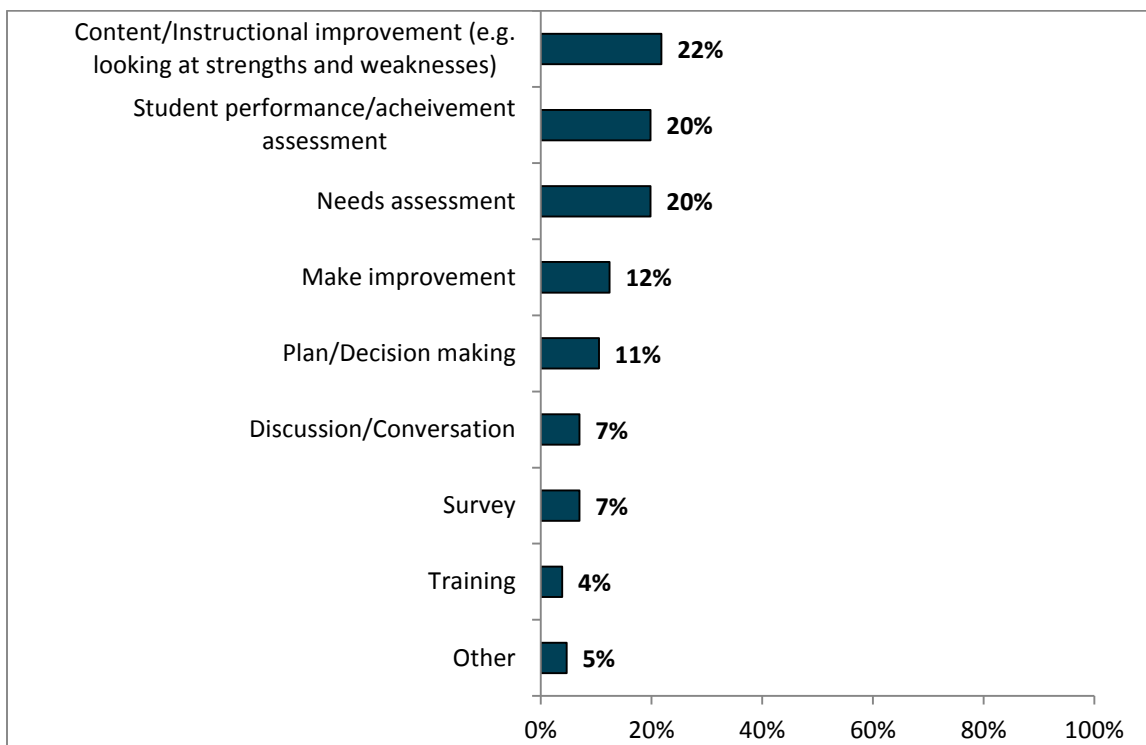
### [Access to Reliable Data](#)

Focus group discussions identified data collection as an area of relative weakness for APS professional development. Generally, providers of professional development were not thought to have effective means to evaluate their work or measure its effectiveness in the big picture. On this topic, a couple of participants countered—pointing to sources such as surveys, consulting experts, and looking to the Strategic Plan.

Staff who identified themselves as regular providers of professional development on the staff survey responded to a series of questions about how and to what extent they use data as part of the professional development they provide. Most providers feel that they **have access to the data they need in order to plan and implement professional development**. Sixty-six percent of central office-based providers and 70% of school-based providers indicated that they *strongly agree* or *agree* with this statement. Nine percent of both groups of providers indicated that they don't attempt to access data in order to plan and implement professional development.

Respondents who indicated that they use data in their professional development planning were also asked an open-ended question about how they use data. Coded responses are shown in **Figure 31**. Between 20-22% of respondents shared that they use data for **instructional improvement, student performance assessment, and needs assessment**.

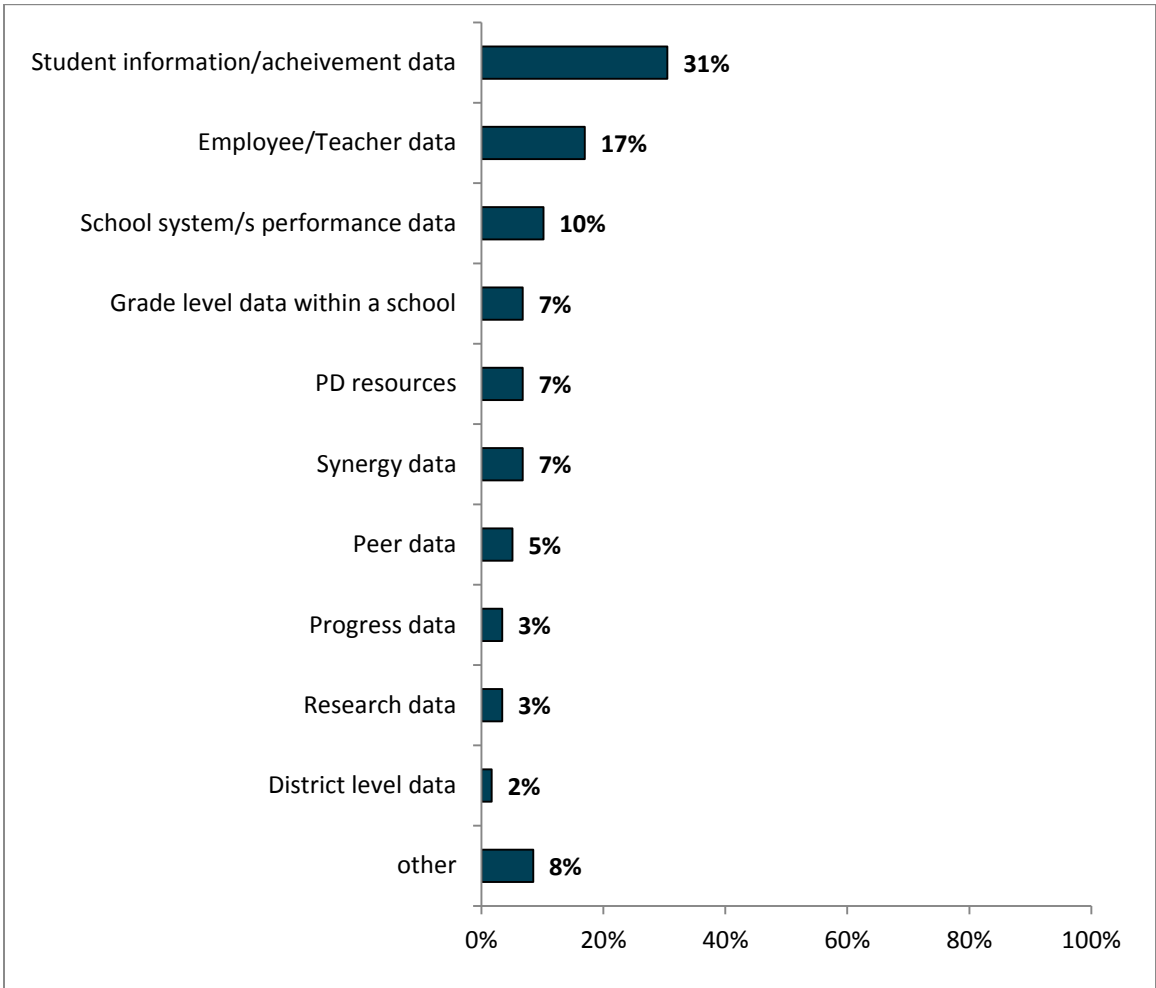
**Figure 31: How do you use data in your professional development planning? (All Providers)**



(n=136) Note: This question was only asked to respondents who use data in order to plan and implement professional development. This figure displays the most common themes, which Hanover coded from open-ended responses. Percentages do not sum to 100 percent, as respondents could cite more than one way to use data in their professional development planning. Respondents who provided non-codable responses were excluded from analysis. For full, verbatim answers, see the report's data supplement.

Providers of professional development were also asked to describe the types of data they would find helpful that they are not currently able to access. About a third said they would like to have more access to **student information/achievement data**.

**Figure 32: Of the data that you cannot currently access, what types of data would you find helpful in planning and implementing professional development? (All Provider)**



(n=81) Note: This figure displays the most common themes, which Hanover coded from open-ended responses. Percentages do not sum to 100 percent, as respondents could cite more than one type of data that they would find helpful in planning and implementing professional development. Respondents who provided non-codable responses were excluded from analysis. For full, verbatim answers, see the report’s data supplement.

The full survey report is available in **Appendix E1**.

*Equitable Distribution of Professional Development Resources*

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources. How resources are allocated for professional learning can overcome inequities and achieve results for educators and students. The availability and allocation of resources for professional learning affect its quality and results.

Equitable distribution of resources includes access to professional development opportunities as well as substitute coverage and funding. Equitable is a term that is frequently confused with “equal,” but the two terms mean different things. Equal implies everyone receiving the same treatment, whereas equitable indicates everyone receiving what they need.

## Use of Substitutes

The Office of Planning and Evaluation conducted an analysis of data provided by Human Resources on the use of substitutes during the 2014-15 school year. Fourteen percent of all fulfilled substitute requests were for professional development. **Table 18** shows the average percentage of a school's teachers and assistants who took at least one half-day of leave for professional development during the 2014-15 school year. On average, middle schools had the highest proportion of instructional staff who took leave for professional development (58%), followed by elementary schools (50%). The average for high schools was just 37%, and it was 27% at programs.

**Table 18: Average Percentage of a School's Teachers and Assistants who Took at Least One Half-Day of Leave for Professional Development in 2014-15, by Level**

| Level         | Average Percentage Taking Professional Development Leave |
|---------------|--|
| Elementary    | 50%  |
| Middle School | 58%  |
| High School   | 37%  |
| Program       | 27%  |

**Table 19** shows the variation within grade levels in the percentage of each building's teachers and assistants who took leave for professional development. Among elementary schools, nine had between 41-50% of their instructional staff take professional leave, and another nine had between 51-70% of their instructional staff take leave. Three schools had between 31-40% and one school had just 21-30%. Most middle schools were in the 51-60% range, with one at the 41-50% range, and one at the 71-80% range. High schools were more consistent and all fell in the range of 31-40%. At two of the programs, only 11-20% of instructional staff took professional leave, two had 21-30% of their staff take leave, and two had 41-50% of their staff take leave.

**Table 19: Number of Schools Falling into Ranges of Teachers and Assistants who Took at Least One Half-Day of Leave for Professional Development in 2014-15, by Level**

| Level         | Number of Schools Falling into Ranges of Teachers and Assistants Taking Professional Development Leave |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|---------------|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|               | 11-20%   | 21-30% | 31-40% | 41-50% | 51-60% | 61-70% | 71-80% |
| Elementary    | 0  | 1      | 3      | 9      | 5      | 4      | 0      |
| Middle School | 0  | 0      | 0      | 1      | 3      | 0      | 1      |
| High School   | 0  | 0      | 3      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| Program       | 2  | 2      | 0      | 2      | 0      | 0      | 0      |

The full report on use of substitutes can be found in **Appendix F3**.

## Compensation for Participation in Professional Development

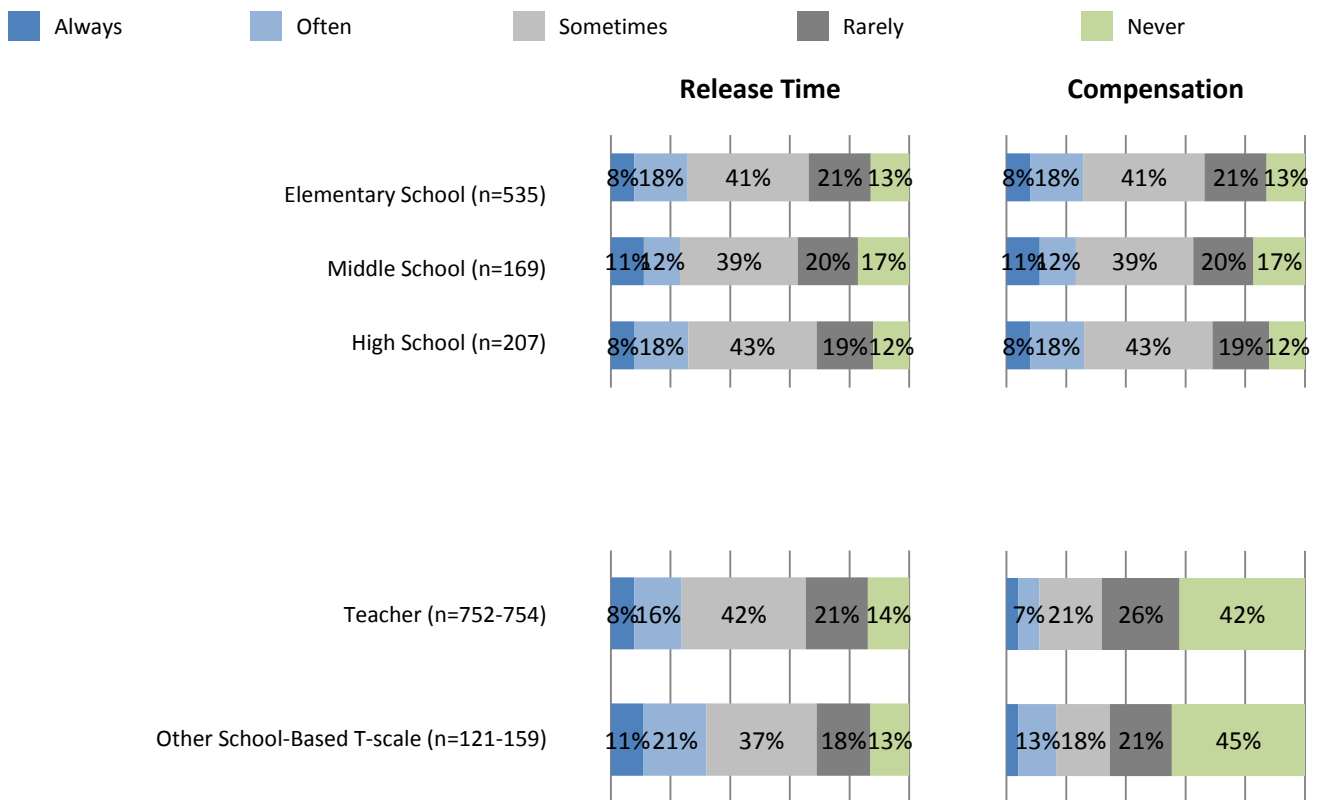
On the staff survey, T-scale staff were asked whether they had received the following during the last five years:

- Release time for professional development that took place during regular work hours

- Compensation for your time for professional development that took place outside of regular work hours

Figure 33 shows responses to these questions, disaggregated by school level and by teacher type. While there is a lot of variation in responses overall, with a range of respondents selecting *always* through *never*, the variation does not appear to be aligned to any particular group of respondents, as the breakdown of responses follows a similar pattern for each group.

Figure 33: In the last five years, how often did you receive release time for professional development that took place during regular work hours/compensation for your time for professional development that took place outside of regular work hours? (T-Scale Staff)



### Funding as an Obstacle to Participation in Professional Development

Figure 34 shows the percentage of survey respondents who selected “**Could not afford out-of-pocket costs**” or “**APS didn’t have sufficient funding**” as an obstacle to participating in professional development that they had encountered over the last five years. Over a third of T-scale staff selected **could not afford out-of-pocket costs**. This barrier was also a commonly cited barrier for E-scale staff (27%), P-scale staff (27%), and staff on other pay scales (33%). E-scale staff were the most likely to select **APS didn’t have sufficient funding** (38%), while A-scale and G-scale staff were the least likely (6-8%).

E-scale staff likely stand out for the question of APS funding because of the specialized nature of the positions included in this pay scale. This specialization means that the most appropriate professional development for an E-scale staff member may be offered through an outside resource, such as



conferences or trainings offered by professional associations, which have a higher cost per person than professional development sessions offered to large audiences (such as teachers) by APS. In open-ended survey responses, many E-scale staff cited this specialization, as well as a general lack of internal opportunities, as a reason they seek professional development opportunities outside of APS:

*PD is non-existent except for the few professional conferences I go to.*

*There needs to be more technical and instructional technology offerings like Apple Certified Training, Blackboard, Promethean and SMART Interactive training to support teachers more thoroughly in my position. I only get some of these by attending state and national conferences, but PD funding has been cut. Usually that means APS pays every other year, unless I pay my own way.*

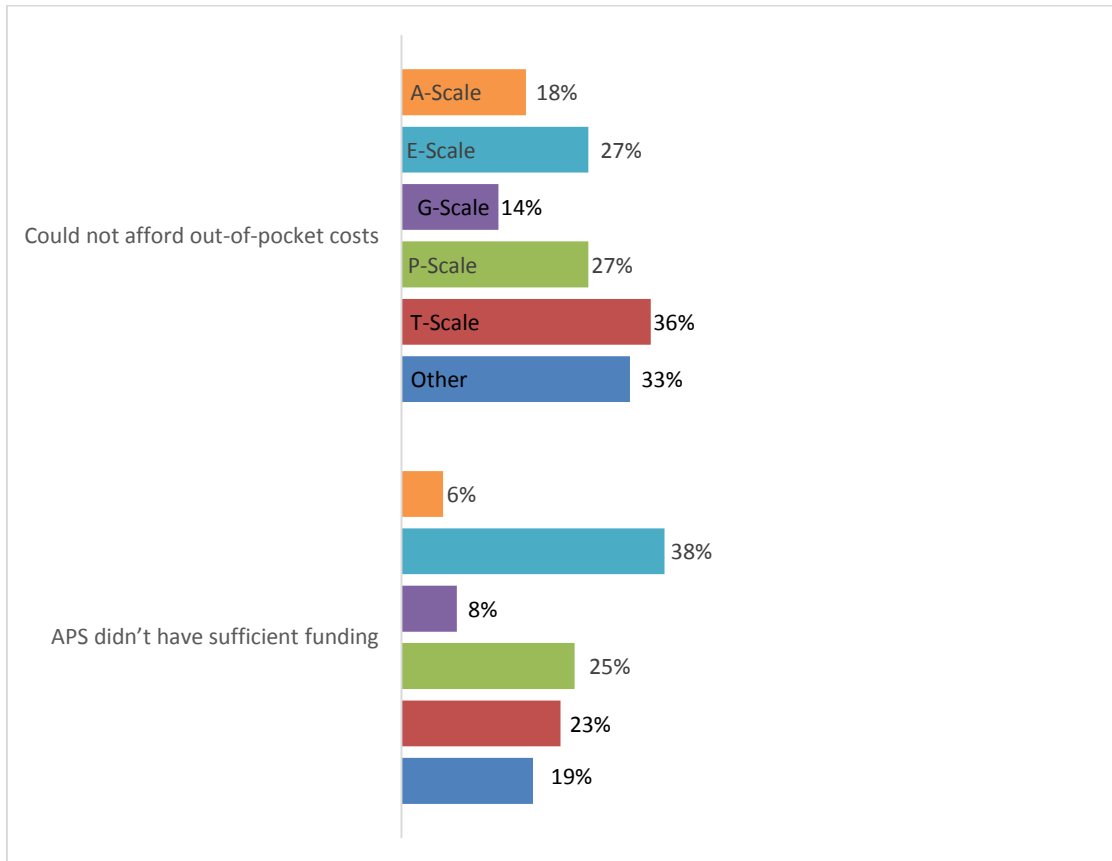
*For my position, the only true PD is at a regional, state or national conference/training session. APS doesn't have content expertise in my area.*

*I must find and pay for all most all of my own PD. I have suggested (as have many of my peers) that we would like PD related to the tools which we use to do our job. None has happened. I don't mind finding my own PD but I wish there was a better/easier way to be able to share and collaborate with my peers so we can all benefit from what each of us learns.*

*PD for my field is outside APS PD, usually offered by professional and certification organizations. PD is on an as needed basis and up to the individual to seek out.*

*Internal opportunities are usually not available due to the unique job requirements of my position. Funding for attending outside training, conferences, etc. is always very limited*

**Figure 34: Percentage of staff reporting “Could not afford out-of-pocket costs” or “APS didn’t have sufficient funding” as an obstacle they have encountered to participating in professional development in the last five years (All Staff)**



The survey report is available in **Appendix E1**.

*Cost of Professional Development*

In an effort to assess the total cost of professional development in APS, the Finance Office provided the Office of Planning and Evaluation with budget and expenditure data related to professional development from 2011-12 through 2015-16.

The data provided includes budget and expenditures for any object codes labeled “staff development” for all departments. This includes new teacher orientation. In addition, the following annual/regular events which are not labeled as staff development are included:

- Administrative Conference (included under Administrative Services)
- Superintendent’s Book Chats (included under Superintendent’s Office)
- Festival of the Minds (included under Curriculum and Instruction)

**Table 20** shows the total budget and expenditures related to professional development from fiscal/school year 2011-12 through 2014-15. While the budget has fluctuated over these four years, there has been an increase in the most recent year to \$2,143,563. The actual expenditures show an overall decrease over that same time, to \$1,911,466 in 2014-15.

**Table 20: Professional Development Budget and Expenditures, FY 2012-2015**

| FY                 |           | PD Adopted Budget  | PD Expenditures    |
|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2012               | All Funds | 1,865,365          | 2,537,039          |
| 2013               | All Funds | 2,145,321          | 1,938,994          |
| 2014               | All Funds | 2,278,042          | 2,069,265          |
| 2015               | All Funds | 2,143,563          | 1,911,466          |
| <b>Grand Total</b> |           | <b>\$8,432,291</b> | <b>\$8,456,764</b> |

**Table 21** provides detailed professional development cost information for the 2014-15 fiscal/school year. Budget and expenditures are disaggregated by fund, department, and office. The Department of Instruction had the largest expenditures for professional development, spending \$507,095 under school operating funds and \$206,659 under grants and restricted programs. This was followed by Human Resources at \$469,225 under school operating and \$843 under community activities.

**Table 21: Professional Development Budget and Expenditures, FY 2015, by Department and Office**

| Fund                          | Department                               | Office                              | FY 2015 Adopted Professional Development Budget | FY 2015 Total Professional Development Expenditures |
|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>100 - School Operating</b> |  |                                     |   |   |
|                               | <b>Administrative Services</b>           |                                     | <b>36,235</b>                                   | <b>30,173</b>                                       |
|                               |  | Administrative Services             | 36,235  | 30,173  |
|                               | <b>Department of Instruction</b>         |                                     | <b>846,410</b>                                  | <b>507,095</b>                                      |
|                               |  | Career, Technical & Adult Education | 5,000   | 13,946  |
|                               |  | Curriculum/Instruction              | 695,518   | 390,137   |
|                               |  | Department of Instruction           | 352   | 1,781   |
|                               |  | ESOL/HILT                           | 0   | 32,262  |
|                               |  | Fine Arts                           | 0   | 135   |
|                               |  | Gifted Services                     | 50,481  | 37,346  |
|                               |  | Library Media Services              | 3,231   | 2,263   |
|                               |  | Office of Minority Achievement      | 91,828  | 28,116  |
|                               |  | Summer School                       | 0   | 1,110   |
|                               | <b>Facilities &amp; Operations</b>       |                                     | <b>67,745</b>                                   | <b>57,813</b>                                       |
|                               |  | Facilities & Operations Management  | 10,695  | 12,742  |
|                               |  | Maintenance                         | 30,200  | 27,986  |
|                               |  | Plant Operations                    | 12,350  | 11,822  |
|                               |  | Risk Management                     | 1,500   | 305   |
|                               |  | Transportation                      | 13,000  | 4,958   |
|                               | <b>Finance &amp; Management Services</b> |                                     | <b>18,205</b>                                   | <b>18,176</b>                                       |

| <b>Fund</b> | <b>Department</b> | <b>Office</b>                                   | <b>FY 2015 Adopted Professional Development Budget</b> | <b>FY 2015 Total Professional Development Expenditures</b> |
|-------------|-------------------|---|--|--|
|             |                   | Finance & Management Services                   | 7,705  | 9,772  |
|             |                   | Other Administrative Accounts                   | 0  | 3,016  |
|             |                   | Purchasing                                      | 10,500   | 5,388  |
|             |                   | <b>Human Resources</b>                          | <b>635,960</b>   | <b>469,225</b>   |
|             |                   | Employee Assistance Program                     | 10,296   | 1,065  |
|             |                   | Employee Benefits                               | 0  | 379  |
|             |                   | Human Resources                                 | 624,164  | 467,780  |
|             |                   | Payroll Services                                | 1,500  | 0  |
|             |                   | <b>Information Services</b>                     | <b>178,566</b>   | <b>128,616</b>   |
|             |                   | Accountability, Assessment & Evaluation         | 17,880   | 27,582   |
|             |                   | Enterprise Solutions                            | 83,502   | 20,578   |
|             |                   | Information Services Management                 | 5,925  | 11,710   |
|             |                   | Instructional & Innovative Technologies         | 49,409   | 44,640   |
|             |                   | Service Support Center                          | 21,850   | 24,105   |
|             |                   | <b>Other School Programs</b>                    | <b>14,552</b>  | <b>14,620</b>  |
|             |                   | Other School Programs                           | 14,552   | 14,620   |
|             |                   | <b>School &amp; Community Relations</b>         | <b>11,303</b>  | <b>21,947</b>  |
|             |                   | School & Community Relations                    | 11,303   | 21,947   |
|             |                   | <b>School Board</b>                             | <b>37,744</b>  | <b>33,035</b>  |
|             |                   | School Board                                    | 37,744   | 33,035   |
|             |                   | <b>Schools</b>                                  | <b>95,982</b>  | <b>141,710</b>   |
|             |                   | Schools   | 95,982   | 141,710  |
|             |                   | <b>Student Services &amp; Special Education</b> | <b>125,403</b>   | <b>109,510</b>   |
|             |                   | Dept of Student Service & Special Ed            | 34,079   | 11,940   |
|             |                   | Office of Special Education                     | 34,840   | 50,812   |
|             |                   | Office of Student Services                      | 56,484   | 46,758   |
|             |                   | <b>Superintendent's Office</b>                  | <b>12,000</b>  | <b>40,928</b>  |
|             |                   | Superintendent's Office                         | 12,000   | 40,928   |

| Fund  | Department                           | Office                              | FY 2015 Adopted Professional Development Budget | FY 2015 Total Professional Development Expenditures |
|---|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| 100   | School Operating Total               |                                     | \$2,080,105                                     | \$1,572,846   |
| <b>201 - Community Activities</b>                   |                                      |                                     |   |   |
|   | Community Activities Fund            |                                     | 56,758  | 111,724   |
|   |                                      | Community Activities Fund           | 56,758  | 111,724   |
|   | Human Resources                      |                                     | 0   | 843   |
|   |                                      | Human Resources                     | 0   | 843   |
| <b>201 - Community Activities Total</b>             |                                      |                                     | <b>\$56,758</b>                                 | <b>\$112,567</b>                                    |
| <b>450 - Cafeteria</b>                              |                                      |                                     |   |   |
|   | Food & Nutrition Services Fund       |                                     | 6,700   | 3,564   |
|   |                                      | Food & Nutrition Services Fund      | 6,700   | 3,564   |
| <b>450 - Cafeteria Total</b>                        |                                      |                                     | <b>\$6,700</b>                                  | <b>\$3,564</b>                                      |
| <b>600 - Capital Projects</b>                       |                                      |                                     |   |   |
|   | Capital Projects Fund                |                                     | 0   | 1,224   |
|   |                                      | Capital Projects Fund               | 0   | 1,224   |
| <b>600 - Capital Projects Total</b>                 |                                      |                                     | <b>\$0</b>                                      | <b>\$1,224</b>                                      |
| <b>700 - Grants &amp; Restricted Programs</b>       |                                      |                                     |   |   |
|   | Department of Instruction            |                                     | 0   | 206,659   |
|   |                                      | Career, Technical & Adult Education | 0   | 22,669  |
|   |                                      | Curriculum/Instruction              | 0   | 163,204   |
|   |                                      | Department of Instruction           | 0   | 1,344   |
|   |                                      | ESOL/HILT                           | 0   | 19,442  |
|   | Schools                              |                                     | 0   | 328   |
|   |                                      | Schools                             | 0   | 328   |
|   | Student Services & Special Education |                                     | 0   | 14,277  |
|   |                                      | Office of Special Education         | 0   | 14,277  |
| <b>700 - Grants &amp; Restricted Programs Total</b> |                                      |                                     | <b>\$0</b>                                      | <b>\$221,264</b>                                    |

| Fund               | Department | Office | FY 2015 Adopted Professional Development Budget | FY 2015 Total Professional Development Expenditures |
|--------------------|------------|--------|---|---|
| <b>Grand Total</b> |            |        | <b>\$2,143,563</b>                              | <b>\$1,911,466</b>                                  |

The full report on professional development costs can be found in **Appendix F1**.

## Evaluation Question #2: What were the outcomes?

### Relationship between Professional Development and Effective Teaching Practices

The long-term goal of professional development within APS is to improve student outcomes by improving instructional practices. It therefore follows that the ultimate measure of success for the APS professional development program would be the relationship between a teacher’s participation in professional development and his/her students’ achievement.

As part of this evaluation process, the Office of Planning and Evaluation contracted with Hanover Research (Hanover) to conduct a literature review focusing on effective methods of evaluating professional development. The review found that, while there is a growing body of literature that links teacher learning and professional development with improved student achievement, evaluating the impact of professional development on student outcomes is challenging because of the numerous factors that influence student achievement.

This evaluation does not measure the long-term outcome – gains in student achievement – but instead focuses on the interim outcome – improvement in teaching practices. The relationship between participation in professional development and effective teaching practices was measured by using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), an observation tool developed at the University of Virginia’s Curry School of Education that focuses on interactions between teachers and students. Research shows that students in classrooms where teachers earn higher CLASS scores achieve at higher levels than their peers in classrooms with lower CLASS scores<sup>15</sup>.

As part of multiple ongoing evaluations, CLASS observations were conducted throughout the 2014-15 school year. In order to analyze the relationship between participation in professional development and effective teaching practices, CLASS results were matched to observed teachers’ total hours of professional development in ERO for the school years 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 – the three years prior to the completed observation. Only teachers who taught during these three school years were included in this analysis.

Each observed teacher was categorized as falling into one of the following ranges of professional development hours over the three prior years: 1-50, 50-100, 101-150, 151-200, and more than 200.

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<sup>15</sup> Observations of effective teacher-student interactions in secondary school classrooms: predicting student achievement with the classroom assessment scoring system – Secondary (<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED556047.pdf>)

Average CLASS scores were then disaggregated by these ranges to determine if there were **educationally significant** differences in CLASS scores depending on the professional development hours of the observed teacher. Typically, half a point to a point difference is considered to be educationally significant; in other words, a difference that would impact outcomes for students<sup>16</sup>.

**Table 22** shows the average lower elementary (grades K-3) CLASS scores by total hours of professional development. The largest difference in scores is in the **Instructional Support** domain between teachers with the lowest range of professional development hours and those with the highest range. Teachers with more than 200 hours of professional development had an average Instructional Support score 0.4 points higher than those with just 1-50 hours.

**Table 22: Average Lower Elementary CLASS Scores by Total Hours of Professional Development**

| Professional Development Hours: | 1-50<br>(n=60) | 50-100<br>(n=62) | 101-150<br>(n=72) | 151-200<br>(n=54) | More than 200<br>(n=66) |
|---------------------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Emotional Support               | 5.4            | 5.6              | 5.6               | 5.6               | 5.7                     |
| Positive Climate                | 5.4            | 5.4              | 5.5               | 5.6               | 5.8                     |
| Negative Climate <sup>17</sup>  | 1.1            | 1.0              | 1.0               | 1.0               | 1.0                     |
| Teacher Sensitivity             | 5.6            | 5.8              | 5.9               | 5.8               | 5.9                     |
| Regard for Student Perspectives | 3.9            | 4.1              | 4.1               | 3.8               | 4.2                     |
| Classroom Organization          | 6.1            | 6.2              | 6.0               | 6.0               | 6.1                     |
| Behavior Management             | 6.2            | 6.5              | 6.3               | 6.3               | 6.4                     |
| Productivity                    | 6.4            | 6.4              | 6.2               | 6.4               | 6.4                     |
| Instructional Learning Formats  | 5.6            | 5.5              | 5.6               | 5.5               | 5.6                     |
| Instructional Support           | 3.5            | 3.8              | 3.8               | 3.7               | 3.9                     |
| Concept Development             | 3.3            | 3.5              | 3.6               | 3.6               | 3.7                     |
| Quality of Feedback             | 3.6            | 3.9              | 4.0               | 3.9               | 4.1                     |
| Language Modeling               | 3.7            | 3.8              | 3.8               | 3.8               | 4.0                     |

**Table 23** shows the average upper elementary (grades 4-5) CLASS scores by total hours of professional development. Again, the largest difference in scores is in the **Instructional Support** domain between teachers with the lowest range of professional development hours and those with the highest range. Teachers with more than 200 hours of professional development had an average Instructional Support score 0.7 points higher than those with just 1-50 hours, an educationally significant difference.

<sup>16</sup> Teachstone, personal communication, June 13, 2014 and January 5, 2016

<sup>17</sup> A lower score is desirable for the Negative Climate Dimension. The Negative Climate score is reversed when calculating the Classroom Organization Domain score.

**Table 23: Average Upper Elementary CLASS Scores by Total Hours of Professional Development**

| Professional Development Hours: | 1-50 (N=12) | 50-100 (n=39) | 101-150 (n=32) | 151-200 (n=13) | More than 200 (n=25) |
|---------------------------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Emotional Support               | 5.0         | 5.0           | 5.1            | 5.1            | 5.3                  |
| Positive Climate                | 5.4         | 5.3           | 5.5            | 5.7            | 5.7                  |
| Teacher Sensitivity             | 5.7         | 5.8           | 5.7            | 5.9            | 6.0                  |
| Regard for Student Perspectives | 3.8         | 3.9           | 3.9            | 3.7            | 4.4                  |
| Classroom Organization          | 6.6         | 6.6           | 6.6            | 6.5            | 6.6                  |
| Behavior Management             | 6.4         | 6.4           | 6.4            | 6.5            | 6.4                  |
| Productivity                    | 6.4         | 6.4           | 6.5            | 6.1            | 6.3                  |
| Negative Climate <sup>18</sup>  | 1.0         | 1.0           | 1.0            | 1.0            | 1.0                  |
| Instructional Support           | 4.1         | 4.1           | 4.0            | 4.5            | 4.8                  |
| Content Understanding           | 4.5         | 4.6           | 4.3            | 4.7            | 5.3                  |
| Analysis and Inquiry            | 3.2         | 3.2           | 3.1            | 3.7            | 4.0                  |
| Instructional Learning Formats  | 5.5         | 5.4           | 5.3            | 5.2            | 4.7                  |
| Quality of Feedback             | 4.3         | 4.0           | 4.0            | 4.8            | 4.7                  |
| Instructional Dialogue          | 3.7         | 3.9           | 3.8            | 4.3            | 4.6                  |
| Student Engagement              | 5.8         | 5.8           | 5.7            | 5.4            | 5.9                  |

**Table 24** shows the average secondary CLASS scores by total hours of professional development. Teachers who had 151-200 hours of professional development had the highest average score in every domain and dimension with the exception of **Classroom Organization** and its corresponding dimensions. This includes an educationally significant difference of half a point for **Emotional Support**, compared to teachers with 1-50, or 50-100 professional development hours, and for **Instructional Support**, compared to all teachers with fewer hours. In addition, contrary to expectations, these teachers’ average **Student Engagement** scores were also half a point higher than those with even more professional development hours – more than 200.

<sup>18</sup> A lower score is desirable for the Negative Climate Dimension. The Negative Climate score is reversed when calculating the Classroom Organization Domain score.



**Table 24: Average Secondary CLASS Scores by Total Hours of Professional Development**

| Professional Development Hours:    | 1-50<br>(N=100) | 50-100<br>(n=67) | 101-150<br>(n=56) | 151-200<br>(n=26) | More<br>than<br>200<br>(N=39) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Emotional Support                  | 5.3             | 5.3              | 5.4               | 5.8               | 5.4                           |
| Positive Climate                   | 5.6             | 5.5              | 5.6               | 6.0               | 5.7                           |
| Teacher Sensitivity                | 5.4             | 5.5              | 5.5               | 6.0               | 5.6                           |
| Regard for Adolescent Perspectives | 4.8             | 4.9              | 5.0               | 5.3               | 4.9                           |
| Classroom Organization             | 6.3             | 6.4              | 6.2               | 6.4               | 6.2                           |
| Behavior Management                | 6.0             | 6.2              | 5.9               | 6.1               | 5.8                           |
| Productivity                       | 6.0             | 6.0              | 5.9               | 6.1               | 5.9                           |
| Negative Climate <sup>19</sup>     | 1.1             | 1.1              | 1.3               | 1.1               | 1.2                           |
| Instructional Support              | 4.8             | 4.8              | 4.8               | 5.3               | 5.0                           |
| Content Understanding              | 5.3             | 5.3              | 5.1               | 5.5               | 5.5                           |
| Analysis and Inquiry               | 4.2             | 4.1              | 4.4               | 5.0               | 4.5                           |
| Instructional Learning Formats     | 5.3             | 5.3              | 5.3               | 5.6               | 5.4                           |
| Quality of Feedback                | 4.7             | 4.7              | 4.7               | 5.3               | 4.8                           |
| Instructional Dialogue             | 4.5             | 4.4              | 4.6               | 5.1               | 4.7                           |
| Student Engagement                 | 5.6             | 5.6              | 5.5               | 5.9               | 5.4                           |

**Table 25** shows the correlation between CLASS domain scores and total number of professional development hours. Small positive correlations were found to be statistically significant for **Emotional Support** and **Instructional Support** at both the lower and upper elementary levels, indicating that hours of professional development has a positive impact on observation scores. Using the  $R^2$  statistic to indicate explained variance, this means that professional development hours explain:

- 3.61% of the variation in lower elementary Emotional Support scores
- 1.61% of the variation in lower elementary Instructional Support scores
- 3.72% of the variation in upper elementary Emotional Support scores
- 5.62% of the variation in upper elementary Instructional Support scores

<sup>19</sup> A lower score is desirable for the Negative Climate Dimension. The Negative Climate score is reversed when calculating the Classroom Organization Domain score.

**Table 25: Correlation between CLASS Scores and Total Number of Professional Development Hours**

| CLASS Levels     | CLASS Domain           | Sample Size n= | Correlation r= | R <sup>2</sup> | Significance level p= |
|------------------|------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Lower Elementary | Emotional Support      | 435            | .19            | 3.61%          | .00***                |
|                  | Classroom Organization | 435            | .059           | 0.35%          | .11                   |
|                  | Instructional Support  | 435            | .127           | 1.61%          | .004**                |
| Upper Elementary | Emotional Support      | 121            | .193           | 3.72%          | .03*                  |
|                  | Classroom Organization | 121            | -.005          | 0.00%          | .958                  |
|                  | Instructional Support  | 121            | .237           | 5.62%          | .009**                |
|                  | Student Engagement     | 121            | .009           | 0.01%          | .926                  |
| Secondary        | Emotional Support      | 291            | .087           | 0.76%          | .14                   |
|                  | Classroom Organization | 291            | -.060          | 0.36%          | .308                  |
|                  | Instructional Support  | 291            | .086           | 0.74%          | .141                  |
|                  | Student Engagement     | 291            | -.03           | 0.09%          | .613                  |

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001

CLASS domains and dimensions are described in detail in **Appendix D1**. The alignment between CLASS dimensions and APS best instructional practices can be found in **Appendix D2**. The full report on CLASS observation results can be found in **Appendix D3**.

#### Retention of Teachers on the CAP Salary Schedule

A primary goal of the differentiated compensation program known as the Career Advancement Program (CAP) is to foster retention of high quality instructional staff. In order to assess whether CAP may have an impact on retention rates, Human Resources provided the Office of Planning and Evaluation with teacher retention data from 2007 through the 2014-15 school year. The first CAP portfolio process began in the 2008-09 school year, and the first group of teachers who achieved CAP were moved to the CAP salary schedule in 2009-10.

The data included in this analysis includes all staff on the CAP salary schedule, including those who achieved CAP through a pathway not supported by the APS Professional Development Office (such as school psychologists, speech and language pathologists, audiologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, or social workers). **Table 26** shows the percentage of T-scale staff who remained with APS from 2007 through the 2014-15 school year, by salary schedule. T-scale staff on the CAP salary schedule have a retention rate of 70%, compared to 56% on the regular salary schedule.

**Table 26: Percentage of T-scale Staff Still with APS in 2015, by Salary Schedule**

| Salary Schedule   | Still with APS |     |
|-------------------|----------------|-----|
| Regular (n=4,227) | 2,378          | 56% |
| CAP (n=349)       | 244            | 70% |
| Total             | 2,622          | n/a |

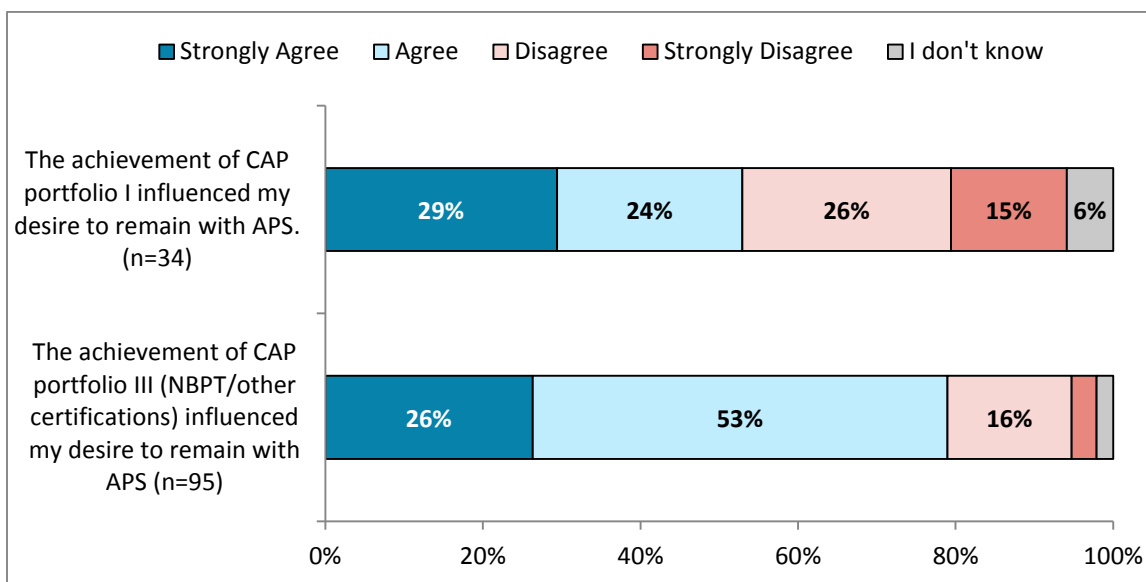
**Table 27** shows the reasons that T-scale staff left APS between 2007 and the 2014-15 school year, and percentages for each reason by salary schedule. **Personal** includes reasons such as staying at home, not returning after taking family leave, or career change. **Resignation** includes reasons such as voluntary resignations, resignation in lieu of termination, or resignation with prejudice. Staff on the CAP salary schedule were less likely to leave for reasons of resignation (14%, vs. 23%) or termination (1% vs 5%).

**Table 27: Reason for Leaving, among T-scale Staff who Left APS, by Salary Schedule**

| Salary Schedule   | Reason for Leaving |    |          |    |            |    |             |     |            |     |             |    |
|-------------------|--------------------|----|----------|----|------------|----|-------------|-----|------------|-----|-------------|----|
|                   | Deceased           |    | Personal |    | Relocation |    | Resignation |     | Retirement |     | Termination |    |
| Regular (n=4,227) | 13                 | 0% | 71       | 2% | 146        | 3% | 978         | 23% | 440        | 10% | 201         | 5% |
| CAP (n=349)       | 0                  | 0% | 5        | 1% | 8          | 2% | 49          | 14% | 41         | 12% | 2           | 1% |
| Total             | 13                 |    | 76       |    | 154        |    | 1027        |     | 481        |     | 203         |    |

Most survey respondents who identified themselves as having successfully moved to the CAP salary schedule indicated that **the achievement of the portfolio influenced their desire to remain with APS**. This feeling was much stronger among those who had achieved CAP Portfolio III (National Board certification) than those who had achieved CAP Portfolio I (local portfolio). Just over half of all respondents who had achieved portfolio I indicated that they *strongly agree* or *agree* that the achievement had influenced their desire to remain with APS, while 79% of those who had achieved portfolio III selected these responses. Responses are displayed in **Figure 35**.

**Figure 35: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the CAP portfolio. (CAP Achievers)**



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in the CAP portfolio I or both CAP portfolio I and III differentiated compensations programs, and who were successfully moved to the CAP salary schedule.

The full report on teacher retention can be found in **Appendix F2**.

## SECTION 3: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### Cohesiveness and Alignment

#### 1. APS needs a comprehensive source of information about available professional development opportunities.

By far, the most common source of professional development for staff is their own school or department. Electronic Registrar Online (ERO) primarily contains information about centrally-offered professional development sessions. Information about professional development offered at schools is entered in ERO much less consistently. This has implications for:

- Providers' ability to understand the big picture of what is being offered throughout APS, which impedes their ability to align efforts and work towards a cohesive system of professional development
- Participants' access to all relevant opportunities

#### 2. Professional development participants perceive that professional development in APS must be cohesive, aligned, and consistent from year to year.

Survey and focus group feedback indicate a strong sense among professional development participants that there is a need for consistency in professional development programming from year to year. The term **shiny new thing** came up in most focus group discussions. In addition, just over half of survey respondents felt that **school- and division-based professional learning objectives are aligned** or that **schools, APS central offices, and the Office of Professional Development coordinate professional development effectively**.

#### 3. Participants have the intention and desire to implement what they learn in professional development, and there is a need for more structures to support and monitor implementation.

Session evaluations in ERO indicate that a large majority of participants intend to implement strategies learned through professional development, and the spring 2015 staff survey shows a lower, but still high, percentage of staff indicating agreement with the statement, "**Overall, I feel confident in my ability to implement what I have learned during professional development.**"

At the same time, implementation of professional development was seen as an area for growth in the focus group discussions, and other survey responses indicate that structures are not always in place to ensure implementation. Forty percent of respondents indicated that, in the last five years, a professional development provider had *never* contacted them following the session to ensure they were implementing what they had learned. Another 32% indicated that this had *rarely* happened.

## Variation in Quality and Resources

### 4. Professional development opportunities, resources, and quality vary for staff depending on many factors, particularly pay scale and location.

There are substantial differences among staff on different pay scales in terms of their access to and experiences with professional development in APS:

- Elementary teachers consistently had a higher number of professional development hours in ERO than secondary teachers.
- Over five years, almost all A-, T-, and P-scale staff had participated in professional development, while E-scale staff participated at a lower rate (84%) and just under half of G-scale staff had participated in professional development.
- A-, T-, and P-scale staff were the most likely to agree that there is enough professional development relevant to their position, ranging from 59-65%, while E-scale (37%) and G-scale (26%) were the least likely.
- Between 50-60% of A-, E-, and G-scale staff cited the lack of professional development available for their position as a barrier to their participation, compared to around a quarter of T- and P-scale staff.
- Other school-based T-scale staff were more likely (40%) than teachers (25%) to cite the lack of professional development available for their position as a reason for not participating.
- Similarly, central office-based staff were more likely (43%) than school-based staff (32%) to cite the lack of professional development available for their position as a reason for not participating.

Observations of professional development sessions showed a difference in quality between sessions intended for teachers and those intended for administrators and central staff. In particular, sessions for administrators and central staff were less likely to include elements of professional development that relate to

- Application of what was learned (e.g., **opportunity for participants to practice learned strategies and skills**, as well as all elements of **reflection and closing**)
- Differentiation for individual participants' needs (e.g., **accommodations made for participants**)

### 5. Findings indicate that scheduling (duration and timing) is crucial to the value of professional development, while at the same time being one of the most challenging factors for providers of professional development.

Observation ratings were almost universally higher when the length of the session was longer, indicating the importance of dedicating time to professional development in order for it to have an impact. At the same time, **time required/scheduling** was by far the factor most likely to be seen as having a negative impact among survey respondents who identified themselves as regular providers of professional development. In addition, there was a variety of opinions among participants and providers in focus groups about when is a good time for professional development.

## 6. Use of data by providers of professional development varies in terms of extent and effectiveness.

Focus group discussions identified **data collection** as an area for growth for APS professional development. Generally, focus group participants felt that providers of professional development need more effective methods to evaluate their work or measure its effectiveness in the big picture. The staff survey indicates that most providers feel that they **have access to the data they need in order to plan and implement professional development**, and roughly a third said they would like to have more access to **student information/achievement data**. It is not clear how much this desire for access is strictly an access issue and how much is a capacity issue.

## 7. There is evidence that professional development resources must be distributed equitably.

There are many instances of variation in access to professional development resources that imply a need for more equity:

- There is variation among grade levels as well as among schools of the same grade level in the percentage of each building's teachers and assistants who took leave for professional development. These percentages range from just 11-20% of a building's instructional staff to 71-80%.
- Survey responses indicate a great deal of variation among T-scale staff in the percentage indicating how frequently they had received **release time for professional development that took place during regular work hours**, or **compensation for their time for professional development that took place outside of regular work hours**.
- Many staff cited **out-of-pocket costs** and **lack of APS funding** as a reason for not participating in professional development. E-scale staff, in particular, stood out as seeing APS funding as an important factor. E-scale staff likely stand out in this area because of the specialized nature of the positions included in this pay scale. This specialization means that the most appropriate professional development for an E-scale staff member may be offered through an outside resource, such as conferences or trainings offered by professional associations, which have a higher cost per person than professional development sessions offered to large audiences (such as teachers) by APS.

## Quality of Professional Development

### 8. There are many indications that APS staff have access to a high level of quality in the professional development opportunities they attend. This appears to be more consistent for instructional staff than for other staff.

Survey data, focus groups, and professional development session observations all point to a strong alignment with best practices in much of the professional development offered throughout APS. Most professional development observations received an overall rating of either 3 - *accomplished, effective professional development* or level 4 – *exemplary*. Large majorities of survey respondents indicated that the

professional development they had participated in had **improved their knowledge/skills** or **increased their effectiveness as a teacher/in their job**. Focus group participants cited **leadership, resources, and learning designs** as strengths in APS professional development.

Disaggregating both survey responses and observational data by staff type or intended audience reveals substantial differences between professional development for teachers and for non-teachers. In addition, observations reveal that **reflection and closing** is the area in greatest need of improvement in the delivery of professional development.

**9. Observation results show a positive correlation between the hours of professional development a teacher has participated in and that teacher's classroom observation scores, indicating that professional development for APS teachers has a positive impact on effective teaching practices.**

CLASS observation results showed *educationally significant* differences in **Instructional Support** scores between upper elementary and secondary teachers at lower and higher ranges of professional development hours. There was an educationally significant difference in **Emotional Support** at the secondary level as well. In addition, there was a small, positive correlation between hours of professional development and lower and upper elementary Emotional Support and Instructional Support scores, indicating that hours of professional development has a positive impact on observation scores.

**10. The differentiated compensation program appears to be meeting its goal of retaining high quality staff.**

Most survey respondents who identified themselves as having successfully moved to the CAP salary schedule indicated that **the achievement of the portfolio influenced their desire to remain with APS**. In addition, T-scale staff on the CAP salary schedule have a retention rate of 70%, compared to 56% of staff on the regular salary schedule.

**11. Findings suggest that differentiation and choice are crucial to facilitating professional development and motivating participation.**

Focus group conversations, which were limited to A-, T-, and P-scale staff, addressed the importance of offering differentiated opportunities in order to facilitate participation and increase the value of professional development. In a conversation about the qualities of professional development that had or had not worked well for participants, the theme of **choice** was prominent. Participants were positive about opportunities they had had to choose which professional development to participate in based on their own needs, and almost all pointed to negative experiences they had had with professional development that was not relevant to them.

**12. T- and P-scale staff are positive about their experiences with the staff evaluation process and feel that it is valuable. There is a need for more consistency in the number of times teachers in their summative evaluation year are observed.**

T- and P-scale survey respondents were generally positive about the value of the staff evaluation process. Most feel that their ratings are accurate and a large proportion (43%) feel that their formal evaluation *always* or *often* **includes feedback that they can use to improve their job performance**. Staff on both pay scales also indicated that the formal and informal appraisal and/or feedback they receive has an influence on their practice in the seven performance standard areas for their respective pay scales, although this was less consistent for P-scale respondents.

Survey responses also show that, even in summative evaluation years, some proportion of teachers reported zero observations. This ranges from 8-9% of teachers in their probationary years and then dips to just six percent in year 6. In subsequent summative evaluation years, between 14-23% of teachers indicated they had never been observed. In addition to those who were never observed, a high proportion of probationary teachers reported being observed just once or twice, fewer than the required three times. This ranged from 20% of all first-year APS teachers to 36% of all second-year APS teachers.



## SECTION 4: RECOMMENDATIONS

**Finding #1:** Professional development in APS could benefit from more comprehensive information about available opportunities, a systematic approach to alignment and continuity, and improved structures to support and monitor implementation.

**Recommendation #1:** Implement a system that:

- aligns all instructional professional learning efforts across the district with each other to support Strategic Plan goals, School Board priorities, and/or budget initiatives; and
- coordinates school-based and central office professional development offerings through a collaborative solution process.

**Finding #2:** Professional development opportunities, resources, and quality vary for staff depending on many factors.

**Recommendation #2:** Conduct an APS professional learning policy review, to cover:

- structure of professional development in APS;
- requirements, roles, and responsibilities; and
- support for non-instructional staff in professional growth.

**Finding #3:** APS staff have access to a high level of quality in the professional development opportunities they attend, particularly instructional staff. Findings from this evaluation also suggest areas for growth in the delivery of professional development and the implementation of the teacher evaluation system.

**Recommendation #3:** Create and pilot professional development delivery models that identify best practices and include tools for evaluation.

SECTION 5: STAFF RESPONSE – Prepared by the Office of Professional Development

| PROGRAM EVALUATION RECOMMENDATION  |  |  |   |                      |
|--|--|--|---|----------------------|
| Department of Instruction (Professional Development Office)  |  |  |   |                      |
| Recommendation #1  | SMART Goal   | Responsible Department(s)  | Anticipated Budget Impact   |                      |
| Implement a system that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>aligns all instructional professional learning efforts across the district with each other to support Strategic Plan goals, School Board priorities, and/or budget initiatives; and</li> <li>coordinates school-based and central office professional development offerings through a collaborative solution process.</li> </ul> | By fall 2017, establish a system in which all professional learning is cohesive, aligned to district goals and priorities, and has continuity from year to year. | Professional Development<br>Student Services and Special Education<br>Information Services<br>Administrative Services<br>Human Resources | TBD: includes investment in upgrading current tracking tool, cost per user                              |                      |
| Planning and Implementation  |  |  |   |                      |
| Strategy   | Office and/or School(s) Responsible  | Desired Outcome  | Data Source(s)  | Completion Date      |
| Continue work with Redesigning Professional Development Work Group in collaboration with Human Resources   | Professional Development<br>Student Services and Special Education<br>Information Services<br>Administrative Services<br>Human Resources                         | APS professional development plan  | Program evaluation data on satisfaction with professional learning, offerings, and timing of offerings. | Meeting #1- May 2016 |

| Planning and Implementation  |                                     |  |  |   |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Strategy   | Office and/or School(s) Responsible | Desired Outcome  | Data Source(s)   | Completion Date   |
| Collect information from schools and departments   |                                     | List/calendar of school areas of professional development foci<br><br>List/calendar of central office-based professional development | Schools Departments Offices  | Summer 2016   |
| Develop a matrix to align professional development offerings to APS priorities.  | Same as above                       | Professional development offerings align with school system priorities   | Alignment matrix created   | Fall 2016   |
| The Redesigning Professional Development Work Group will create a process to coordinate school-based and central office professional development foci and offerings, and to resolve issues.  | Same as above                       | Have a system in place to prioritize APS needs for professional learning   | School PD calendars<br><br>Central office PD calendars                     | Fall 2016   |
| Establish a single system of record for all APS provided professional learning.<br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine the appropriate tool</li> <li>• Conduct a needs analysis of each department/school provider</li> <li>• Support each office/school in management of the system</li> </ul> | Same as above                       | All staff have access to comprehensive information about professional development opportunities                                      | Centralized source of all available professional development opportunities | Selection: spring 2017<br><br>Implementation: fall 2017 |

| <i>Expectations for this audience</i> |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Principals</b>                     | Plan, implement, and document school-based effective professional learning.<br>Participate in effective professional learning and apply new learning and strategies to their work. |
| <b>Staff members</b>                  | Participate in professional learning and apply new learning and strategies to their work.  |
| <b>Schools</b>                        | Plan, implement, and document school-based professional learning.  |
| <b>Offices/Departments</b>            | Plan, implement, and document office/department-based professional learning.   |

| PROGRAM EVALUATION RECOMMENDATION   |   |   |  |                 |  |
|---|---|---|--|-----------------|--|
| Department of Instruction (Professional Development Office)   |   |   |  |                 |  |
| Recommendation #2   | SMART Goal  | Responsible Department(s)   | Anticipated Budget Impact  |                 |  |
| Conduct an APS professional learning policy review to cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• structure of professional development in APS;</li> <li>• requirements, roles, and responsibilities;</li> <li>• support for non-instructional staff in professional growth.</li> </ul> | By fall 2016, establishment of a group that meets quarterly for this purpose. | Human Resources<br>Professional Development   | TBD:<br>Includes research on similar policies on a local and statewide level; substitute costs |                 |  |
| Planning and Implementation   |   |   |  |                 |  |
| Strategy  | Office and/or School(s) Responsible   | Desired Outcome   | Data Source(s)   | Completion Date |  |
| Review existing APS policies  | Human Resources<br>Professional Development                                   | Establish the current condition of policy support for professional learning                               | APS PIPs and Policies  | June 2016       |  |
| Conduct an external scan to review other district policies  | Same as above   | Establishment of professional learning policies in benchmark districts                                    | Comparable districts' policies   | July 2016       |  |
| Review compensation for participation in PD   | Same as above   | Equitable compensation for professional learning  | Policy<br>Past expenditures for professional learning  | Summer 2016     |  |
| Develop a system to support non-instructional staff in professional growth that align with policy changes   | Same as above   | Creation of a system for implantation and monitoring of professional learning for non-instructional staff | System of record for professional learning   | Spring 2017     |  |

| Planning and Implementation   |   |   |  |                 |
|---|---|---|--|-----------------|
| Strategy  | Office and/or School(s) Responsible                       | Desired Outcome   | Data Source(s)   | Completion Date |
| Utilize the suggested process in <a href="#">Professional Learning Policy Review: A Workbook for States and Districts</a> designed to assist states and districts in conducting a self-guided review of current professional learning policies. This workbook presents a six-phase process for the review and includes tools to facilitate the process as well as links to resources for accessing and studying professional learning policies. | Same as above   | APS policy in place to support beliefs and best practices in professional learning for improved outcomes. | APS policies<br>Virginia Code  | Spring 2017     |
| Investigate ways to support non-instructional staff in professional growth that align with policy changes.  | Same as above   | <i>APS staff engages in professional learning for continuous improvement.</i>                             | Opportunities for professional learning are offered and non-instructional staff participate in the opportunities and report the learning as being impactful on their work. | Fall 2017       |
| <i>Expectations for this audience</i>   |   |   |  |                 |
| <b>Principals</b>   | Send representation to the team. Send issues to the team. |   |  |                 |
| <b>Staff members</b>  | Send issues to the team.                                  |   |  |                 |
| <b>Offices/Departments/<br/>Schools</b>   | Send representation to the team. Send issues to the team. |   |  |                 |

**PROGRAM EVALUATION RECOMMENDATION**  
**Department of Instruction (Professional Development Office)**

| Recommendation #3  | SMART Goal   | Responsible Department(s)   | Anticipated Budget Impact  |
|--|--|---|--|
| Create and pilot professional development delivery models that identify best practices and include tools for evaluation. | Professional development offerings for 2017-18 will utilize a variety of delivery models that best meet the needs of learners. | Human Resources<br>Student Services and Special Education<br>Information Services<br>Administrative Services<br>Instruction | TBD: Includes resources to support the process, substitute costs, research and development costs |

**Planning and Implementation**

| Strategy   | Office and/or School(s) Responsible   | Desired Outcome   | Data Source(s)  | Completion Date |
|--|---|---|---|-----------------|
| Partner with Human Resources to work with Redesigning Professional Development Work Group to find time in the calendar to provide job-embedded professional learning   | Human Resources<br>Student Services and Special Education<br>Information Services<br>Administrative Services<br>Instruction | Designated time in the calendar for job-embedded professional learning  | Calendar  | Spring 2017     |
| Support providers in utilizing a variety of delivery models that best meet the needs of learners<br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop system of accountability to monitor implementation</li> <li>• Assess provider data needs</li> </ul> | Professional Development  | Professional development opportunities meet the needs of learners.<br><br>Providers are skillful and knowledgeable in the delivery of effective professional learning | Observations of delivery of professional development workshops<br><br>Other data sources as appropriate | Fall 2017       |

*Expectations for this audience*

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Principals</b>                         | Honor what is agreed to in the calendar.<br>Deliver effective professional learning   |
| <b>Professional development providers</b> | Honor what is agreed to in the calendar.<br>Use a variety of delivery models to meet the needs of learners.   |
| <b>Offices/Departments/<br/>Schools</b>   | Honor what is agreed to in the calendar.<br>Use a variety of delivery models to meet the needs of learners.<br>Support PD providers in planning, implanting and delivering effective professional learning. |