Northwest Regional
Professional
Development Program

Self-Evaluation Report

2014 - 2015

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The Northwest Regional Professional Development Program (NWRPDP) serves six Nevada school districts: Carson City, Churchill, Douglas, Lyon, Storey and Washoe Counties. Within those six districts, 14 NWRPDP regional learning facilitators support 154 schools coordinated by Director Kirsten Gleissner.

Executive Summary

During the 2014-2015 school year, the Northwest Regional Professional Development Program (NWRPDP) facilitators supported teachers and administrators in a variety of content areas across the region's six districts. Support for diverse learners and parent/family engagement were an integral part of all workshops. Focus areas included, but are not limited to:

- Professional learning opportunities in understanding the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) Instructional and Professional Responsibility Standards for teachers and administrators.

- Ongoing in-depth study of the Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS) in mathematics content K-12 and usage of the Eight Mathematical Practices during instruction.

- Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS)-based Literacy development in the content area (K-12) with particular focus on writing and robust vocabulary development.

- Incorporation of the new NVACS-Science (NVACS-S) Standards based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) into K-8 classrooms with a hands-on approach to application and inclusion of STEM practices.

- Support of district-wide blended learning using 1:1 technology in the classroom in two districts.

- Expanded curriculum development in social studies with a focus on fourth grade.

- Teacher Leader development through the National Board Certification process and the Northern Nevada Teacher Leader project.

The following report details the scope, content, type, and impact of services that the NWRPDP has performed within its six districts during 2014-2015. This includes 11 narrative evaluation case studies which are representative of the program's overall service to our region and share a common philosophy of standards-based professional learning delivered in the context of district and school plans. Included in each project is a long-term commitment to follow-up and support for teachers and administrators in order to sustain professional learning. The case studies, which share the story behind the work of our learning facilitators this year, cover a wide range of subjects: increasing teacher learning with respect to the NVACS in literacy, math, and science; instructional strategies and planning that support student learning; helping to launch school-wide writing initiatives and robust vocabulary programs; implementation of a teacher observation protocol to gain feedback and share teaching strategies; support of teachers for increased use of rich mathematical tasks; application of an instructional practice guide to facilitate student critical thinking; and increasing student learning through district programs based on the NVACS.

Key findings:

- Case study evaluation data reveal a variety of positive outcomes across NWRPDP case study projects; examples include teacher growth in 4 of the 5 domains of collaborative math learning practices in 4 different counties, dramatic increases in 3rd through 5th grade students' writing complexity levels at an urban school, and increased teacher knowledge and retention of Science and STEM content in two districts.

- Professional development services were conducted in all six districts which comprise NWRPDP, reaching a total of 3,288 unique educators during 2014-15. Because professional development covers varied training topics and consulting services, the total number of duplicated educators receiving services was 8036. These numbers represent significant increases in the numbers of educators NWRPDP served in 2013-14 (unduplicated = 2,442 and duplicated = 5,580). Elementary teachers (total served = 4,764) were the largest educator group served this past year, followed by Middle school teachers (1,180), High school teachers (747), Others, which include substitutes, counselors and district personnel (502), and Administrators (843). Overall, 61.4% of the approximate 5,267 educators employed in the region participated in programs provided by the NWRPDP during 2014-2015.

- Participant ratings of the quality of professional development trainings performed by NWRPDP staff reveal consistent and high satisfaction ratings over the past several years. During 2014-15, this included high mean ratings from educator participants regarding the expertise of the facilitators (4.7 out of 5) and the quality of the delivery of instruction during trainings, particularly providing opportunities for interaction and reflection (4.7 out of 5).

- Professional services this past year were predominately delivered at school sites in the form of in-service classes and workshops. Content was focused on the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) and the Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS) in math, literacy, and science/STEM.

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Introduction:
Professional Learning Supports State Standards in Education

Teacher quality has a considerable impact on student learning and achievement (Meister, 2010; Opfer & Pedder, 2011), and professional development is the primary strategy for affecting teacher quality (Lytle, 2008). This report details the self-evaluation efforts of the Northwest Regional Professional Development Program (NWRPDP) in providing training and professional development to the region's educators. This evaluation integrates several widely-accepted educator professional development frameworks, including Guskey's (2002) and Desimone's (2009) conceptual frameworks that identify critical features of how professional development can influence teacher and student outcomes (see Figure 1). A case study approach has been employed to assess the diversity and wide-ranging impact of various training topics. These mixed method strategies are advocated by Killion (2002), and are consistent with the educator professional development evaluation frameworks of Guskey (2002) and Desimone (2009). NWRPDP staff actively design and implement each evaluative case study that seeks to illustrate changes in teacher practice and student achievement as a result of the diverse professional learning activities employed over the past year.

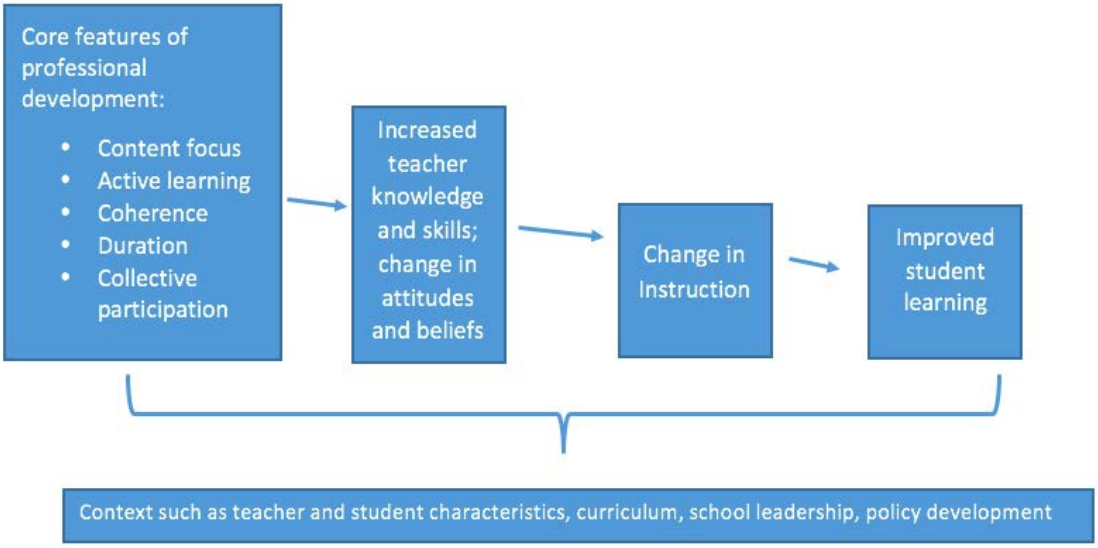


Figure 1. Conceptual framework for studying the effects of professional development on teachers and students (Desimone, 2009)

The 2014-2015 school year brought continuing focus on the Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS), based on the Common Core, as the standards for English language arts and mathematics moved toward full implementation. The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) were adopted as the State standards in science (NVACS-S) and the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) validation study was completed. The NWRPDP collaborated with Washoe County; University of Nevada, Reno (UNR); and outside entities in grants designed to provide intensive content training in mathematics and science for K-12 teachers served by the regional program. Collaboration with the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) and district

leaders continued as well in support of developing NVACS resources for teachers in literacy, math, and science. Knowledge of and training on the NEPF for teachers and administrators continued for all regional facilitators. Regional Learning Facilitators served on state-wide committees to support the writing of the Nevada State Literacy Plan and to develop resources for the Next Generation Science Standards. NWRPDP facilitators also served on national committees such as the board of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, with representatives from higher education, Departments of Education from several states, and national leaders in education. Through the efforts of NWRPDP facilitators, Nevada is now a representative state member of the national professional learning association, Learning Forward.

History:
Teacher and Student Performance in an Age of Standards

The Regional Professional Development Program was established by Nevada Revised Statue (NRS) 391.512 in 1999 to provide research-based professional development opportunities to all of the school districts in Nevada. The organization was further directed by NRS 391.544 to focus on training teachers in the standards which were established by the Council to Establish Academic Standards for Public Schools (NRS 389.520) and to establish and implement the Nevada Early Literacy Intervention Program (NELIP). Additionally, the regional program was directed to provide training in one or more of the following: using assessment and measurement of pupil achievement including methods of analyzing data to improve student achievement, instruction in content areas including methods of instruction, training in methods to teach basic skills to students in reading and mathematics, or training for educators who provide instruction to pupils who are limited English proficient. Originally set up as a Trainer of Trainers model, where teacher leaders from each site were trained as Site Trainers responsible for training their colleagues, the program moved to a model based on the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards for professional development which includes facilitation of learning, follow-up observations, and coaching with educators. As the trend in professional development moved towards Professional Learning Communities, the *Standards for Professional Learning* developed by Learning Forward, formerly NSDC (see Appendix A), were adopted in 2013. Additionally, the legislature included parent education for teachers as a focus for the regional professional development programs in 2011 (NRS.391.544). In 2013, legislation tasked the RPDPs with supporting training for teachers and administrators in the newly adopted Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) standards and indicators for evaluation of teachers and administrators (NRS.391.31217).

Implementation of Curriculum Standards

Trainers facilitated teacher learning on content and instructional strategies representing research-based best practices to increase student achievement. Programs were developed to facilitate the movement to standards-based instruction and to improve student achievement through improved teacher skills using backwards lesson design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), engagement strategies (Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock, 2001; Kagan, 1990; Intrator, 2004), differentiated instruction (Rutherford, 2008; Silver and Strong, 2007; Tomlinson, 2000; Tomlinson and McTighe, 2006), and assessment (Stiggins, Arter, Chappuis and Chappuis 2004).

The adoption and implementation of the Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS), based on the Common Core, resulted in shifts in curriculum, assessment, and instruction. Full implementation was required for the 2014-2015 school year. In May of 2014, the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) were adopted, which resulted in the need to shift a third major content area to new content and instruction. With the new focus on performance expectations in science, an additional consideration was how to provide materials for hands-on science learning opportunities for teachers. Regional Learning Facilitators continue to serve on national and state-wide committees to plan for the changes in content, instruction, and assessment that drive the implementation of the NVACS in literacy, math, and science.

Nevada Early Literacy Intervention Program (NELIP)

The NWRPDP continued to provide training and support for area teachers as they implemented the Nevada Early Literacy Intervention Program (NELIP), established in 2001. The inclusion of standards for literacy in the content areas in the NVACS extended the focus of literacy instruction in the early grades. The Kindergarten Cadre project supported Kindergarten teachers with training in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and student motivation in Washoe County along with other institutes for K-3 teachers. This project has expanded to include early numeracy as well.

Collaboration

The NWRPDP has worked collaboratively with researchers, universities, and fellow professional learning facilitators over the years to better support the educational community in the region.

University of Nevada, Reno:

Several programs have grown out of the collaboration between the NWRPDP and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). The Northern Nevada Writing Project (NNWP), which started as an institute to support site trainers, still conducts institutes and on-going trainings for teachers in northern Nevada. During the summer of 2014, the NWRPDP collaborated with UNR on a Mathematics and Science Partnership (MSP) grant which provided content and instructional strategies training in mathematics content and pedagogy to over sixty teachers from all six counties served by the NWRPDP. Recently, the NWRPDP enlisted the help of UNR professor, Dr. Bill Evans, to guide the NWRPDP evaluation report. Historically, a UNR representative sits on the local Governing Board.

Nevada Department of Education:

The NWRPDP has a long history of collaboration with the Nevada Department of Education (NDE). Early collaborations included support of the Student Achievement Gap Elimination (SAGE) initiative. This was followed by the initial data gathering efforts by Huck Fitterer of WestEd Laboratories, which lead to the *Data in a Day*, a teacher observation protocol, which later evolved into the *Teach for Success* protocol and the current *T4S Observation Protocol and Program*, still in use in some districts today.

The NWRPDP supported the NDE during the introduction of the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) initiative in 2009 and provided training for educators in the region, which continues as the state

moves towards the implementation of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium instruments.

In 2010, extensive collaboration with the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) was initiated as the state began the transition to the NVACS. Initial collaboration focused on developing professional development to introduce educators to the new standards and included facilitators from all three regional programs as well as NDE personnel. Collaboration continues with the NDE and local districts to ensure successful implementation of the new standards and a smooth transition to the new assessments. During the 2014-15 school year, RPDP collaborations with NDE served to provide resources for teachers on the NDE website in support of math, English language arts, and the new Nevada Academic Content Standards in Science, based on the Next Generation Science Standards. Additionally, the Nevada State Literacy Plan was developed during the 2014-15 school year with the help of NWRPDP facilitators.

Other Regional Professional Development Programs

In 2010, extensive collaboration with the other Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDPs) was also enacted to plan for the introduction of the NVACS, based on the Common Core. This collaboration continues and includes curriculum development and implementation strategies for educators. In 2013, adoption of the new teacher and administrator evaluation framework, the NEPF, began a statewide collaboration across all three regions to implement this new program with a common message and language. During the last biennium, 2013-15, the RPDPs collaborated with NDE and WestEd in the execution of a validation study of the NEPF system.

Future Direction

Recent legislative decisions continue to require educators to increase awareness of aligning resources and systems to support positive outcomes for students at all levels (Nevada Department of Education, 2013). To that end, the Nevada Regional Professional Development Programs serve a crucial role in supporting the ongoing professional learning of teachers and administrators.

The future direction of the Northwest RPDP is consistent with the expectations of the legislators, educators, students, and families of our state. In order to increase the learning of our students, deeper understanding of the NVACS will be an ongoing focus. Developing pedagogical expertise and sharing curriculum resources to meet the demands of our standards will continue to be an important aspect of our work in collaboration with the Nevada Department of Education, our colleagues in the other two Nevada regional professional development programs, local universities, and district personnel. Supporting our teachers and administrators in aligning curriculum and instruction with assessment will be crucial, as will developing deeper understanding of how to evaluate the success of our classroom practices in terms of our students' learning growth. With this alignment in mind, the NWRPDP will continue to develop training and materials to expand professional learning opportunities for educators throughout the region while integrating 21st century skills and technology appropriate to the needs of each of our districts. It is a goal of the NWRPDP to support the uniqueness of each of our districts, whether urban or rural, and to provide services accordingly.

NWRPDP is committed to ongoing support of regional educators for implementation of the Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS). Parent Involvement/Family Engagement will continue to be embedded in the NWRPDP work with teachers. The Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) for all educators will be an ongoing priority as we move into the first year of application. In this era of transition from No Child Left Behind to the next level of rigor represented by the NVACS, creating an understanding of the interconnectedness and alignment of initiatives will be vital to sustaining learning for both teachers and administrators. According to Nevada's ESEA Flexibility Request (2014), "rich, job-embedded professional development is the most important factor for increasing educator capacity to provide learner-centered instruction that supports student growth and proficiency" (p. 16). Therefore, in accordance with legislation, district priorities, and the needs of our students and educators, the NWRPDP will continue to provide professional learning that aligns with the *Education 2020* Characteristics of Quality Professional Development (2014):

- Continuous learning, not one-time seminars,
- Focused on improving classroom practices that increase student learning,
- Embedded in the daily work of teaching,
- Centered on crucial teaching and learning activities around our new content standards,
- Cultivated in a culture of collegiality around the same student improvement objectives,
- Supported by modeling and coaching that reflects 21st century skills, and
- Based on research-based best practices.

In partnership with our colleagues and communities, providing high-quality professional learning for teachers and administrators to support the needs of Nevada's students in the northwest region remains at the forefront of the Northwest RPDP's goals.

Our Vision:
Nevada's Northwest Regional Professional Development Program (NWRPDP), in accordance with the Nevada Revised statutes, is committed to elevating student performance by providing sustained professional learning and building regional partnerships.

Our Mission:
Nevada's Northwest RPDP will work in collaboration with stakeholders to provide high quality research-based learning opportunities, aligned with the Nevada Professional Learning Standards and the Nevada Academic Content Standards. Northwest RPDP offers diverse professional learning opportunities and support that is based on current empirical research on effective instruction for student learning. In addition, we are committed to increasing communication between regional members and parents in order to build capacity among all partnerships and to increase student achievement.

Self- Evaluation Overview

Self-Evaluation Procedures
As outlined in NRS 391.532, Director Kirsten Gleissner directs the in-house evaluation, assisted by support staff who coordinate data collection and compilation. The Director and an outside

consultant, Dr. Bill Evans from UNR, provide support for the rest of the team as they design instruments to gather and analyze data, and develop, implement, and write-up their evaluative case studies. The case studies, based on the Killion (2002) staff development evaluation design, and aligned with recent teacher professional development frameworks (Desimone, 2009; Guskey, 2002), provide a broad view of the nature of the support provided by the NWRPDP to schools and educators in the region. These evaluation projects employ both qualitative and quantitative designs and incorporate mixed-methods data collection strategies to assess training outcomes. Collectively, they 'tell the story' and document the impacts of the diverse NWRPDP professional development activities this past year.

In addition to the case studies, this report describes the results of educator participant ratings of NWRPDP trainings and educational events, and the scope, type, and participant numbers of trainings that staff completed during 2014-15.

Legislative Requirements

Nevada Revised Statue (NRS) 391.512-556 established the requirements for data collection used by the NWRPDP in the evaluation process. Areas specifically identified for documentation in the NRS include Nevada Early Literacy Intervention Program (NELIP), content standards, reading and math literacy, assessment, meeting the diverse needs of students including English Language Learners, Parent Involvement and Family Engagement support for teachers, Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF), and on-going follow-up to trainings. Optional areas for documentation identified in the NRS include educational technology, model classrooms, training for paraprofessionals, and suicide prevention.

Statewide Coordinating Council & Governing Board Requirements

The Statewide Coordinating Council and the Governing Board have established the instrument used by the NWRPDP to collect participant evaluation data. The RPDP Activity Evaluation form (see Appendix B), which uses a Likert-type scale, is used to collect data from participants regarding the effectiveness of the professional development provided by regional facilitators.

Services can be requested through direct contact with a facilitator or the director. An initial consultation is scheduled to determine the most effective format, timeline, and content. The updated Contact Form (see Appendix C) provides data including length of the training, group demographics, primary focus of the service provided, and type of service provided. A data tracking method through Google Docs provides additional information regarding initiation, type, and delivery of services by each facilitator in each of the counties served, and more specific data regarding the distribution of services throughout the region. Results from this data collection informed information in this document. In 2010, the Assembly Committee Resolution 2 (ACR2) Report was established to provide districts with information about the trainings provided.

Professional Development Standards

In 2013, the Nevada State Professional Development Standards were replaced by the Learning Forward *Standards for Professional Learning* (see Appendix A). Since that time, all trainings have been assessed against the new standards during the planning, delivery, and reflection phases using a rubric (Appendix A). The *Standards for Professional Learning* were reconfirmed by the Statewide Coordinating Council in 2015.

How is the NWRPDP organized?

The NWRPDP is composed of 14 full-time Learning Facilitators, under the direction of Kirsten Gleissner. Support is provided by three full-time regional support professionals. In 2014-15, four additional part-time facilitators served the region in support of the NEPF rollout. The NWRPDP provides services to Carson City, Churchill, Douglas, Lyon, Storey, and Washoe counties. Ten of the learning facilitators operate out of the Reno office, one facilitator coordinating services in Lyon County. One facilitator serves as liaison for each of the other rural counties and is housed in that district. Learning Facilitators are selected based upon their expertise covering all K-12 grade levels, plus the content, standards, and literacy requirements of the state professional development legislation. Facilitators average almost 20 years of teaching and/or administrative experience with a minimum of a master's degree.

The Statewide Coordinating Council
NRS 391.520 establishes the Statewide Coordinating Council (SCC), with direct responsibility to coordinate and disseminate information regarding training, programs, and services across the regions; to adopt uniform procedures for professional development and evaluation; and to conduct long-term planning for the program.

As defined in NRS 391.516, the SCC currently consists of nine members: the Superintendent of Public Instruction or his or her designee; one member who is not a Legislator, appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate and one appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly; one teacher appointed by the Governor from a list of nominees submitted by the Nevada State Education Association; one administrator at a public school (not at the district level) appointed by the Governor from a list of nominees submitted by the Nevada Association of School Administrators; one member appointed by the Governor; three members, each of whom is a superintendent of schools, or designee, appointed by each of the Governing Boards.

The Governing Board
NRS 391.524 establishes a governing body for each regional program and the membership of that body. Membership consists of the superintendent of schools or his/her designee for each school district served by the NWRPDP, a master teacher appointed by the superintendent of each represented district, a representative of the Nevada System of Higher Education, and a non-voting member of the Nevada Department of Education.

The duties of the Governing Board include the following:

- Selection of the program coordinator/director
- Annual review of budget
- Acceptance of gifts and grants
- Adoption of a regional training model
- Needs assessment of regional teachers and administrators
- Review of the five-year plan

The NWRPDP Governance Board members for 2014-2015 were alphabetically: Scott Bailey, Chief Academic Officer, superintendent designee, Washoe County School District; Barbara Barker, Washoe County master teacher; Dave Brancamp, Nevada Department of Education; Kirsten

Gleissner, Director, NWRPDP; Dr. Melissa Burnham, appointed by the Dean of the College of Education, University of Nevada, Reno; Dr. Lisa Noonan, Superintendent, Douglas County School District; Romney Cronin, Curriculum and Instruction Director, Douglas County master teacher; Claudia Fadness, Curriculum and Instruction Director, superintendent designee, Lyon County School District; Damon Etter, Lyon County master teacher; Susan Keema, Associate Superintendent of Educational Services, superintendent designee, Carson City School District; Pam Copperthwaite, Carson City master teacher; Kimi Melendy, Curriculum and Instruction Director, superintendent designee, Churchill County School District; Laura Malkovich, Churchill County master teacher; Cindy Sharp, Nevada Department of Education; Dr. Robert Slaby, Superintendent, Storey County School District; Karen Staffen, Storey County master teacher; and Pamela K. Mills, NWRPDP Administrative Assistant. Dr. Lisa Noonan served as chair of the Governing Board in school years 2013-2015.

Governing Board meeting agendas can be found in Appendix D.

Long Range Planning

As required by legislation, the Statewide Coordinating Council (SCC) conducts long-range planning for the three state RPDPs in the form of a five-year plan (see Appendix E). The current plan runs from 2010-2015 with a yearly review. NWRPDP Director Kirsten Gleissner uses the five-year plan's goals as a guide to inform the northwest region's annual goals. Since there will be new SCC membership in 2015, NWRPDP will follow the existing SCC goals until revision is accomplished. The SCC's goals and the NWRPDP's implementation are as follows:

Goal 1: Implement the Nevada Professional Development Standards

For the 2012-2013 school year, the Statewide Coordinating Council adopted the *Standards for Professional Learning* (Learning Forward, 2011,) (see Appendix A) for use by the regional professional development programs to replace the Nevada Professional Development Standards. The process of adoption by the State Board of Education was in progress prior to the start of the 2013 legislative session, but was not completed prior to the end of the school year. The NWRPDP used the new standards as an ongoing form of self-assessment for collecting data regarding the implementation of projects used in the case studies documented in this report and for assessing the year's work. The Standards were reconfirmed by the SCC in 2015.

Goal 2: Design and implement high quality Professional Development for teachers to improve student achievement

Professional development (PD) is often initiated by requests from district or site administrators based on goals in their District Performance Plans or School Performance Plans. PD is supported by research and conducted as part of a reflective cycle which includes assessment, analysis, and feedback to ensure consistent high quality programs.

Goal 3: Design and implement high quality PD for school administrators that increases their instructional leadership skills to improve student achievement

The three regions generally sponsor an annual one-day Leadership Summit in both the northern and southern sections of our state, in which our director and several trainers participate each year as presenters. Regional trainers included administrators in their trainings at the school sites – in fact, participation of administrators is preferred. The math and science grants also included

administrators from the school teams during the summer sessions. In 2014-15, support for administrators was provided for the NEPF in the form of Inter-Rater Reliability workshops and examination of the rubrics for both teachers and administrators.

Goal 4: Implement systems to measure impact of RPDP professional development on teacher effectiveness and student achievement

In addition to collecting multi-year systematic data on the scope, type, participation, and feedback from NWRPDP PD trainings, a case study approach has been employed to assess the diversity and wide-ranging impact of various training topics. These mixed method strategies are advocated by Killion (2002), and are consistent with the educator PD evaluation frameworks of Guskey (2002) and Desimone (2009). NWRPDP staff actively design and implement each evaluative case study that seeks to illustrate changes in teacher practice and student achievement as a result of the diverse PD activities employed over the past year.

Needs Assessment

The assessment of training needs of teachers and administrators are determined through a combination of planning tools and strategies, including but not limited to the following:

- Collaborative meetings with superintendents or key district personnel to identify priorities and needs on an annual basis guided by the District Performance Plan (DPP).
- Request for services from principals based on their School Performance Plan (SPP) and needs of teachers on staff.
- Collaborative planning meetings with principals and leadership teams to determine goals and objectives for designing a professional development plan.
- Collaborative work with Nevada Department of Education Initiatives to design and implement roll out plans for the NVACS as well as other state initiatives.

Regional Structure Effectiveness

The structure of the region remained consistent during the 2014-2015 school year, with all facilitators available to bring expertise to all districts in the region.

Services provided to each county in relationship to the number of schools in that county were as follows: Washoe County, which has 66% of the schools in the region, received 33.5% of the services; Carson City with 7% of the schools received about 21.3% of the services, Churchill County with 3.9% of the schools received 26.4%, Douglas County with 9% of the schools received 21.3% of the services, Lyon County with 11% of the schools received 23.2% of the services and Storey County with 2.6% of the schools received 4.4% of the services provided by trainers in the region. The balance of the trainers' time, 10.2%, was allocated to regional projects and collaborations with other state agencies.

Staffing Patterns and Roles

Staff changes were minimal during the current school year. A K-6 math facilitator position became vacant at the semester and was filled at the end of the year. A facilitator vacancy that was open throughout the year was filled with a new position for 2015-2016 to support PreK through third grade initiatives. A new administrative secretary was hired to fill a previous vacancy.

Program evaluation continues mainly to be performed in-house and to be provided by individual trainers who are supported by the entire team. Support from an external evaluator this year allowed outside eyes to critique and clarify the report. Program evaluation continues to focus on the reflective cycle to support quality professional learning throughout the region.

Learning facilitators bring experience in all content areas at both elementary and secondary levels. Additional areas of expertise include elementary and secondary literacy and NELIP; pedagogy; T4S; sheltered instruction; Understanding by Design (UbD); Student Learning Objectives (SLO); implementation of standards-based instruction focused on the NVACS; Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM); and parent involvement/family engagement. Learning facilitators update their knowledge and skills through attendance at national, regional, state, and local conferences and workshops. Staff biographies are available on the NWRPDP website located at www.nwrpdp.com. Table 1 lists staff members, their titles and areas of expertise for the current year.

Table 1: NWRPDP Staff Members, titles and areas of expertise for the 2014-15 school year

Name	Title	Area of Expertise
Kirsten Gleissner	Director	School performance/improvement planning; Leadership Team, Professional Learning Communities, and Data Team support; classroom observation and coaching; Administrative Mentoring; NVACS; NEPF
Jane Bantz	Early Literacy and Numeracy Learning Facilitator	NVACS Best Practices in literacy and numeracy, PreK – 2; NELIP; NEPF
Patrick Beckwith	Professional Learning coordinator for Storey County	Mathematics, Assessment, Administrative Mentoring, NVACS, NEPF
Kristin Campbell	K-12 Learning Facilitator	NVACS, Science and Social Studies content area literacy, Backward Lesson Design (UbD), Assessment, Student Learning Facilitator (SLF) program, T4S, Core Task Implementation Project (CTIP), Writing to Sources, Differentiated Instruction, NEPF
Georgia Coulombe	Parent Involvement/Family Engagement Facilitator	State Parent Advisory Council, training for districts and schools relative to parent involvement and family engagement, Family Friendly Schools walk through process, Parent University in Washoe County
Brian Crosby	K-12 STEM Learning Facilitator	STEM, Inquiry, Depth of Knowledge, NVACS, Differentiated Instruction, Outdoor Education, technology integration
Patty Fleming	K – 12 Mathematics and Literacy Learning Facilitator, coordinator for Churchill County	NVACS Elementary and Intermediate Math; Sheltered Instruction, Balanced Literacy; T4S; Instructional coaching; New Teacher Induction and Mentoring; Vocabulary Instruction- *OWL: Owning Words for Literacy; W*riting Traits, Differentiating Instruction, Teaching Gifted Students in the Regular Classroom; Formative Assessment; NEPF
Desiree Gray	7-12 Literacy Learning Facilitator, coordinator for Lyon County	Content Literacy, Sheltered Instruction, Academic Vocabulary, Thinking Maps, Constructed Response, Professional Learning Communities, NVACS, NEPF

Name	Title	Area of Expertise
Darl Kiernan	K-6 Literacy Striving Readers Liaison	K-6 Literacy, Word Study, NVACS, Student Learning Facilitator Program, K-6 Writing
Lou Loftin	K-12 Science Learning Facilitator	K-12 Science Inquiry, DOK, NVACS, Differentiated Instruction Science and Math, Informal Science, Outdoor Science Education, Science/Math Integration, STEM
Marissa McClish	7-12 Mathematics Learning Facilitator	NVACS in math, STEM support, Student Learning Objectives, NEPF
Jaci McCune	K-6 Mathematics Learning Facilitator, coordinator for Carson City	NVACS Elementary Math content, K-6 science support, Assessment, NEPF
Amy Salgo	K-8 Math Learning Facilitator	NVACS Elementary Math content, Backward Lesson Design, Differentiation, NEPF
Nicolette Smith	K-12 Literacy and Social Studies Learning Facilitator	Differentiated Instruction, Backward Lesson Design, Content area literacy, Student Learning Facilitator (SLF) Program, Social Studies Content, NVACS, NEPF
Carly Strauss	K-8 Mathematics Learning Facilitator, coordinator for Douglas County	NVACS, K-6 math content, Academic Vocabulary, Assessment, NEPF
Diana Walker	K-12 Literacy Learning Facilitator	NVACS content area literacy, Academic Vocabulary, Assessment, Differentiated Instruction, English Language Learners, NEPF
Katie Garcia	Support Staff	Administrative Secretary
Pam Mills	Support Staff	Administrative Assistant
Jama Sutfin	Support Staff	Administrative Secretary/Bookkeeper

Collaborations

Learning facilitators reported participation in projects which represented collaborations with other state agencies, most notably the Nevada Department of Education and the University of Nevada, Reno. This represented 10.2% of the trainers' time during the 2014-2015 school year.

Collaboration with the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) focused on NVACS initiatives, furthering the work started with representatives of the regions, districts, and state. This collaboration included the development of the State Literacy Plan and placement of resources for teachers and administrators on the NDE website in support of content standards and NEPF. Learning facilitators worked with NDE staff to gain insight and provide training on the implementation of the NVACS and the new Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) assessment system.

Regional learning facilitators collaborated with the Northern Nevada Mathematics Council to plan the fourth annual Math Academy and to present at sessions throughout the day. Over 200 local mathematics educators attended. The NWRPDP sponsored over 40 scholarships for teachers to attend the conference.

Ongoing grant collaborations included five learning facilitators who collaborated with the University of Nevada, Reno, on the Mathematics Partnership grant which provided training in

mathematics content and pedagogy for elementary school (K-6) teachers representing all six counties served by the NWRPDP. Two learning facilitators participated in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education Coalition in collaboration with the university and supported a significant grant with Project Water Education for Teachers (PWET) as well as a mathematics/science grant. Our collaboration with the Striving Readers grant and the International Reading Association produced the first ever regional International Reading Association Conference in our rural counties, hosted in Fallon. Over 150 teachers from the region attended.

Regional learning facilitators participated in a variety of other collaborative projects. Cross-regional collaboration with districts outside the region included science and STEM content in several rural counties and collaboration with the Nevada Education Association in support of National Board Certification opportunities for sixty-five teachers over three years in Washoe County School District. As a result of this collaboration, an additional cohort of thirty-five teachers from our rural districts will be added in the coming year.

What are the nature and extent of services?

Participant Counts and Training Categorizations

Professional development services are reported in two formats: unduplicated counts which show how many teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals were served in each county; and duplicated counts which reflect how many educators participated in trainings, some more than once. Tables 2 and 3 show this data.

Table 2: Unduplicated Number of Educators Trained by the NWRPDP

District	ES Teachers	MS Teachers	HS Teachers	Administrators	Others*	Total by District
Carson	261	119	36	40	31	487
Churchill	98	31	37	8	12	186
Douglas	234	54	85	30	37	440
Lyon	290	110	133	32	21	586
Storey	11	12	14	2	2	41
Washoe	883	178	131	200	156	1548
Totals	1777	504	436	312	259	3288

Table 3: Duplicated Number of Educators Trained by the NWRPDP

District	ES Teachers	MS Teachers	HS Teachers	Administrators	Others*	Total by District
Carson	1017	354	98	225	122	1816
Churchill	468	137	96	21	25	747
Douglas	784	99	112	132	63	1190
Lyon	800	302	226	121	48	1497
Storey	30	30	28	4	2	94
Washoe	1665	258	187	340	242	2692
Totals	4764	1180	747	843	502	8036

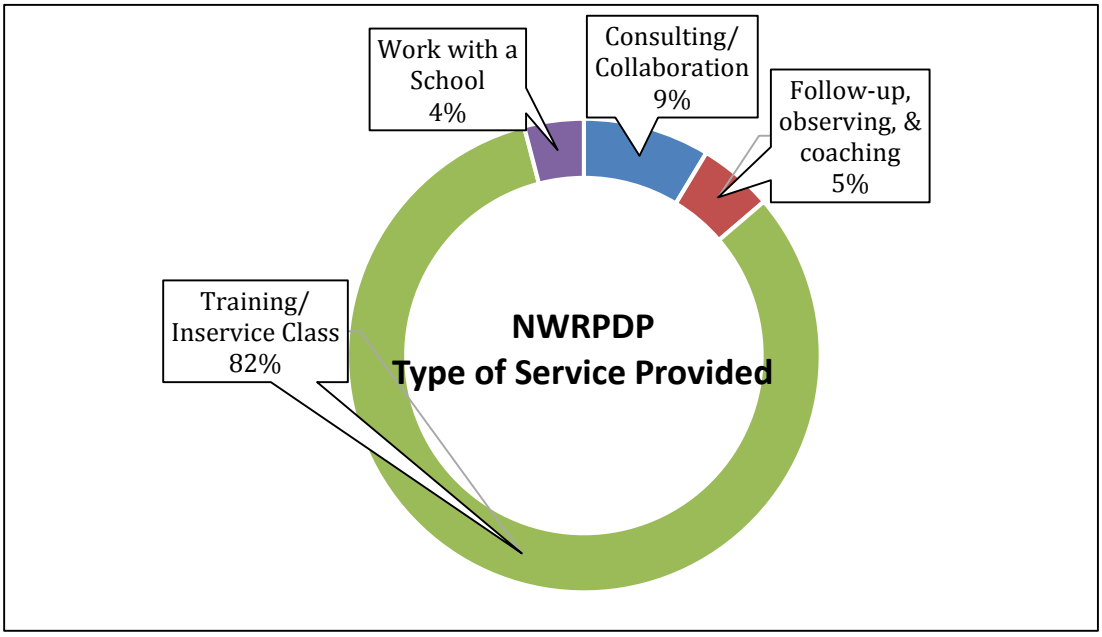
*Others in Tables 2 and 3 included certified personnel who did not specify a grade level, substitutes, school counselors, district-level certified positions, and other participants such as parents and community members.

A total of 3,288 educators, 62.4% of the approximate 5,267 educators employed in the region (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013), participated in programs provided by the NWRPDP during 2014-2015 (unduplicated count). In Carson City, 97% of the teachers and administrators participated in programs, 81% of the teachers and administrators in Churchill County participated in programs, in Douglas County 100% participated, 100% of the certified staff in Lyon County, in Storey County 100%, and 42% of teachers and administrators in Washoe County were served. Many educators attended programs on more than one occasion, resulting in a total of 8036 contacts between the NWRPDP and educators during the year (duplicated count).

Type and Focus of Services

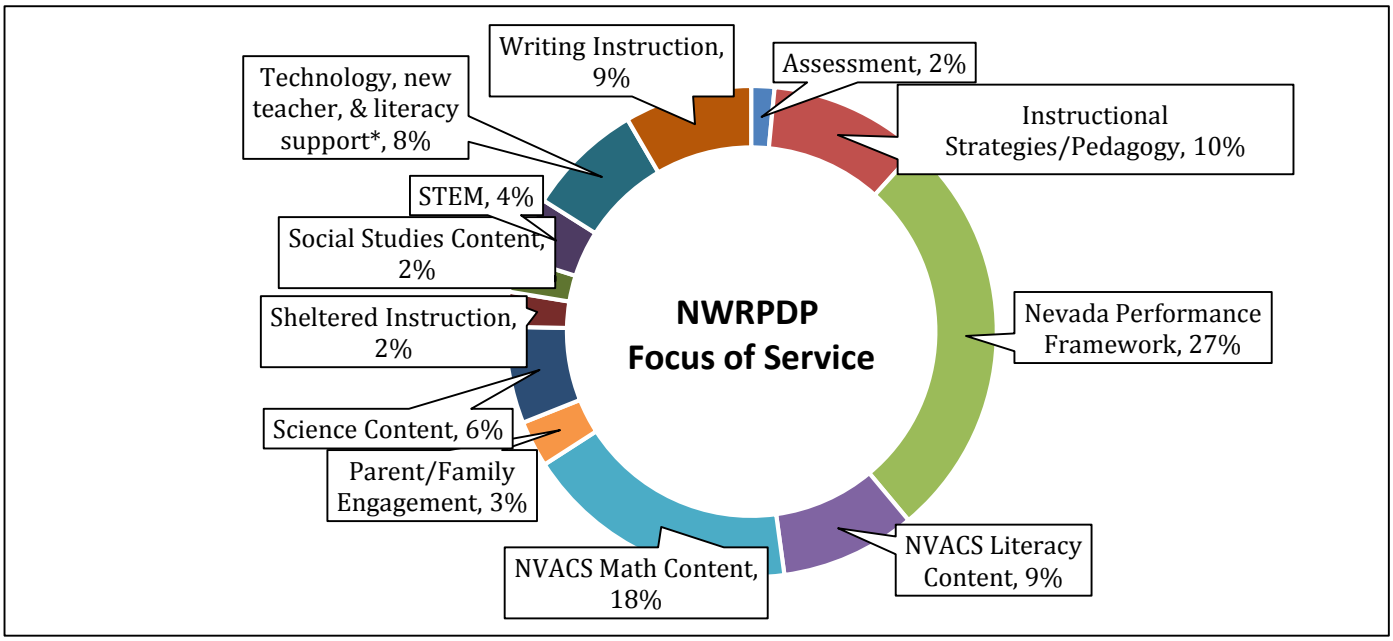
The NWRPDP provides a wide variety of services for the six counties in the region. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of the types of services provided by regional trainers throughout the district with a significant majority of services being in the form of training and in-service classes for the 2014-15 school year.

Figure 1: Types of Services Provided by the NWRPDP



Another measure of services is the focus of the services provided. This measure looks at the content of the services offered in the region (See Figure 2). The major areas of services provided in the region for the 2014-2015 school year were the ongoing focus training of the Nevada Educator Performace Framework (NEPF) and the implementation of the Nevada Academic Content Standards in math, literacy (including writing), and science/STEM.

Figure 2: Focus of Services of the NWRPDP



Types of Services Provided by District

Carson City School District has eleven schools: six elementary schools, two middle schools, one comprehensive high school, one alternative high school, and one charter school. One full-time learning facilitator is housed in Carson. Training focused mainly on the Nevada Educator Performance Framework and Nevada Academic Content Standards in math (See Appendix F).

Churchill County School District has six schools: one pre-K and Kindergarten school, three elementary schools, one middle school, and one comprehensive high school. There is also a charter school in Churchill County which received support. A full-time Learning Facilitator coordinates services for Churchill County. Primary areas supported by regional learning facilitators this year were Instructional Strategies and Pedagogy, Nevada Academic Content Standards in math, and the Nevada Educator Performance Framework followed by science and STEM (See Appendix G).

Douglas County School District has fourteen schools: seven elementary schools, three middle schools, and four high school schools. A full-time Learning Facilitator coordinated services for Douglas County. The majority of services provided this year were in support of the Nevada Educator Performance Framework and implementation of the Nevada Academic Content Standards in math (See Appendix H).

Lyon County School District has seventeen schools in five communities (Yerington, Dayton, Fernley, Smith Valley and Silver Springs): eight elementary schools, four intermediate schools, four high schools, one K-8 school, and one K-12 school. A full-time facilitator coordinates services for Lyon County. Services were focused this year on the Nevada Educator Performance Framework followed by the Nevada Academic Content Standards in math (See Appendix I).

Storey County School District has four schools and one part-time Learning Facilitator dedicated to organizing professional development for the district. Storey County received services in implementing the Nevada Academic Content Standards in math and the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (See Appendix J).

Washoe County School District is the largest school district in the region with 102 schools: 62 elementary schools, 15 middle schools, 15 high schools, one K-12 school, one online school, and eight charter schools. Washoe received services in support of the Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS) in math and literacy (including writing) and introduction of the Nevada Educator Performance Framework for administrators (See Appendix K).

What is the quality of NWRPDP professional development?

Participant Rating of Quality of Training

At the conclusion of every training or project participants were asked to evaluate the training using the form designed and implemented by the Statewide Coordinating Council (See Appendix C). The data in Table 4 shows the average ratings for all trainings provided in the region over the past three years (see Table 4). In reviewing the ratings in this table, it is notable how consistent and high participant ratings have been over the past 3-year training cycles. The highest levels of satisfaction regarding trainings this past year were in items related to the expertise of the facilitators and the delivery of instruction during trainings, particularly providing opportunities for interaction and reflection. Areas for examination and growth included matching trainings to teachers' perceived needs and connecting professional learning to the needs of diverse students. The data for item 6 (knowledge of standards and/or subject matter content) may be influenced negatively because participants fail to mark "not applicable" when trainings such as sheltered instruction or pedagogical strategies are not centered on content standards.

Table 4: Participant Mean Ratings on Quality of RPDP Trainings

	2012-2013 Rating	2013-2014 Rating	2014-2015 Rating
1. The activity matched my needs	4.4	4.4	4.4
2. The activity provided opportunities for interactions and reflections.	4.7	4.7	4.7
3. The presenter/facilitator's experience and expertise enhanced the quality of the activity.	4.7	4.7	4.7
4. The presenter/facilitator efficiently managed time and pacing of activities.	4.7	4.7	4.7
5. The presenter/facilitator modeled effective teaching strategies	4.6	4.6	4.6
6. This activity added to my knowledge of standards and/or subject matter content.	4.5	4.5	4.5
7. The activity will improve my teaching skills	4.5	4.4	4.4
8. I will use the knowledge and skills from this activity in my classroom or professional duties	4.5	4.5	4.5
9. This activity will help me meet the needs of diverse student populations (e.g., gifted and talented, ELL, special ed., at-risk students).	4.4	4.4	4.4
(Scale: 1 = not at all: 3 = to some extent; 5 = to a great extent)			

Internal Assessment for Quality Assurance

The region uses an internal program evaluation model as recommended in the *Evaluation Report: Nevada Regional Professional Development Program 2004-2005 and 2005-2006.* Positive feedback from constituents on the expansion of the case study model to include a wide variety of projects throughout the region provided direction for the NWRPDP to maintain this model. Case studies which document a broad spectrum of the work of the region and represent the work of all trainers are included in this report. Projects were designed based on the backwards planning model from *Assessing Impact: Evaluating Staff Development* by Killion (2002). Procedures for assessing constituents' needs and project data collection are continually refined.

Professional Learning Standards

In 2015, the Statewide Coordinating Council reconfirmed the adoption of the *Standards for Professional Learning* (Learning Forward, 2011) which serves as the basis for internal evaluation of all projects. These standards are incorporated into NWRPDP planning as learning communities that help staff monitor critical aspects of their professional learning implementation. The NWRPDP staff mean ratings of standards implementation reported below reflect the application of these standards to their training activities and consultation throughout the region for the year. NWRPDP facilitators use the standards for self-reflection and rate themselves on each of the seven elements using a descriptive rubric (see Appendix A). The rating scale range includes 0 (not applicable), 1 (ineffective), 2 (minimally effective), 3 (effective), and 4 (highly effective).

LEARNING COMMUNITIES:

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

Implementation rating: *3 Effective*

Rationale and evidence: Participants are engaged in continuous improvement and follow up, take responsibility for the learning, and participate in creating alignment and accountability at least 75% of the time.

LEADERSHIP:

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

Implementation rating: *3.7 between Effective and Highly Effective*

Rationale and evidence: The project is designed to develop capacity in participants and creates support systems for on-going learning.

RESOURCES:

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

Implementation rating: *3.5 between Effective and Highly Effective*

Rationale and evidence: There is evidence of a system in place to prioritize, monitor and coordinate human, fiscal, material, technology, and time resources to support the project until all participants are trained.

DATA:
Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning
Implementation rating: *3 Effective*
Rationale and evidence: Student, educator, and system data is analyzed initially to plan the project and at the end to evaluate the project.

LEARNING DESIGNS:
Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.
Implementation rating: *3.7 between Effective and Highly Effective*
Rationale and evidence: Learning theories, research, and models of human learning which emphasize active engagement are used consistently by facilitators to plan and deliver the learning. Active engagement is emphasized in training.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.
Implementation rating: *3.5 between Effective and Highly Effective*
Rationale and evidence: Change research is consistently applied and follow up systems are sometimes in place to sustain implementation; constructive feedback is provided occasionally to participants as they implement new learning.

OUTCOMES:
Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students aligns its outcomes with educator performances and student curriculum standards.
Implementation rating: *3.7 between Effective and Highly Effective*
Rationale and evidence: Educator performance standards are considered throughout the project and learning outcomes are aligned and build coherence throughout the school or district.

Areas of strength for implementation of the Standards for Professional Learning were reported in developing leadership and capacity in participants, utilizing research-based learning designs, and increasing focus on outcomes for participants. Areas for growth were identified as the consistent use of data for planning and assessment of student learning as related to professional learning as well as the need for more structured systems for monitoring and coordinating resources to support long-term projects.

Research and Development Base
Professional development (PD) based on current educational literature and aligned to the Standards for Professional Learning (see Appendix A) is the foundation of the NWRPDP's work. A list of the references cited in this report and on which the case studies are based can be found starting on page 65.

How does the NWRPDP measure training effectiveness?

The Case Study Model

The NWRPDP has utilized the case study model to document its work over several years. The regional program has continued an internal evaluation model, which involves a team of facilitators and incorporates case studies from projects throughout the region to document not only the diversity and wide-ranging impact of the work, but also, in some cases, to document the long term effects of the support provided to teachers in the region. Evaluative case studies facilitate exploration of complex phenomena within their contexts—in this case, professional development (PD) within schools and districts--using a variety of data sources. This ensures that PD is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows training effectiveness to be revealed and understood more fully (Guskey, 2002; Yin, 2003). NWRPDP staff actively design and implement each evaluative case study that seeks to illustrate changes in teacher practice and student achievement as a result of the diverse professional learning activities employed over the past year. Thus, the following 11 case studies are focused evaluation investigations that incorporate mixed-method research designs to illustrate the breadth of training, variety of topics, and depth of consultation employed by NWRPDP staff over the past year.

The Impact of Writing Instruction on the Quality of Student Writing

An urban elementary school implemented a school-wide writing focus. Within the first year, 3rd through 5th grade students' writing complexity increased dramatically. Throughout the year, the percentage of students at a level 1 and 2 complexity level (i.e., information density, passage length, language forms, and vocabulary) decreased and the percentage of students at levels 3 and 4 increased.

Introduction

At one Washoe elementary school, the staff were in the first year of implementing a school-wide focus on writing with the overarching question, "How does a comprehensive but flexible PK-6 writing professional learning plan impact student writing development for grades 3-6?"

Instructional Context

The school was an urban elementary school with 450 students. It was a majority minority school. The school had a high Individualized Education Program (IEP) population (20.67%), a high English Language Learner (ELL) population (45.56%), a high transiency rate (46.8%), and a high Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL) population (99.3%).

The school day was scheduled into blocks with priority for the literacy and math blocks. ELL and special education services were mostly push-in to the general education classroom. However, there were two full time Comprehensive Learning Skills (CLS) programs that were pullout with some push in. The entire staff had GLAD training (Guided Language Acquisition Design), including new teachers. The PK-3 teachers have had year-long intensive early literacy training. The 4-6 grade teachers had year-long intensive training focused on high leverage instructional literacy strategies, learning targets, and formative assessment.

Participants included teachers for grades 3-6 and six students in each of their classes. There were nine total teachers, however, the two 6th grade teachers and their students were not included in this case study due to inconsistency in the teaching staff. Of the included teachers, one was a new teacher and six were experienced teachers with at least 10 years of experience. Six students were randomly selected from each of the classrooms to follow their writing progression.

Initial Data and Planning

For the 2012-2013 school year, the writing results indicated that 75% of the 5th grade students at the school failed to meet writing standards. Only 25% met the standard, and zero students exceeded the standard. In addition, the ELPA (English Language Proficiency Assessment) data indicated that ELLs across grade levels scored significantly lower in reading than the other three language skills (reading, speaking, and listening).

At the end of the 2013-14 school year, under the principal's guidance, the staff chose a school-wide writing focus for the 2014-15 school year. They used the Lucy Calkins Units of Study resources. Every teacher evaluated student writing at the beginning and end of each focus genre. The professional learning plan was tailored to the school site, which included planning, coaching, and PD support. In addition, two forms of data were collected throughout the year, including six pre- and post-writing samples from the 3-6 grade classrooms to analyze for language complexity for each of the three genres using a language complexity rubric. Teacher reflection data was also gathered at monthly professional learning support meetings during half day early release times, which included exit tickets for what teachers valued in terms of content and what they would like next.

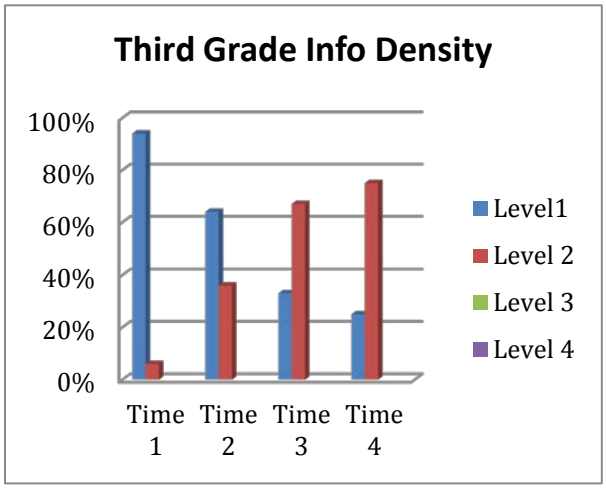
Delivery of Services

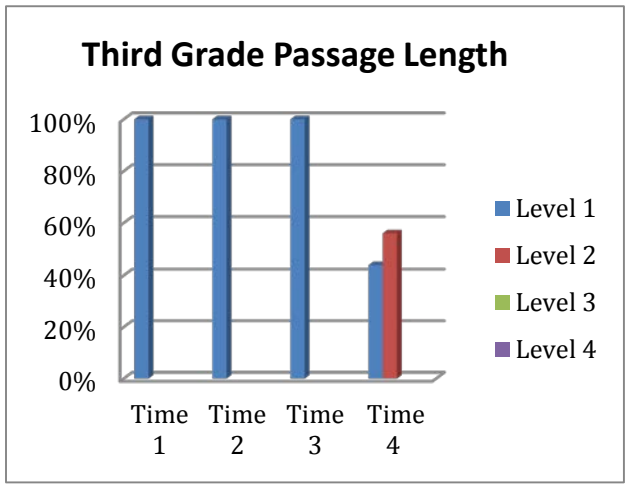
Services were delivered in several ways, including at seven half-day professional development sessions focused on structure of the Writer's Workshop, conferencing, writing learning targets, and student growth. There were five optional after school sessions that provided extended resources on the topics, personal coaching, and feedback during the school day.

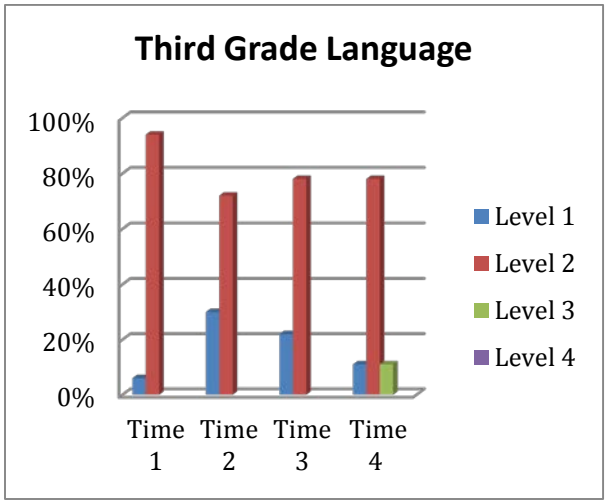
Results and Reflection

The results indicated that the complexity of 3rd through 5th grade students' writing increased during the school year (Tables 1-3). The percentage of students at level 1 in all four categories (information density, passage length, language forms, and vocabulary) decreased and the percentage of students at the higher levels increased from time 1 to time 4.

Table 1. Third Grade Language Complexity Rubric Results.







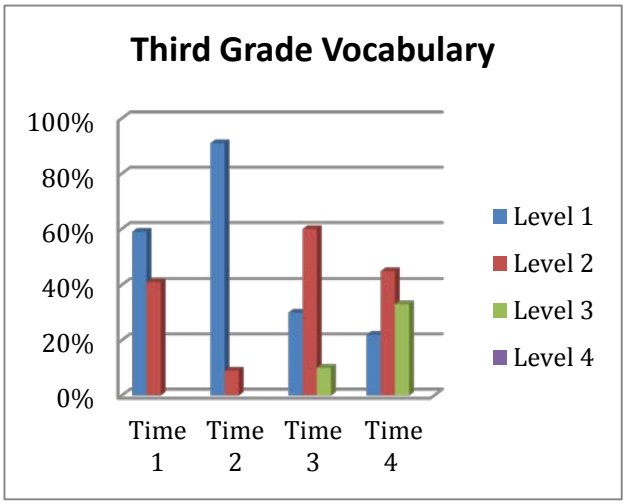
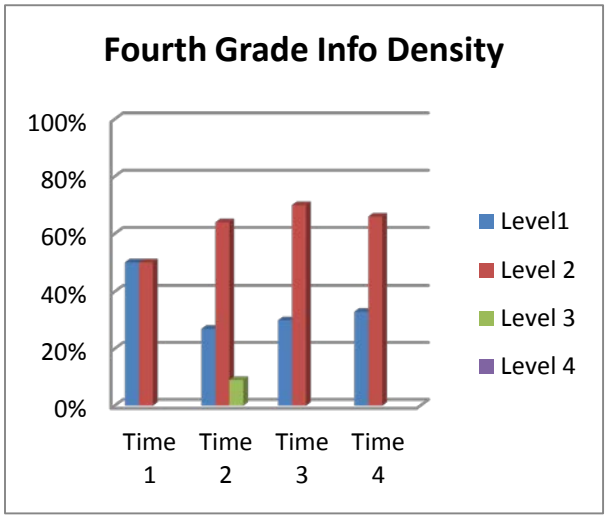
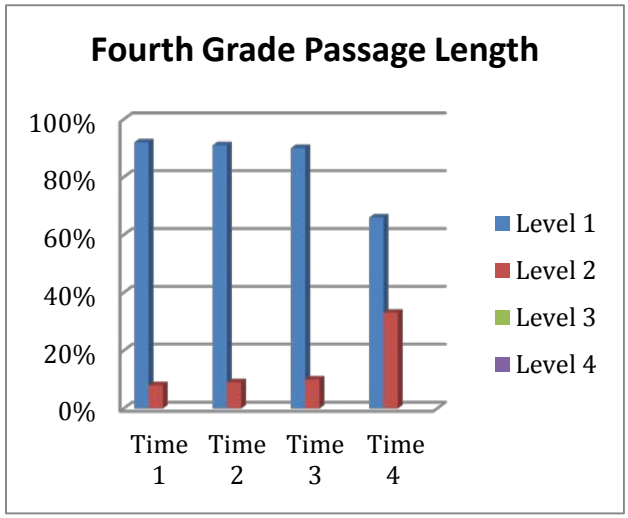
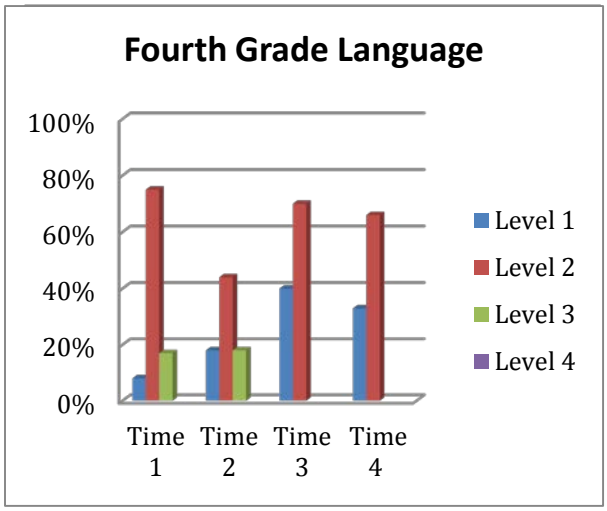


Table 2. Fourth Grade Language Complexity Rubric Results.







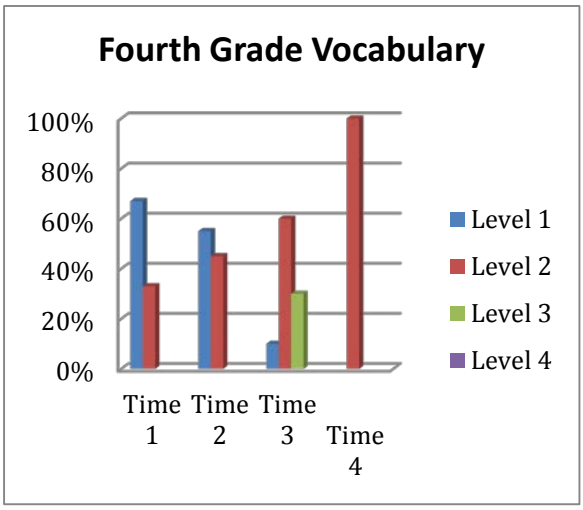
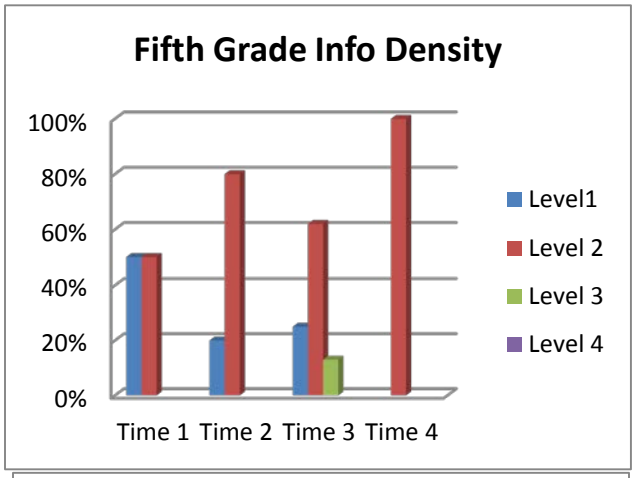
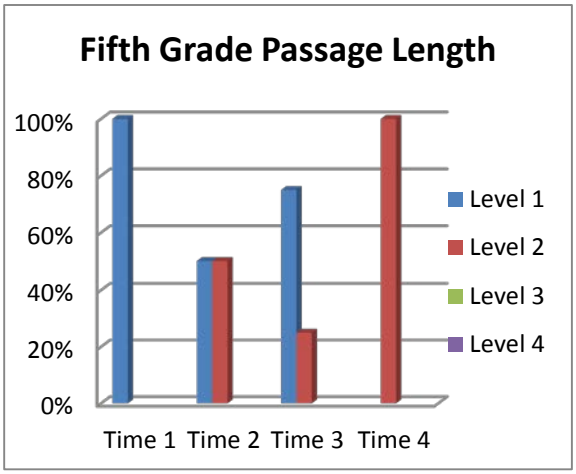
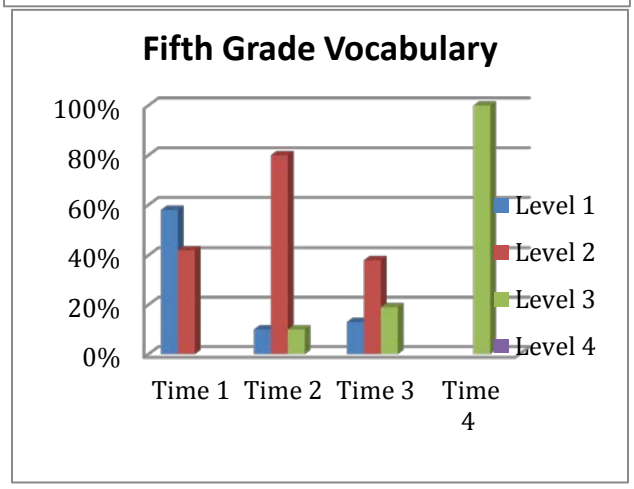
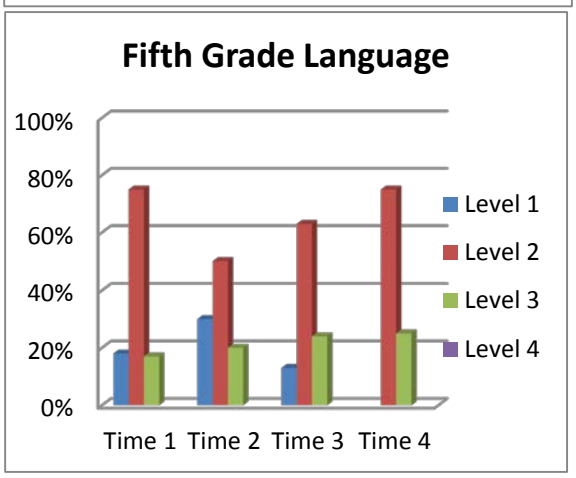


Table 3. Fifth Grade Language Complexity Rubric Results









Teacher reflections also indicated that students' writing stamina increased. In addition, teachers were able to identify and focus on specific writing learning targets for students (Table 4).

Table 4. One Washoe Elementary School Writing Focus 2014-2015: Teacher Reflections.

Grade	Instructional focus	Skills learned/almost learned	Important skills not yet learned
3rd	Organization	Lead	Elaboration
	Transitions	Stamina	Paragraphing
	Lead	Organization	Sentence structure
	Elaboration	Talking about writing	Information density
4th	Beginnings	Organization	Conclusions
	Endings	Focus on topic	Passage length
		Stamina	
		Transitions	
		Elaboration	
		Punctuation	
5th	Lead	Lead	Transitions
	Organization	Organization	Editing
	Stamina	Stamina	Real revision
	Conclusions/endings	Elaboration	
		Citing sources	
6th	Organization	Clear topic sentence	Citing sources
	Coherence	Stamina	Conclusions
	Leads	Elaboration	Awareness of audience
	Endings	Organization	Content specific

Conclusion

This project was designed to identify appropriate targets for students' writing and learning and to use available resources to teach lessons focused on the learning targets. The most powerful part of the process was how teachers targeted instruction based upon student work. As a result, the overwhelming task of teaching writing became more manageable, focused, and effective. Teacher feedback on the year-long project supports this conclusion. Below are teacher comments collected through an end-of-year e-survey. The question was, "What changed in your instruction for the better?" Selected responses include:

"My writing instruction was more focused and more consistent because we had goals as a school that we wanted to meet."

- "Mini lessons were kept mini, and I had time for more individual instruction."
- "My writing instruction was more focused and more consistent because we had goals as a school that we wanted to meet. The prewriting and post writing scores also gave us direction of what we needed to teach in between."

Robust Vocabulary: A School-Wide Collaboration

In a rural elementary school, 21 teachers were involved in a robust vocabulary program that increased word knowledge and comprehension by using direct and interactive instruction, such as writing definitions and drawing pictures to illustrate meaning.

Introduction

Vocabulary knowledge is the single best predictor of students' reading ability, comprehension, and academic success. Therefore, it is emphasized throughout the Nevada Academic Content Standards. Specifically, the standards set the expectation for elementary students to acquire and accurately use a range of general academic words and phrases. Currently, a wide word gap exists between students in poverty and more advantaged students. This persistent gap in word knowledge is known as "word poverty."

Instructional Context

This case study was conducted at a rural elementary school in Churchill County, Nevada. It is a Focus school with a three star rating serving 496 students. Over half of the school's population receives free or reduced price lunch. The student body is mainly comprised of Caucasian students with a growing population of children identified as Hispanic. The table below shows the demographic breakdown (Table 1).

Table 1. Student demographics at this rural elementary school.

Race	**% of students**
White	63%
Hispanic	20%
American Indian	7%
Bi- or Multi-racial	7%
Asian	2%
African American	1%

Sub-population areas	**% of students**
Individualized education program (IEP)	14%
English language learners (ELL)	12%
Free or reduced lunch (FRL)	55%

Data and Planning

Scores obtained on the Criterion Reference Test (CRT) among sub-groups including IEP, ELL, and FRL revealed that many students were not proficient in their reading. Walk-through observations using the Teach 4 Success (T4S) protocol showed that academic vocabulary was not being addressed during instruction. Findings from a large body of research suggest that students from low-income families and students learning English as an additional language face a large deficit in English vocabulary throughout their elementary years (Manyak et al., 2014).

In order to address this word gap among the students, the well- established research of Isabel Beck and colleagues (2008) known as robust vocabulary instruction guided the planning for this professional learning project. When vocabulary instruction is direct and interactive, word knowledge and comprehension of text containing target words can significantly increase. First, a

regular routine should be established for introducing words. Review experiences are then provided to promote deep processing of the selected vocabulary. Additionally, teachers should structure interactions with words that hold all students accountable for learning.

For young students who may not yet be skilled readers, the read aloud offers an opportunity to learn sophisticated words by listening to picture books with rich language. Effective "read alouds" entail interactive and quality conversations around targeted words. Table 2 presents the steps for teaching targeted words after a read aloud.

Table 2. Steps for Introducing General Academic Words after the Read Aloud

Instructional Step	**Example**
1. Show students the word and present the word in the context in which is appears in the text.	In the story, the girl did not hear the menacing rumble of thunder.
2. Provide a student-friendly definition.	Menacing means threatening. Something menacing makes you expect danger.
3. Provide an additional context outside of the story.	The dog looked menacing when I came into the yard because the hair on its back was standing up.
4. Prompt students to use the word and increase their depth of knowledge.	Think of an animal that might be menacing. Make sure you use the word menacing. "A ____ is menacing because…"

In 2014, a total of 21 teachers were introduced to this model of robust vocabulary instruction (Table 3).

Table 3. Teacher participants by Grade Level or Teaching Position

Grade/Position	**# of Teachers**
1st	5
2nd	4
3rd	4
4th	3
ELL	1
Title 1	1
Resource	3

The work was framed around the following essential questions:

- *In what ways will teachers need to shift their practice to teach vocabulary acquisition that meets the Nevada Academic Content Standards?*
- *How do we identify and teach general academic words within our literacy instruction?*
- *How can teachers use Robust Vocabulary to increase student performance, and how can we assess for understanding?*

Teachers were provided with a high-quality picture book and a 5-day lesson plan that included step-by-step directions for introducing and reviewing words by providing meaningful

interactions with them throughout the week. The lesson also included an assessment component.

Monthly facilitated trainings continued during the 2014-2015 school year. Initial sessions focused on assisting teachers in selecting quality picture books for reading aloud by using a qualitative measures rubric to evaluate text complexity. Participants also learned how to select five to seven general academic words from the text for instruction. These words are also referred to as Tier 2 words and typically have abstract definitions and appear with high frequency in texts across all content areas. Examples include: *inspired, structure, and conclusion.* Teachers then met in grade level Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to create robust vocabulary lessons using a template to guide the writing process. NWRPDP facilitators provided written feedback for the team to consider prior to teaching the lesson. The PLC met again to reflect on instruction and make additional refinements. Revised lessons were then published on the Washoe Striving Readers Website. http://washoestrivingreaders.com/robust-vocabulary/

Additional content for the learning included ways to develop effective vocabulary instruction by building a word rich classroom. Teachers were encouraged to begin by developing a general academic word wall using the target words from the picture books.

Results and Reflection

The facilitators conducted two days of classroom visits and follow-up coaching for each teacher during October. Classes were observed for 20 minutes followed by a 15 minute debriefing and coaching session. An observation tool adapted from Blachowicz and Fisher's (2010) checklist of a quality vocabulary program was used to guide observations and discussions. Information gathered from these observations and conversations with teachers were used in planning and refining content for the next PLC meeting in December.

In February, two days of instructional rounds were scheduled. The purpose of the rounds was to provide an opportunity for teachers to observe instruction and collect evidence of vocabulary learning in colleagues' classrooms. Groups of three teachers along with the facilitators observed for a total of 15 minutes in three different classrooms. Observers were provided with a note-taker to gather evidence showing application of learning from robust vocabulary instruction. These elements included: a word rich environment, student words logs, assessments of word learning, and content integration. Each team convened after the instructional round to reflect on observations and plan for future learning opportunities.

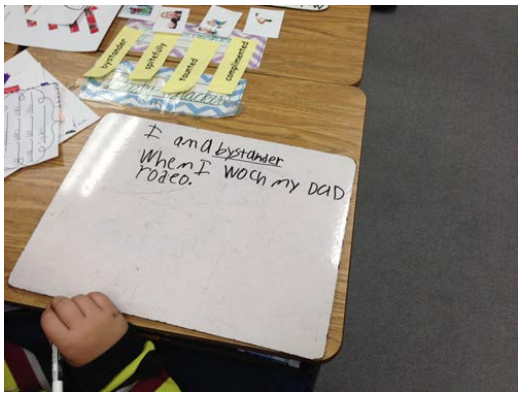
Nearly all the classrooms had general academic word walls, and many offered picture support to accompany the words. The following first and second grade examples are representative.

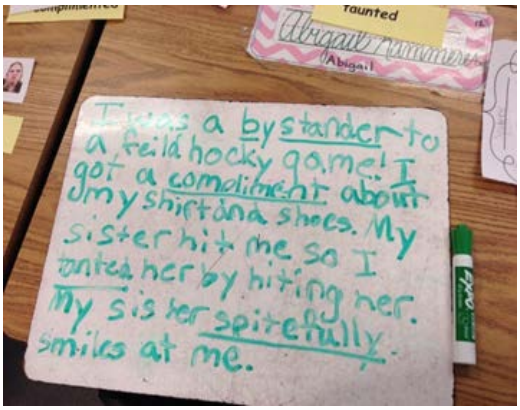
First Grade Word Wall

Second Grade Word Wall

Opportunities for students to deeply process the words were also observed. The teams saw children in two classrooms drawing pictures on white boards and recording sentences to illustrate the meaning of words as shown in the third grade white board review below**.**

Third Grade White Board Review

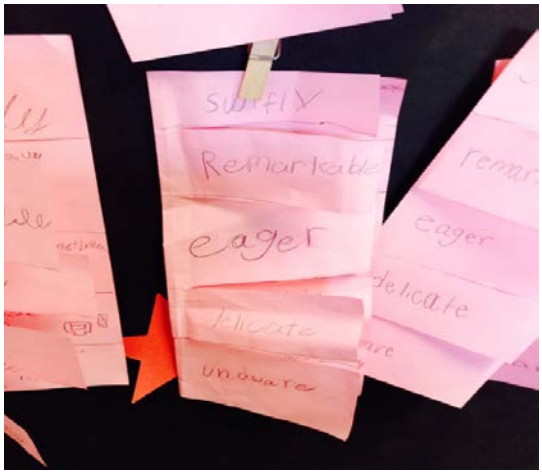




It is important to provide multiple encounters with words and provide examples of how students revisited words by writing definitions and drawing pictures to illustrate meaning, as demonstrated in the following third and fourth grade pictures.

Third Grade Work Samples

Fourth Grade Work Samples



The response to this professional learning was overwhelmingly positive. Participants were enthusiastic about the results in student learning. The following comments show several samples gathered from an evaluation.

Evaluation Comments

- *"It's exciting to see the students using the new vocabulary and feeling proud when they do. I have also seen how the vocabulary is remembered and that they have retained words and definitions."*
- *"I think Robust Vocabulary has increased students learning and understanding of words that were unknown."*
- *"These classes have given me great strategies to engage students in authentic learning*
- *"As a grade level we have already planned a common book/lesson to teach each month of the year. "*
- *"I loved the enthusiasm of the presenters. They modeled well and made vocabulary fun to teach. "*
- *"Thanks for all your valuable and useful information, strategies, and coaching you have given me. I really appreciate your special help in teaching second language children. Vocabulary is so important and new ways to teach it are so valuable to me as a teacher. "*
- *"I am getting relevant, useable ideas from our trainings."*

Conclusion

Given that 48 percent of reading achievement can be predicted by vocabulary knowledge, the need for effective vocabulary instruction throughout the elementary grades is clear. The teachers at this rural elementary school have shifted their practice to provide on-going robust vocabulary instruction that meets the expectations of the Nevada Academic Content Standards. Additional teacher-created resources will be added to the Washoe Striving Readers website to support the sustainability of continued work with academic words from high quality picture books.

Content Area Literacy Strategies

In the Lyon County School District, content area literacy strategies supported students' ability to successfully navigate information in textbooks and literature. Teachers appreciated guided practice with new resources and collaboration with their colleagues.

Introduction/Abstract

The first and foremost objective of professional development for teachers is to create college and career ready students who are successful thinkers, problem solvers, decision makers, and ultimately, lifelong learners. In order to accomplish this goal, students need to be able to read and write effectively across content areas.

The primary goal of this study was to provide teachers with the opportunity to improve instruction in teaching students to read, comprehend, analyze, and interpret text across subject areas. In addition, teachers participated in professional development that required them to look at grade level literary and informational text, write text-based questions, and plan lessons that require students to use literacy strategies such as using before, during, and after reading strategies. Best teaching practices were explored and implemented to meet the needs of students with varied reading levels, cultures, and linguistic backgrounds. Teachers explored and practiced specific skills and standards directed in the Lyon County School District Instructional Units and the Nevada Academic Content Standards. Collaboration time emphasized content area reading as well as preparation for state assessments in literacy.

Instructional Context

Teachers who participated in the case study were from an intermediate school in Lyon County, NV. Teaching experience ranged from first year teachers to veteran teachers. There were approximately 30 certified teachers. Teachers participated in training during their collaboration time, once a month throughout the year. This school was designated as a Four Star School during the 2013-14 school year. The student population in 2014-2015 was approximately 549 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Lyon County Intermediate School Student Characteristics.

Race	% of students
White	65%
Hispanic	21%
Native American	3%
Bi- or Multi-racial	8%

Sub-population areas	% of students
Individualized education program (IEP)	13%
English language learners (ELL)	5%
Free or reduced lunch (FRL)	49%

Initial Data and Planning

The initial planning of the PD project came as a request from the principal in support of the School Performance Plan. The primary goal and objective listed in the School Performance Plan was for students to demonstrate proficiency in determining what a text says specifically, make logical inferences from their reading, and cite specific textual evidence when writing to support

conclusions from text. Literacy needs are also specified as an area of improvement in the school improvement plan.

The teachers took an interest/needs inventory and indicated need in several areas of content literacy such as close reading; text based questions; summarizing; and before, during, and after reading strategies; specifically to help students become proficient citing evidence from text, thinking critically, and improving overall growth in reading and responding in different content areas.

Delivery of Services

Teachers participated in collaboration time each Friday from 7:00-8:15. Trainings were held monthly from August through May of 2014-15. Content Area Literacy strategies were the highlight of the collaboration sessions. The facilitator also completed eighteen hours of professional development on the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) with the staff. Content Area Literacy strategies were reviewed in the context of this forthcoming new teacher evaluation system.

Results and Reflection

Evaluation data were collected in the form of survey ratings and annotations. The teacher survey results in Table 2 below reflect pre- and post-assessment feedback about specific Nevada Academic Reading Standards.

Table 2. 2014-2015 Course Assessment and Feedback Scale: 1 (low) to 5 (high)

Question	Before	After	Change
I have an understanding of NVACS Reading Anchor Standard 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	2.5	4.1	**+1.7**
I feel confident in my ability to implement NVACS Reading Anchor Standard 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text in my own work.	2.6	4.2	**+1.6**
I have an understanding of before, during, and after reading strategies that help students access my content area.	2.6	4.2	**+1.7**
I feel confident in my ability to implement before, during, and after reading strategies that help students access my content area.	2.5	4.3	**+1.8**

Qualitative data was also collected in the form of annotations--examples include:
"Which strategy, idea, example or practice helped you increase student understanding of content area text?

- Seeing differences in text structure and applying appropriate strategies
- Wealth of mentor text used to model strategies
- Examples of activities that can be used across subject areas
- Exploring and practicing multiple reading strategies that could be used immediately with students
- Guided practice using step-by-step hands-on activities to use with students
- Being able to discuss ideas, collaborate with others, and reflect on teaching practice
- Receiving resources and ideas on implementing content literacy, especially graphic organizers, flipbooks, and complex text possibilities
- Breaking things down to the basics to see how students might learn material best
- Availability and follow-up from presenter

Conclusion
It is evident from the data collected that content area literacy strategies such as annotating text and close reading were teaching practices that supported students' ability to successfully navigate information in textbooks and literature. Participants appreciated guided practice with new resources and collaboration with their colleagues. It was indicated that further training is needed for continued professional development in the area of content literacy.

Blended Learning on the Comstock

Use of the Ready Common Core instructional materials is reaping benefits, particularly at the elementary school level in Storey County School District.

Introduction
The Storey County School District is in its second year of implementing new instructional materials and methods, along with interim assessments and student interventions, which align with the Nevada Academic Content Standards. This alignment, in grades K-8 in both mathematics and language arts, fits into the core belief system of the SCSD, which is grounded in the idea that a vertically aligned curriculum is the foundation on which student achievement and growth are built.

The SCSD believes that the fundamental purpose of any school or district is to ensure that all students learn at high levels. All staff must be committed to becoming a lifelong learner to make this a reality. Collaborative teamwork and interdependence among teachers and administrators allows schools and districts to continuously improve and not become stagnant.

Instructional Context
Storey County is a rural school district with four schools. The student population is approximately 425 students.

Since the inception of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2002, all four schools, as well as the district, have made adequate yearly progress (AYP) as measured by NCLB. In 2013 and 2014, the first two years of the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF), all four schools were rated as 3-star schools. Despite being one of only two Nevada districts to have this level of success, academic challenges still exist due to the small, rural, and isolated nature of the district and the schools. With Nevada's transition to a school accountability system based largely on student growth, and not proficiency, Storey County is moving to a blending learning model for its instructional and assessment methods.

Data and Planning

In the final few weeks of the 2013-14 school year, the site administrators, along with the district's chief academic officer, met with each certified staff member. The teachers were surveyed about their instructional needs, both short and long term. The most common response was a strong desire to maintain the use of a blended learning model for consistent instructional content, methods and assessments across grade levels. For 2013-14, *Ready Common Core Mathematics* and *Ready Common Core Reading*, developed by Curriculum Associates, were selected as the primary instructional materials in grades K-8. Additionally, the district adopted *I-Ready Diagnostic and Instruction* (Curriculum Associates), a computer based program, to use for both diagnostic and interim assessments as well as remediation and extension activities. These programs were maintained for 2014-15. As a companion piece, the district also expanded the use of the *Time to Know* computer based curriculum in math and language arts, from just 4th and 5th grades to all middle school grades as well.

In the two years of transition from AYP to NSPF the Storey County School District has been High Achieving-Low Growth in both mathematics and English language arts. The *Time to Know, Ready Common Core, and I-Ready* programs allow for consistent standards-based instruction across grade levels. Teachers now have the advantage of *I-Ready* student data generating instructional interventions for each individual student. This will assist each student to demonstrate both proficiency and growth. The goal of the SCSD is for each of the four schools to be High Achieving-High Growth in both content areas.

Delivery of Services

The Storey County School District conducted five full-day trainings beginning in August 2014. Two of the days were devoted to initial *Time to Know* training for the middle school staff, as well as a day of refresher training for the elementary teachers. All staff also had a day dedicated to *Ready Common Core* and *I-Ready.* The teaching staff spent the day learning about updates to the *I-Ready Diagnostic and Instruction* program. *I-Ready* instruction delivers online lessons at each student's level based on results from the online adaptive diagnostic. Teachers were trained on how to incorporate the online student lessons and teacher resources to successfully support a blended learning environment. This alignment of standards, assessments, instruction, and content is a bold foundational shift for the SCSD.

In early November all staff from grades 4-8 received follow-up trainings on *Time to Know* to assess their progress and answer any questions since the implementation in August. Additionally, each teacher was observed monthly throughout the school year by the Storey County RPDP Trainer to determine the progress and effectiveness of the implementations.

Results and Reflection

Three *I-Ready* diagnostic assessments were administered during the 2014-15 school year at two elementary schools and one middle school. Students took the assessments in September, January, and May. Student growth reports for the *I-Ready* assessments demonstrate that the use of the *Ready Common Core* instructional materials is reaping benefits, particularly at the elementary school level. Table 1 below shows school wide progress towards targeted growth and is based on an average across all students. This data demonstrates the impact of the *Ready Common Core* curriculum.

Table 1. Progress toward Targeted Growth (Average across All Students) – Target 100%

School	Math	Reading
Elementary School 'A'	166%	137%
Elementary School 'B'	126%	145%
Middle School	105%	98%

This data is limited, but encouraging. In five of the six areas the average student growth exceeded the student growth targets. The lack of comparative data from the SBAC (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium) tests make it difficult to document that the current interventions are increasing student success and growth.

In five of the six areas the average student growth exceeded the student growth targets.

Conclusion

The initial transition to *Time to Know* at the middle school created some natural anxiety among staff. However, in post-observation discussions, the vast majority of staff has embraced the new instructional materials. The second year of *Ready Common Core* was smooth across the district. The consistency from grade to grade, as well as classroom to classroom, has been a welcome change for teachers. This team approach to interventions, lesson planning, and curriculum is not only meeting the needs of the students of Storey County, but the staff as well.

Building Instructional Capacity: Peer Observations

The T4S® Observation Protocol provided teachers in Churchill County School District an opportunity to gain an understanding of one another's teaching practices and share strategies. Over the course of the program, teachers increasingly demonstrated characteristics of instructional components.

Introduction

The dual goals of this case study project were to increase teachers' consistent use of research-based effective instructional practices included in the Nevada Educator Performance Framework and also to familiarize and embed the practice of peer observations.

While teachers work side-by-side with one another every day, they don't often have the chance, or take the opportunity, to visit each other's classrooms and observe instructional delivery. This project provided time for teachers to review and discuss research-based, instructional practices, and then conduct classroom observations with peers. Following observations, teachers discussed what they noticed and provided brief feedback. This type of professional development is personal and effective, providing educators a close look at techniques and pedagogy that best meets the needs of students (Lustick & Sykes, 2006; Sato, Wei, & Darling-Hammond, 2008).

Instructional Context

Churchill County School District is a rural district serving approximately 3,400 students in pre-K through high school. There is one early learning center for preschool and kindergarten students, three elementary schools for students in grades 1-5, one middle school for students in grades 6-8 and one 4-year high school.

This project took place at an elementary site designated as a focus school due to low growth scores in 2011-2012 in math and ELA, especially in sub-population areas (FRL, ELL, IEP). Close to 460 students attended this site (grades 1-5). Approximately 45% of the students receive free or reduced lunch (FRL), 15% are served as English language learners (ELL) and about 17% through Individualized Education Programs (IEP).

During the past few years, all teachers completed professional development workshops including 30-45 hours of sheltered instruction focused on best instructional practices for all students with an emphasis on strategies to support students learning the English language and content at the same time. By scheduling design, students are released at 1:30 every Friday, to provide time for teachers to meet for 90 minutes. This time is used primarily for co-planning and discussion around student data, but may include professional development on site or district topics. Grade level teams differentiate instruction for enrichment groups, providing targeted instruction to like-ability students for about 40 minutes each day. The school provides a summer school program for limited English proficient students and an after school intervention session three days a week to provide extra support in math and reading to identified students. Besides working hard to align instruction to the Nevada Academic Content Standards for the past few years, including shifts in math and English language arts, professional development has been focused around robust vocabulary instruction and strengthening the school community through Tribes® training .

Initial Data and Planning

Professional development focused on strong teaching techniques and pedagogy supports teachers to improve their delivery of instruction in any content area (Blank, de las Alas, & Smith, 2007; Wenglinsky, 2000). Churchill County School District has used the Teach 4 Success (T4S®) Observation Protocol for over fifteen years to gather data on effective instructional practices used by teachers at all sites. Data is collected during 20-minute T4S® observations by trained teams of observers during unannounced "sweeps" of all classrooms. One set of data collected for this site over the past two years is shown in Table 1 below. Observers found evidence that teachers often planned tasks and facilitated instruction to stretch students' thinking to higher levels as noted using Bloom's taxonomy and Depth of Knowledge (DOK; Webb, 2002). However, the staff determined this area for needed growth in order to increase the use of critical thinking.

This focus area correlates with shifts in instruction using the Nevada Academic Content Standards and is named in the five high-leverage instructional practices of the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (high cognitive demand for diverse learners and use of discourse).

Table 1. Percentage of teachers observed demonstrating the characteristics of instructional components.

	Spring 2013	**March 2014**	**May 2014**	**Sept 2014**
Facilitation of Student Collaboration (discourse)	13%	4%	0%	6%
Blooms's				
Remember	78%	100%	100%	100%
Understand	83%	74%	90%	80%
Apply	43%	33%	32%	28%
Analyze, Evaluate, Create	13%	0%	0%	0%
Depth of Knowledge (DOK)				
Level 1			100%	100%
Level 2			14%	39%
Level 3			0%	0%

To accomplish the goal of using higher order questions and facilitating higher level tasks to deepen learning and students' thinking skills, professional development was planned and delivered to review the characteristics of tasks at all levels of rigor followed by guided peer observations and subsequent discussions. Teachers grew in their ability to write and recognize tasks requiring increasing depths of knowledge. Peer observations were conducted with all teachers followed by coaching discussions. The plan for March and April was for teachers to conduct two or three peer observations on their own, followed in May when the learning facilitator would accompany teachers for more rounds of peer observations coaching conversations. Teachers would provide some friendly feedback to peers following observations and reflective conversations with the learning facilitator, thus building capacity. Another whole staff sweep gathering evidence of effective instructional practices was scheduled for mid-May.

Delivery of Services

The learning facilitator scheduled with two to three teachers at a time to review and deepen knowledge and understanding of effective instructional practices identified to have a high impact on student learning including tasks that have high cognitive demand and students engaging in meaning making through discourse (NEPF, 2014). Roving subs released teachers from their classrooms in two-hour blocks, allowing for three sessions each day. All teachers on staff met with the learning facilitator within a three-day timeframe. Teachers answered questions and named attributes of effective instructional techniques. The professional development session was tailored to members of each group based on needs and interests. Peer observations and coaching discussions support proper use of practices and strengthen the collaborative support of teachers with one another.

Before visiting classrooms to conduct peer observations, teachers reviewed how to script a lesson. Each group observed and scripted for about 15 minutes before stepping out for

discussion. Observation sheets were marked by each person while collaboratively discussing attributes and notes using the frame: "When I saw/heard the teacher/students doing/saying _____, that's an example of _____ because _____." Observers repeated the process in another classroom. At the end of the session, teachers wrote exit surveys naming the most valuable aspect of the professional development, what they learned, and what could be improved. They also rated their comfort with peer observations (as an observer and while being observed), as well as the perceived value of peer observation.

While 100% of the licensed staff participated in these professional development sessions for the first full round of instruction and peer observations, less participated in the spring rounds. Because of district re-structuring, many teachers were preparing to move classrooms and/or buildings. The principal decided the final accompanied rounds of peer observations to be optional and fewer teachers participated.

Results and Reflection

Data were collected by teams of trained observers near the end of the school year to observe teacher interactions and rate demonstrated instructional components (see Table 2).

Table 2. Percentage of teachers demonstrating the characteristics of instructional components.

	Spring 2013	March 2014	May 2014	Sept 2014	May 2015
Facilitation of Student Collaboration (discourse)	13%	4	0	6	0
Blooms's					
Remember	78%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Understand	83%	74%	90%	80%	79%
Apply	43%	33%	32%	28%	32%
Analyze, Evaluate, Create	13%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Depth of Knowledge (DOK)					
Level 1			100%	100%	100%
Level 2			14%	39%	42%
Level 3			0%	0%	0%

While the frequencies in Table 2 didn't show marked improvement in the use of effective instructional techniques, some gains were made at the use of DOK level 2 tasks. The biggest gains of this project are exhibited in the level of comfort teachers feel for participating in peer observations. Table 3 below shows how teachers responded to questions prior to the initial peer observation rounds as well as after the concluding round of peer observations.

Over and over again, teachers noted the aspect of this professional development work of greatest value was seeing other teachers in action with their students.

Before the close of the initial session, teachers were asked if their self-assessment shifted as a result of the peer observations. All three ratings moved up slightly from the beginning of the initial session to the conclusion.

Table 3. Pre/post teacher participant ratings of peer observation process.

Initial rating		Concluding rating
3.3	I feel comfortable having observers in my room	**4.5**
4.0	I think peer observations are valuable.	**5.0**
3.4	I feel comfortable observing in others' rooms.	**4.8**

(1 = no; 2 = sometimes; 3 = often; 4 = most of the time; 5 = yes)

Over and over again, teachers noted the aspect of this professional development work of greatest value was seeing other teachers in action with their students. Teachers gained insight about different techniques and instructional approaches to support students' learning.

Quotes from exit surveys:

- Observing another teacher is both enlightening and nerve-wracking. Being observed makes you feel as though you are under a microscope, but it also helps focus you on what is essential in the lesson. I thought it was beneficial.
- I believe that [peer observations] keep us on top of our game and help us to work with our peers to improve our teaching.
- When I have the privilege to observe another educator, I always learn, pick up tips and/or am reminded of things that I used to do, but have long since forgotten.

Following peer observations: "What did you find valuable in the session today?"

- Something valuable was seeing good teachers in action. I enjoyed seeing not only the work being done, but student work from previous lessons.
- Reviewing the T4S components was valuable.
- Loved seeing below and above grade teachers, watching how to easily deepen students' thinking during an activity and talking after the observation to deepen our learning.
- Enjoyed different ideas from each classroom. I like the little mini conferences after each observation to share what we each saw.
- Got to see some great teaching!
- I value the discussion with [the facilitator] about questions regarding the observation protocol, effective teaching and ways to increase DOK of what I'm doing.

Conclusion

Table 3 reveals a strong increase in the comfort teachers felt about participating in peer observations, both as the one being observed and the one observing. Teachers' facilitation of higher order thinking tasks increased some, but fell short of their goal of strongly moving to the Analyze Level in Bloom's and DOK Level 3.

The principal noticed teachers discussing the peer observations with one another. The overall experience was quite positive, providing teachers with an opportunity to gain an understanding of one another's teaching practices and share strategies.

Nevada History, Art & Culture: 2014-2015 Cohort

Fourth grade teachers in WCSD participated in a program dedicated to Nevada history, incorporating art into the classroom, and developing NVACS aligned resources. At the end of the year, teachers' efficacy as well as students in their classrooms benefitted from their involvement. Teachers indicated increases in historical thinking, collaborative inquiry, discussions, the use of text dependent and text specific questioning, and primary source and art analysis within their 4th grade classrooms.

Introduction

In celebration of Nevada 150, this year-long project brought together 51 fourth grade teachers in a cohort dedicated to learning about Nevada history, incorporating art into the classroom, and developing Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS) aligned resources. This was a unique opportunity for 4th grade teachers to build an ELA/Social Studies community while engaging in high levels of personal and professional learning in Nevada history with local scholars, art education facilitated by museum staff, and teaching of historical thinking. Teachers had opportunities to work with the special exhibitions at the Nevada Museum of Art, including a limited showing of the original Emancipation Proclamation from the National Archives.

Instructional Context

Washoe County School District (WCSD) is an urban district in the Reno-Tahoe area of Nevada. WCSD is the second largest school district in the state with more than 65,000 students, comprised of 37% Hispanic, 48% white, 6% Asian, 3% African American, 2% Native American, and 4% multiracial.

In May 2014, elementary school administrators in WCSD were sent invitations to offer 4th grade teachers from their sites an opportunity to participate in a year-long professional development program focused on Nevada History, Arts, and Culture content. Participants included teachers from 19 of the district's 63 elementary schools. The schools made up a diverse slice of the district population by including Title I, Striving Readers Grant, STEM academy sites, as well as a charter school.

Initial Data and Planning

Initial work regarding the integration of social studies into elementary classrooms began in 2012. The original intent was to offer a small group of 4-6 grade teachers and implementation specialists the opportunity to extend their learning and create resources for social studies. During the course of the following school year, however, there were several requests from both teachers and administrators to offer more professional learning that would build the pedagogical content knowledge of elementary school teachers. This is the first time in more than ten years that administrators were asking for disciplinary literacy support in social studies. A number of teachers also requested support for deeper content understanding as well as strategies and resources to support the social studies integration.

The research question that guided this project was: How do core-aligned strategies and collaborative development of content resources shift thinking and instructional practice in social studies?

Delivery of Services

The Nevada History, Art, and Culture cohort offered 53 fourth grade teachers from across the district an opportunity to develop pedagogical and content knowledge in teaching Nevada history. Teachers met on 13 occasions in a variety of formats, such as in small groups (8-15), half cohort (25-27), and whole group (53). During these different learning experiences teachers had the opportunity to develop their content expertise through interactive lectures by art historians from the Nevada Museum of Art as well as John Reid, a Nevada history professor from Truckee Meadows Community College. As a part of this iterative learning process, teachers were then given pedagogical instruction on how to integrate the content knowledge they had acquired (see Table 1). Using a plan-do-study-act model, teachers were able to learn, implement, discuss, and refine instructional moves within the structured environment of the cohort.

Table 1. Fourth Grade Nevada History Year Long Calendar Overview

Dates	**Meeting Type**
July 22-24	Kick-Off Summer Institute
Sept. 27 Nov. 15 Mar. 21	Saturday Seminars
Oct. 15 Jan. 21 Mar. 14	Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
Oct. 16	Special Museum Reception
Dec. 15 Mar. 23 May 18	Monday Meetings

Results and Reflection

Using a pedagogical content knowledge model, this project offered participants the opportunity to build their self-efficacy and confidence in social studies integration. Initially teachers were apprehensive about their own ability to integrate social studies into their curriculum. Comments such as "I just didn't know much Nevada history" and "I didn't teach social studies much beyond a few sections in the book" were captured in videotaped interviews conducted at the May 18th meeting. Additionally, many teachers noted that student engagement had increased as a result of their participation in the cohort, such as, "The kids are really enjoying them [primary sources]," "I am seeing critical thinking, awesome questions, and reasoning!" and "it has helped me incorporate NVACS in a more creative and engaging way. It challenges students!"

Teachers were asked to take the strategies they were introduced to in meetings and implement them into their classrooms. Following each session, teachers were invigorated, returning with exciting anecdotal stories about

Following each session, teachers were invigorated, returning with exciting anecdotal stories about how their students responded to the strategies and how it has impacted their instructional moves.

how their students responded to the strategies and how it has impacted their instructional moves. Every teacher who participated in the cohort indicated on an end-of-course survey that the sessions were relevant and applicable and that they planned on implementing concepts, topics, and activities from their learning in their work.

An analysis of the teachers' responses to their participation in the cohort provided significant evidence that teachers' efficacy as well as students in their classrooms benefitted from their involvement. Additionally, respondents indicated increases in historical thinking, collaborative inquiry, discussions, the use of text dependent and text specific questioning, and primary source and art analysis within their 4th grade classrooms. The resources that were created as models for the cohort and the resources that were created by cohort participants will be shared district-wide in an effort to support disciplinary literacy integration.

Conclusion

Since the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act, social studies subjects became a smaller focus in most prescribed curricula. The majority of K-6 curricular materials focused on ELA and mathematics content because, under NCLB, these were the only two content areas that had mandated assessment criteria. Because of the nature of high stakes testing, the marginalization of untested subjects became a serious area of contention for many educational researchers and teachers alike. With the inclusion of social studies in the NVACS, a renewed effort to integrate social studies content and develop disciplinary literacy among teachers emerged. The Nevada History, Art, and Culture cohort offered teachers strategically designed learning that tended specifically to the indicated concerns. Better preparing teachers' planning and instruction to align with NVACS and offering students exposure to rigorous and challenging learning experiences prepare them to be college and career ready.

Putting the Eight Mathematical Practices into Action in the Classroom

During the first year of the Collaborative Learning in Secondary Mathematics Course, teachers' depth of understanding in, and implementation of, effective collaborative learning practices increased. Teacher growth data in 4 of the 5 domains indicates a successful first year in 4 different counties.

Introduction

What makes the Nevada Academic Content Standards in Mathematics, based on the Common Core, different from previously adopted standards? The difference is the inclusion of eight mathematical practice standards that were designed so students could demonstrate mathematical proficiency their content knowledge through problem solving, modeling, communication, and justification. According to Susan O'Connell and John SanGiovanni, authors of *Putting the Practices into Action: Implementing the Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practice K-8*, "These practices cannot be learned in quiet math classrooms willed with drill-and-practice activities. This level of thought must be developed in language-based classrooms filled with explorations and discussions about math concepts. No matter how much content is "covered" in math class, students are not mathematically proficient without attention to these standards" (2013).

In Douglas County School District, elementary teachers have been implementing the Nevada Academic Content Standards in math for the last several years. While teachers have become familiar with the new standards for their grade levels, it became evident to district administration that teachers still needed support in how to implement the Practice Standards. As a result, each elementary teacher, including specialists and administrators, were given a copy of *Putting the Practices into Action: Implementing the Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practice K-8* (O'Connell and SanGiovanni, 2013). Each elementary school participated in two hours of professional development to help them gain familiarity with the standards and the activities that support the standards that are found in the book. All teachers in Douglas County School District were offered the option of taking an in-service class on implementing the Practice Standards in the classroom. Nineteen people enrolled in the in-service course during the 2013-14 school year and 11 participants enrolled in the in-service for the 2014-15 school year.

Instructional Context

Douglas County School District (DCSD) is a rural school district located in Northern Nevada. DCSD is comprised of 14 schools, including 7 elementary schools, 3 middle schools and 4 high schools. Approximately 6,100 students are enrolled in DCSD. DCSD has an average daily attendance rate of 95% (see Table 1). The student to teacher ratio is 23:1 as reported in the Nevada Report Card (2013-2014).

Table 1. Douglas County School District Student Demographics (2013-14).

Race	% of students
White	68%
Hispanic	20%
Native American	4%
Bi- or Multi-racial	6%

Sub-population areas	% of students
Individualized education program (IEP)	13.6%
English language learners (ELL)	5%
Free or reduced lunch (FRL)	34%

According to the Nevada School Performance Framework, Douglas County School District has seven three star schools, 4 four star schools and two five star school. Table 2 shows a summary of the percent proficient on the Nevada CRT in math administered in the spring of 2014. The mathematics HSPE for 11th graders, given in spring 2014, showed that 85.4% of students taking the exam were proficient.

Table 2. Percent Proficient on the Math CRT in Spring 2014.

	3rd grade	4th grade	5th grade	6th grade	7th grade	8th grade
% proficient	75.7%	80.4%	69.8%	67.8%	66.4%	45.5%

The eleven teachers enrolled in the 2014-15 in-service represented the K-12 spectrum. The make-up included one high school math teacher, one middle school math teacher, one elementary special education teacher, one substitute teacher, and seven elementary teachers representing grades K, 1, 2, and 4.

Initial Data and Planning

Based on classroom observations in the fall of 2013, it was noted that when using the Instructional Practice Guide (Achieve the Core, 2013) teachers were not incorporating the mathematical practices in their lessons.

Teachers participating in the in-service course during the 2014-2015 school year were asked to do a self-assessment on their implementation of the mathematical practices in a math lesson they had taught. Using Core Action 3 of the Instructional Practice Guide (IPG), which is providing "all students with opportunities to exhibit mathematical practices in connection with the content of the lesson" (Achieve the Core, 2013) and the scoring rubric provided in the IPG, teachers rated the strength of each practice in their lesson. The IPG scores evidence observed or gathered during a lesson on a one-to-four scale. In this scale a 1 = "the teacher does not provide the students opportunity and very few students demonstrate this behavior," 2 = "the teacher provides opportunity "inconsistently and few students demonstrate the behavior," 3 = "the teacher provides opportunity consistently and some students demonstrate this behavior," and 4 = "the teacher provides students opportunity and all students demonstrate this behavior." The results of the pre-post data are summarized in Figure 1 below.

Delivery of Services

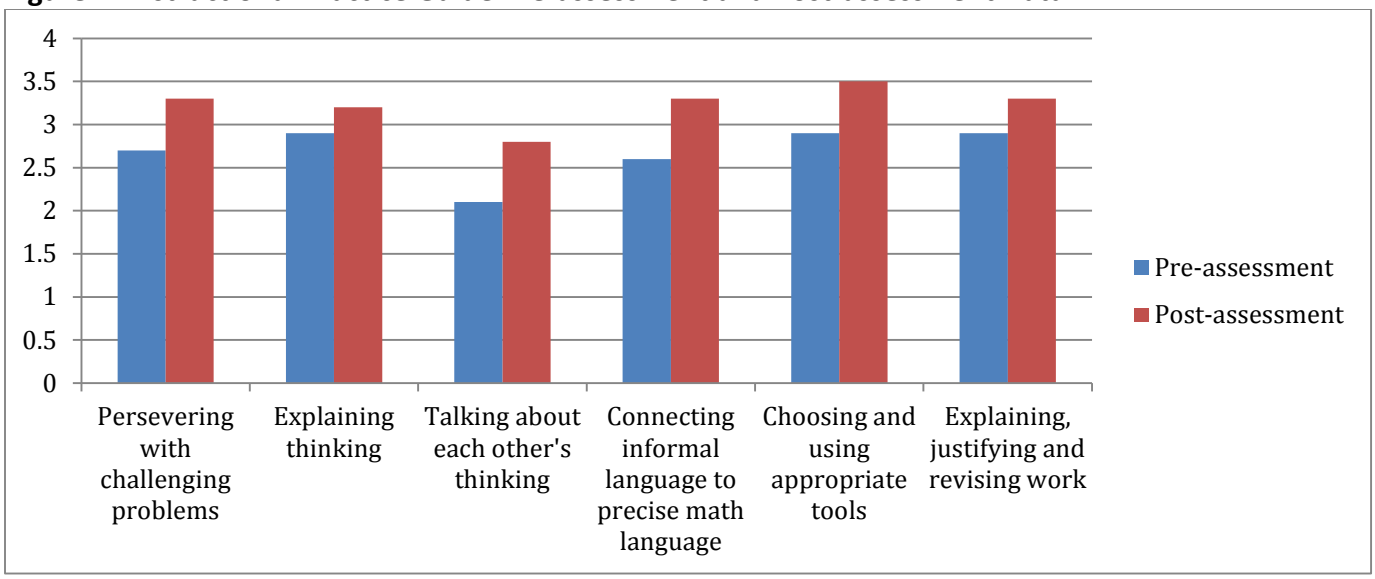
The Putting the Practices into Action in-service class took place over a period of eight weeks, with each week focusing on a different mathematical practice. Each week, participants read about one mathematical practice. They then participated in journal reflection on the reading and activities to illustrate the practice in action. They also took time to plan how to implement the practice in future lessons. After the 16-hour in-service course, teachers reflected on their practice again using the IPG in hopes that they had begun to incorporate the practices more consistently in their lessons with all of their students.

Results and Reflection

The response to this in-service course was very positive, as it was in the 2013-2014 school year. While the enrollment was lower during the 2014-2015 school year than the previous year, this year's course provided an opportunity for teachers from kindergarten through high school to have important vertical alignment conversations around the mathematical practices. With a wide range of grade level teachers represented, teachers were able to discuss what each practiced looked like through elementary school, in middle school, and ultimately in high school. These conversations were very rich and informative for the participants.

At the conclusion of the course, the participants completed the IPG on a previously taught math lesson. The results of the post-assessment are summarized in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Instructional Practice Guide Pre-assessment and Post-assessment Data



It is interesting to note that in the pre-assessment, all of the practices averaged between a two and a three, meaning that the teachers on average felt that they were inconsistently providing their students with the opportunity to engage in the practice and/or that few of the students were demonstrating the practice during the lesson. In the post-assessment data, it is clear that the average scores moved to above a three, meaning that in the classroom, teachers were providing opportunities more consistently and that more of their students were demonstrating the practice in action during the lesson. The one exception is the practice where the teacher orchestrates conversations in which students talk about each other's learning, which improved from an average score of 2.1 to 2.8. However, initially seven people scored their lesson as a one or a two in this category. In the post-assessment, eight people scored themselves as a three and the remaining two participants scored themselves as a two. There were no participants who scored themselves as a one in the post-assessment.

As with the previous year, it is apparent that when teachers focus on understanding the practices deeply and understand how the practices look when students are engaging in them in the classroom, they include them more consistently in their classroom lessons. The use of the instructional practice guide also seemed to help teachers gain a clearer picture of the student behaviors that demonstrate the practice. On both the pre-assessment IPG and the post-assessment IPG, teachers made notes of the evidence they saw in their classrooms to justify their ratings. On the pre-assessment, the most frequent comments surrounded the fact that not all students were demonstrating the practice. In one instance, a teacher noted that the students were using Think, Pair, Share as a strategy to explain their thinking, but that not all students were using the math vocabulary of tens and ones. In completing their final IPG, teachers were much more thorough in providing evidence from their classrooms. One teacher noted, "Aha! I need to have them talk more about 'others' reasoning."

In an additional in-service course that also focused on implementing math lessons aligned to the Nevada Academic Content Standards, teachers used the IPG to debrief a lesson observation. This proved to be extremely valuable. Teachers felt that the use of the IPG allowed them to stay focused while debriefing and reinforced what to look for in the classroom for an aligned math lesson. Teachers benefitted from observing one another and using a tool like the IPG as part of the process. The IPG proved to be a valuable tool to help teachers reflect on their own lessons and the lessons of fellow teachers. This tool allowed teachers to see if their lessons were truly meeting the intent of the standard.

The IPG allows teachers to see if their lessons are truly meeting the intent of the standard.

Classroom implementation of the mathematical practices will continue to be one area of focus in math professional development in the future.

Conclusion

The Standards for Mathematical Practice are critical components in teaching math lessons that are truly aligned to the Nevada Academic Content Standards. The use of the Instructional Practice Guide is a powerful tool for teachers to see where the practices are present in their lessons as evidenced by student behaviors during the lesson. Teachers need additional professional development to continue to incorporate the practices in their math lessons.

Collaborative Learning in Secondary Mathematics

During the first year of the Collaborative Learning in Secondary Mathematics Course, teachers' depth of understanding in, and implementation of, effective collaborative learning practices increased. Teacher growth data in 4 of the 5 domains indicates a successful first year in 4 different counties.

Introduction

This is the first year of the Collaborative Learning in Secondary Mathematics project. The goal of the professional development is to increase the amount of collaborative learning taking place in secondary math classrooms, as both classroom observation and administrator requests often point to students sitting in isolated rows for lecture and notes-based math pedagogy. The intention is to run this course in cohorts with a long-term goal of empowering secondary math teachers with confidence in their collaborative learning capacity such that they positively influence other teachers in their school to practice collaborative learning.

Modern classrooms consist of diverse populations with respect to student cultures, student abilities, and student interests, a trend that promotes the use of collaborative instructional strategies (Edgar & And, 1994; Vaca, Lapp, & Fisher, 2011; Boaler, 2006). Traditional transmittance-based high school practice simply does not meet the needs of 21st century learners (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). Collaborative learning is not a universal instructional practice in secondary schools, especially high school, where less than half of

American high school students report working in collaborative groups or engaging in student-centered discussions (Corcoran & Silander, 2009).

Recent educational movements toward student growth in critical thinking and communication skills will hold teachers accountable for ensuring students have opportunities to hone analytical skills (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). The Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS) and Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) are local initiatives that reflect such movements. Secondary educators are currently being required to shift habits from traditional teacher-led lectures to ones involving student critical thinking, communication, and exploration to provide a quality education that meets the social and academic needs of their students (Edgar & And, 1994; Corcoran & Silander, 2009; Sharan, 2010). These discourse shifts have potential for positive student impact: when different cultural backgrounds, perspectives, and beliefs are emphasized as classroom tool kits, academic achievement and democratic thinking increases for all students including special populations and language learners (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002).

Instructional Context

The Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF), Nevada's new teacher and administrator evaluation system, is increasing the need for teachers to be facilitating discourse in their classrooms: "students engage in meaning-making through discourse" is one of the five instructional standards for educator evaluation.

A total of 12 teachers signed up for the initial course. Participating teachers spanned grades 7-12 in four counties. The teachers represented nine schools, five of which are designated as Title I schools. Table 1 below includes math achievement data for the four counties represented.

Table 1. Math Achievement Data for Four Northern Nevada Districts participating in this project.

2013-2014		*Percent Proficient in Mathematics*		
	Total Enrollment	**7th Grade**	**8th Grade**	**HSPE**
County A	397	66.7	44.1	89.3
County B	6120	66.4	45.5	85.4
County C	7528	55.7	33.6	84.5
County D	62967	58.6	41.5	79.5
State	427442	53.5	36.7	77.5

Initial Data and Planning

Qualitative data were collected using a pre- and post-test to determine participants' daily/weekly classroom routines, ratio of student talking/doing to teacher talking/doing time, classroom norms and expectations that promote collaboration, types of real-world activities in their classroom, and instructional practices that promote discourse.

Observational data were collected using the Instructional Practice Guide for math (IPG) (Student Achievement Partners, 2013). Though all three Core Actions of the IPG were analyzed in the observational debrief, Core Action 3, "[teachers] provide all students with opportunities to

exhibit mathematical practices in connection with the content of the lesson" was focused on for this study. The indicators under Core Action 3 are consistent with the NEPF elements of "students engage in meaning making through discourse" and measure the quality and quantity of student discourse in the classroom.

Delivery of Services

Learning took place over four evenings from November through May, with one classroom observation by the course facilitator in February or March. Participant's observations were followed up with a debriefing, reflection, and feedback meeting within 24 hours.

The essential question to guide the learning of the course was "how can we increase the quality of and quantity of student discourse in our classrooms?" Experiential learning with collaborative learning practices embedded in mathematical modeling simulations was a large focus of the course. This way, theory is imbedded with practice as teachers actually experience strategies and methods before reading about or debriefing them. Teachers read and analyzed various research articles on collaborative learning in the math classroom and effective math discourse facilitation. Each session included instructional strategies for collaborative learning student norms and attention to different learning styles. Teachers then implemented collaborative learning techniques from the course in their classrooms and brought back evidence from their implementation to debrief with other members of the cohort throughout the class series.

Results and Reflection

Class Data

Student Work Time. On the pre-test teachers listed some amount of student work time as a daily routine, though only one clarified collaborative student work time; 75% of the responses had student work immediately following teacher lecture or modeling. On the post-test, 50% of the teachers included daily collaborative work time for students. Only 4 teachers (33%) listed student's work followed by teacher lecture, with 6 teachers (50%) posing a task or problem with student work time followed by teacher facilitation. This growth represents a shift in expectations for students as practicing mathematicians in the daily classroom, and has implications for quality formative assessment practices imbedded into assessment (NEPF Instructional Standard 5) though the latter was not an intentional goal for this course.

Ratio of Student to Teacher Class Time. On the pre-test, the average ratio of student to teacher talking/doing time was close to 50:50. This ratio shifted to nearly 40:60 on the post-test. Three teachers reported a 40:60 ratio with two of them indicating a desire to decrease the teacher talk/do time in the future. Although these ratios were self-reported, observational data was consistent with individual teacher reporting. Reduction in teacher talk time provides more opportunity for student collaboration time, and this growth indicates that teachers are paying attention to the quantity of student discussion taking place in their classrooms.

Real-World Applications. As far as real world applications, 5 teachers (42%) reported utilizing task-based real-world applications on the pre-test; the remaining expressed difficulties with this topic and/or the desire to increase real-world mathematics in their classrooms. On the post-test, 10 of the 12 teachers (83%) reported real-world activity connections. These teachers were also

able to identify specific NVACS-aligned resources they use to find real-world tasks including Mathelicious, Dan Meyer's Yummy Math, Dan Meyer's Modeling in Three Acts, Learnzillion, and the Mathematics Assessment Resource Service.

Strategies that Promote Discourse. As far as strategies, teachers listed 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4 total strategies with the average number of strategies being 2.25 on the pre-test. While the average on the post-test only increased a small amount (2.8), many teachers' responses were more explicit and deeper than on the pre-test. For example, one teacher's pre-test included "engaging questioning strategies and "wait time" while his post-test included "anticipating students' responses, monitoring students' work, selecting student strategies and who will share, ordering [student] presentations, and bringing strategies back to the math behind it."

Classroom Norms and Expectations for Collaboration. Teachers struggled with this question on the pre-test: many students listed a specific strategy (such as "talk with a shoulder partner") or a routine ("write your own answer before sharing") rather than a behavioral norm. In fact, only three teachers listed any norms related to collaboration on the pre-test. All were able to identify at least one expectation on the post-test such as "assist peers when appropriate" or "classroom respect rules." Two teachers reported not having established norms or needing assistance. Post-test results indicated little growth for 10 of the 12 teachers in terms of collaboration norms, however there was an overall increase in student expectations regarding discourse. Sample responses included "Don't say 'I don't know,' use accountable talk to describe where you are confused," "Hold each other accountable," and "Our class is our team. It is the job of all of us to ask when [we] don't understand. It is the job of all of us to help."

"Our class is our team. It is the job of all of us to ask when [we] don't understand. It is the job of all of us to help."

Observational Data

Table 2 summarizes the observational indicators of the participants using the Instructional Practice Guide, with 1 = "low," 4 = "high" and N/O = "not observed." The purpose of the observation was to promote accountability in taking course learning to classroom practice as well as to provide a coaching opportunity specific to practices that individual teachers were implementing. It is worth noting that the counts in the one, or low-level column are the same teacher. In the future, pre- and post- observations will be useful to further examine teacher growth.

Table 2. Observational Data for Participating Teachers.

Indicator	Illustrative Student Behavior	Low			High	N/O
The teacher uses strategies to keep all students persevering with challenging problems.	Even after reaching a point of frustration, students persist in efforts to solve challenging problems.	1	3	6	2	0
The teacher establishes a classroom culture in which students explain their thinking.	Students elaborate with a second sentence (spontaneously or prompted by the teacher or another student) to explain their	1	3	2	6	0

Indicator	Illustrative Student Behavior	Low			High	N/O
	thinking and connect it to their first sentence.					
The teacher orchestrates conversations in which students talk about each other's thinking.	Students talk about and ask questions about each other's thinking in order to clarify or improve their own mathematical understanding.	1	4	3	4	0
The teacher connects students' informal language to precise mathematical language appropriate to their course.	Students use precise mathematical language in their explanations and discussions.	0	3	6	3	0
The teacher has established a classroom culture in which students choose and use appropriate tools when solving a problem.	Students use appropriate tools strategically when solving a problem.	1	4	1	4	2
The teacher asks students to explain and justify work and provides feedback that helps students revise initial work.	Student work includes revisions, especially revised explanations and justifications.	1	3	2	4	2

Conclusion

Teacher growth data in four of the five domains probed during the first year of the Collaborative Learning in Secondary Mathematics Course indicates a successful first year. Teachers' depth of understanding in and implementation of effective collaborative learning practices increased. Two unanticipated outcomes will shape the learning for future cohorts. First, teachers are not explicitly aware of classroom norms, which may result in enigmatic classroom environment expectations for students. Thus, one area that will be strengthened for future cohorts is explicit instruction in classroom norms including implications of implicit norms that may hinder the implementation of new classroom processes. Are teachers aware of what's important to them? Are their students? Do classroom norms reflect what is important or are students expected to infer them from the class rules and teacher behavior? Secondly, there is a desire to delve deeper into content that supported our learning such as brain-based student learning and Carol Dweck's Growth Mindset. Exit surveys on interest in future content reflected a majority of participants wanting to continue work in the collaborative cohort with an emphasis in these areas. This is a positive sign not only in participant interest to continue, but also their intentionality of learning that will impact student achievement in their classrooms.

Incorporating Effective Instructional Practices in Mathematics

The application of an Instructional Practice Guide allowed educators to shift focus from only the teacher to teacher-student interactions, which had not been a previous focus. This generated sharing of process and pedagogical strategies among coaches, administrators, and teachers in Carson City School District.

Introduction
Carson City School District adopted the Nevada Academic Content Standards in Mathematics (NVACS-M) in 2009. NVACS-M requires an equal balance of focus, coherence (both within and between grade levels), and rigor. Teachers have a general understanding of the standards when viewed in isolation. However, as teachers continue to refine their knowledge and comfort with the standards, it is critical that they shift their instructional practices to include the eight mathematical practices. This step will aid teachers in making the shifts necessary to fully implement NVACS-M in the classroom.

Instructional Context
Carson City School District (CCSD) is a rural district serving approximately 8,000 students, 50.37% of which are ethnicities other than white, many having a language other than English as their first language. As such, a high priority has been training in High Quality Sheltered Instruction (HQSI) and certification opportunities in Teachers of English to Students of Other Languages (TESOL). Both trainings include accessible learning for all students while maintaining the integrity of the standards. Carson City is also a 1:1 Mobile Device district. Currently, all students in grades 3-8 have mobile devices, either a laptop or Chrome book, assigned to them at the beginning of the year.

Carson City School District's Strategic Plan guides district initiatives. The five year plan is comprised of five goals: 1) Community in full partnerships; 2) Engages parents and guardians; 3) Healthy generations of Carson City; 4) Curriculum that matters; 5) Exceptional administrators, teachers, and staff. Goals four and five are the focus of this case study.

Initial Data and Planning
Math walk-throughs were completed in every elementary (K-5) classroom at the end of the 2013-2014 school year. These walk-throughs revealed that teachers continued to struggle with incorporating effective instructional practices and the mathematical practices in their math instruction.

At the start of the 2014-2015 school year, the CCSD adopted the Instructional Practice Guide (IPG) in Mathematics as the walk through document for all elementary classrooms. This document, created by Student Achievement Partners, includes all necessary shifts for NVACS-M implementation. Walk-throughs were completed in 133 classrooms in the fall of 2014. The data mirrored results from the previous spring and is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Fall Walk-through Results (Core Actions 2 and 3).

Core Action 2 (Instructional Practices)	**% of teachers**
The teacher makes the mathematics of the lesson explicit by using explanations, representations, and/or examples.	46%
The teacher provides opportunities for students to work with and practice grade-level problems and exercises.	45%
The teacher strengthens all students' understanding of the content by sharing a variety of students' representations and solution methods.	29%

Core Action 2 (Instructional Practices)	% of teachers
The teacher deliberately checks for understanding throughout the lesson and adapts the lesson according to student understanding.	41%
The teacher summarizes the mathematics with references to student work and discussion in order to reinforce the focus of the lesson.	27%

Core Action 3 (Mathematical Practices prompted by teacher and demonstrated by student)	% of teachers
The teacher poses high-quality questions and problems that prompt students to share their developing thinking about the content of the lesson. Students share their developing thinking about the content of the lesson.	30%
The teacher encourages reasoning and problem solving by posing challenging problems that offer opportunities for productive struggle. Students persevere in solving problems in the face of initial difficulty.	35%
The teacher establishes a classroom culture in which students explain their thinking. Students elaborate with a second sentence (spontaneously or prompted by the teacher or another student) to explain their thinking and connect it to their first sentence.	36%
The teacher creates the conditions for student conversations where students are encouraged to talk about each other's thinking. Students talk about and ask questions about each other's thinking, in order to clarify or improve their own thinking.	34%
The teacher connects and develops students' informal language to precise mathematical language appropriate to their grade. Students use precise mathematical language in their explanations and discussions.	51%
The teacher establishes a classroom culture in which students choose and use appropriate tools when solving a problem. Students use appropriate tools strategically when solving a problem.	33%
The teacher asks students to explain and justify work and provides feedback that helps students revise initial work. Student work includes revisions, especially revised explanations and justifications.	27%

Delivery of Services

The focus in Carson City was to build teacher capacity through the use of math coaches or interventionists at each elementary site. As such, district coaches meetings were held quarterly. Meeting agendas were developed based on coach feedback and site needs, including standards clarification, data reviews, professional development, book club progress, and sharing current research on math instruction. Some site-based professional development was designed with the math coach as a lead. Following mid-year walk-throughs, teachers received individual coaching. The completed IPG was the reference point during all coaching sessions.

Results and Reflection

Over 85% of elementary teachers were part of the full walk-through process (fall, winter, and spring). The spring walk-through results showed an increase in all areas except summarizing mathematics, which was a decrease of two percentage points (see Table 2). While the results are positive, a level of concern about students engaging with mathematics, specifically student discourse and use of manipulatives, remains.

Table 2. Spring Walk-through Results (Core Actions 2 and 3).

Core Action 2 (Instructional Practices)	**% of teachers**
The teacher makes the mathematics of the lesson explicit by using explanations, representations, and/or examples.	69%
The teacher provides opportunities for students to work with and practice grade-level problems and exercises.	68%
The teacher strengthens all students' understanding of the content by sharing a variety of students' representations and solution methods.	55%
The teacher deliberately checks for understanding throughout the lesson and adapts the lesson according to student understanding.	59%
The teacher summarizes the mathematics with references to student work and discussion in order to reinforce the focus of the lesson.	25%

Core Action 3 (Mathematical Practices prompted by teacher and demonstrated by student)	**% of teachers**
The teacher poses high-quality questions and problems that prompt students to share their developing thinking about the content of the lesson. Students share their developing thinking about the content of the lesson.	54%
The teacher encourages reasoning and problem solving by posing challenging problems that offer opportunities for productive struggle. Students persevere in solving problems in the face of initial difficulty.	60%
The teacher establishes a classroom culture in which students explain their thinking. Students elaborate with a second sentence (spontaneously or prompted by the teacher or another student) to explain their thinking and connect it to their first sentence.	53%
The teacher creates the conditions for student conversations where students are encouraged to talk about each other's thinking. Students talk about and ask questions about each other's thinking, in order to clarify or improve their own thinking.	50%
The teacher connects and develops students' informal language to precise mathematical language appropriate to their grade. Students use precise mathematical language in their explanations and discussions.	69%
The teacher establishes a classroom culture in which students choose and use appropriate tools when solving a problem. Students use appropriate tools strategically when solving a problem.	63%
The teacher asks students to explain and justify work and provides feedback that helps students revise initial work. Student work includes revisions, especially revised explanations and justifications.	50%

Conclusion

Using a new walk-through tool was a big shift for administrators, coaches, and teachers in the district. While it is not a tool to identify all aspects of teaching, the IPG allowed all users to shift focus from the teacher to teacher-student interactions, which has not been a focus previously. This shift in focus generated great discussions among coaches, administrators, and teachers.

> "This was an amazing class to take! Thank you for making teaching that much more powerful and reflective."

Professional development focus in the past was on grade-level content knowledge, which was imperative when NVACS-M was adopted. The data from this case study affirms that teachers need more professional development and support in very specific areas outside of grade-level content such as math instructional strategies. Additionally, administrators will benefit from more specific professional development on core aspects of NVACS instruction in mathematics, specifically how students engage in mathematics and what that should look like in the elementary classroom.

The IPG will be used next year as the math walk-through document. Now that educators at the elementary sites are familiar with the document, more discussions can center on students and less on what the teacher is doing in isolation.

The use of Rich Mathematical Tasks in the Primary Classroom

An urban district serving the largest geographic area of Northern Nevada implemented a yearlong program that focuses on the use rich mathematical tasks in the classroom. Teachers' use of rich mathematical tasks increased, resulting in enhanced student ability and understanding of math.

Introduction

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics states that "The tasks in which students engage must encourage them to reason about mathematical ideas, to make connections, and to formulate, grapple with, and solve problems. Good tasks nest skill development in the context of problem solving. In practice, students' actual opportunities for learning depend on the kind of *discourse* that the teacher orchestrates."

The National Council for Supervisors of Mathematics states that "The potential 'richness' of a task is evident from its context, its complexity, its novelty or its requirement for analysis or evaluation. Rich contextual tasks can be sourced readily, but it's what the teacher does with the task that really counts."

Early Numeracy Cadre II is a yearlong professional development model which focuses on the use of rich mathematical tasks. The goal of this project was to examine whether teachers' use of rich tasks would increase over time as they became more familiar with the tasks, such as where to find them and how to use them. It was also of interest to see if students' abilities with rich mathematical tasks evolved over time.

Instructional Context

The teachers who participated in this study represent a cross section of an urban district serving the largest geographic area of Northern Nevada. There are approximately 64,838 students enrolled in grades PK -12. Table 1 reveals student characteristics.

Table 1. Washoe County School District Student Characteristics.

Race	% of students
White	46%
Hispanic	39%
Asian/Pacific Islander	5%
African American	3%
American Indian	2%

Sub-population areas	% of students
Average Daily Attendance	94.9%
Transiency Rate	30.9%
Graduation Rate	73%
Credit Deficient	22.7%
Dropout Rate	3.5%
Limited English Proficient	15.9%
Free & Reduced Lunch	48%

Initial Data and Planning

Early Numeracy Cadre II

The emphasis of the Early Numeracy Cadre II is on how things can be done differently in the classroom to ensure that all students succeed in mathematics. Year II of the cadre moves to a deeper study of two practices from Year I, classroom discussion and solving rich mathematical tasks or problems. Cathy Fosnot's Young Mathematicians at Work along with several papers from the University of Cambridge guided the development of the class. Surveys document change in teacher practices, teacher understanding, task choice, and student ability.

Delivery of Services

Seven 3.5 hour classes occurred after school between August, 2014 and May, 2015 in the North Training Room at NWRPDP's Edison facility.

Results and Reflection

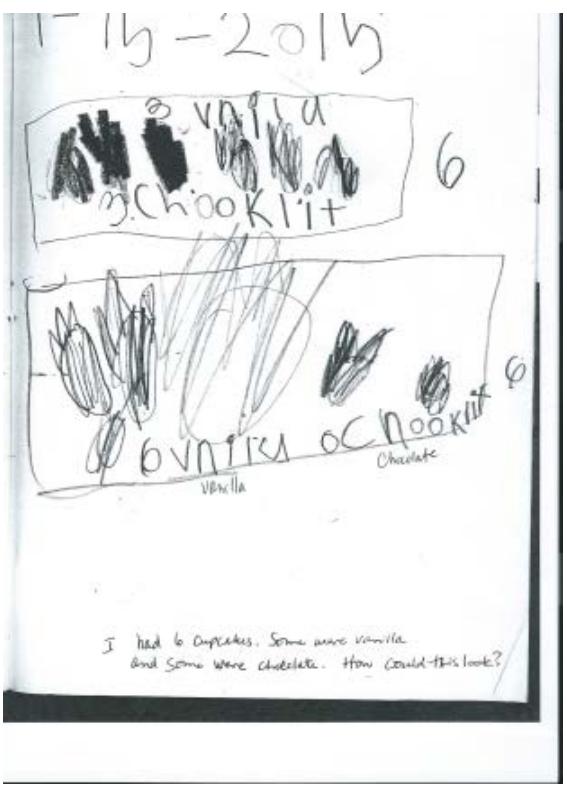
Several Likert scales used at the end of the course, ranging from 1 to 4, were used to gather results and reflections from the seven teachers who agreed to take part in this case study (captions represent highlights of teachers' reflection associated with a specific self-rating) (See Table 2).

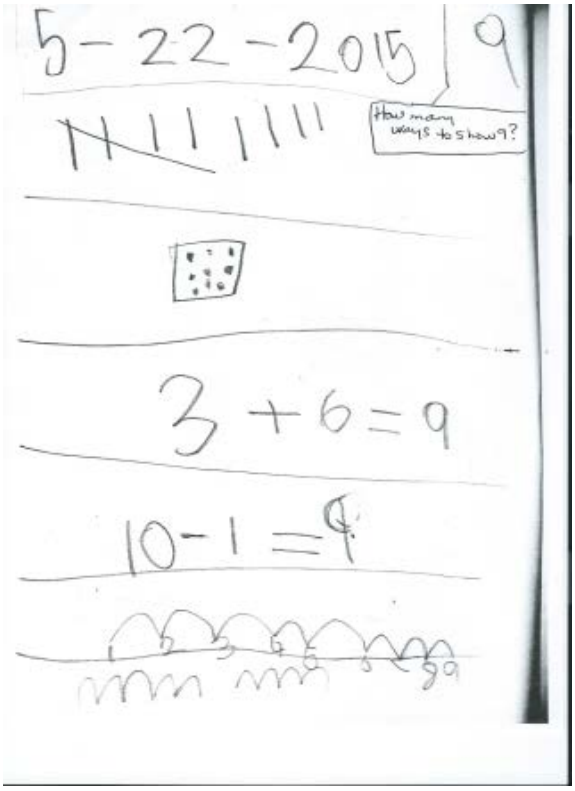
"A great class – can't say enough about it."

Table 2. Teacher ratings of Rich Mathematical Tasks Training.

	Average
The primary use of rich mathematical tasks is as a tool for teachers to evaluate the depth of students understanding, to catch misconceptions, and to facilitate classroom discourse designed to extend students' thinking.	3.9
My knowledge of the what, why and how of rich mathematical tasks has increased due to the presentations and discussions.	3.9
My use of rich mathematical tasks has increased since the onset of class.	4.0
Providing students with increased opportunities for thinking, reasoning, problem solving, and mathematical communication is necessary in order to meet the Nevada Academic Content Standards for mathematics.	3.9
My student's ability to access rich mathematical tasks has improved over time.	3.7
	Average
My use of rich mathematical tasks increased over time.	4.0
How much did the following influence this increase?	
1) Professional reading	3.0
2) Cadre discussions	3.9
3) Collaboration with others	3.6
4) Continued practice in using rich tasks	4.0
	Average
My students ability with rich mathematical tasks has evolved over time	3.9
This change was a result of:	
1) A change in my understanding of rich tasks	3.9
2) A change in my teaching practice	3.6
3) An increase in the number of rich tasks offered	3.7
4) Continued practice in using rich tasks	3.4
How much did the following influence this change?	
1) Cadre discussions	3.9
2) Professional reading	3.0
3) Collaboration with others	3.4
4) Continued practice in using rich tasks	2.4
	Average
My rich tasks…	
Revolve around an interesting problem – offering several methods of solution.	3.6
Are directed at essential mathematical content as specified in the standards.	3.9
Require examination and perseverance – challenging students.	3.9
Beg for discussion – offering rich discourse on the mathematics involved.	3.6
Build student understanding – following a clear set of learning expectations.	3.4
Warrant a summary look back – with reflection and extension opportunities.	3.4

Examples of Kindergarten work:





Plans for the cadre next year include being more explicit regarding the why and how of rich mathematical tasks, filming students using rich tasks from the beginning of the year and continuing through the end of the year in order to document change over time, and requesting copies of students' journals throughout the year to document change.

"This course has completely changed how I perceive myself as a teacher in math and I'm really happy I took this course."

Conclusion

It was exciting to watch teachers take a risk and begin using tasks that "offer different opportunities to meet the different needs of learners at different times" (University of Cambridge). They were unsure and worried when we first began (cognitively incompetent) and gained confidence as the year continued (cognitively competent). At the end of the school year, they presented student work samples from a rich task. It was rewarding to see the student work as well as hear teacher conversations around rich tasks. The teachers were very excited about what their students were capable of doing with rich mathematical tasks.

NVACSS MSP Grant Lyon and Churchill Counties, 2014-2015

NWRPDP trainers, district administrators, and UNR faculty provided Lyon and Churchill county teachers training and support needed to engage students in quality science and STEM learning activities in the classroom that incorporate the NVACS-S. Teachers' science content knowledge was assessed several times throughout the school year, and they scored highest on the final test, indicating that their content knowledge increased and that they retained the information over time.

Introduction

The focus of introducing and training the Nevada Academic Content Standards in Science (NVACS-S) is of great importance for Nevada teachers. The updated standards are based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and were adopted by the State of Nevada in May of 2014.

> "It was rewarding to see the student work as well as hear their conversations around rich tasks."

Lyon and Churchill School Districts requested NWRPDP support with implementing the NVACS-S based on their own analysis that teachers required training, materials, and expertise regarding the new NVACS-S. In preparation for the adoption of the new standards, teachers in the northwest region were questioned about their understanding of them. Teachers indicated that they understood very little about how to interpret the new standards. Based on this information, two NWRPDP facilitators worked together with Lyon and Churchill counties' staff to research, author, and submit a Math Science Partnership (MSP) grant proposal for K-8 teachers within the two school districts. With the grant's acceptance, they worked to design, prepare, and implement a one-week summer institute followed by three Saturday field trips and five Tuesday afterschool follow-up sessions throughout the 2014-15 school year.

The goal of the workshops was to provide teachers the training and support required to engage students in quality science and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) learning activities that incorporated the NVACS-S. Teachers gained an understanding of what STEM education is, and how they could utilize it in their classrooms.

> "I wish we had another workshop! I had so much fun!"

Instructional Context

Forty-one teachers participated in the grant. An evaluative survey was developed in December of 2013 to gauge their ability to deeply understand NVACS-S content knowledge and use of pedagogical skills to help students learn. The on-line survey was used as a pre- and post-assessment for the 3rd through 8th grade teachers in the participating school districts based on K-8 NVACS-S Earth Science standards.

Academically, on the 2012-13 Criterion Referenced Test (CRT) assessments, at least 10.4% of Lyon County School District and 8.9% of Churchill County School District 5th grade students did

not meet standards on the science portion. In addition, fifth and eighth grade scores in both districts reflected a state and national trend; that is, that students were losing ground in science between 5th and 8th grade. For example, 20.7% of Churchill County's fifth graders scored in the Exceeds Standards category on the 2012-13 CRT in science with only 3.7% of 8th graders scoring at the Exceeds level (www.nevadareportcard.com).

Table 1. Lyon and Churchill Fifth Grade Science CRT Results, compared with state.

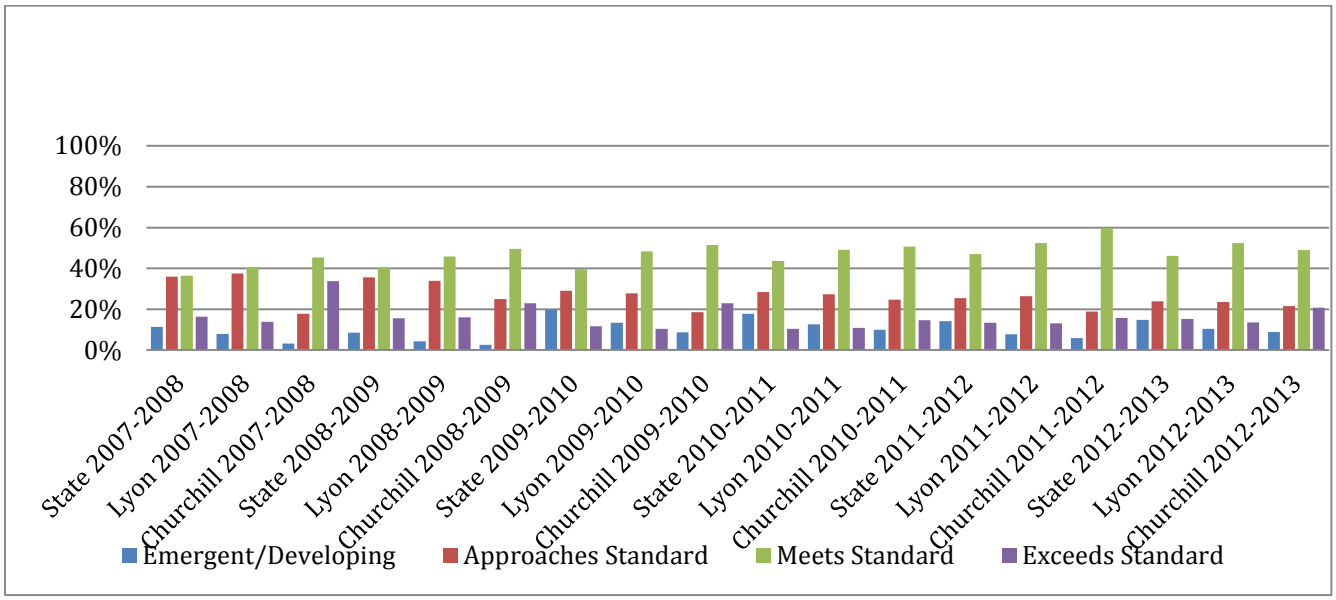
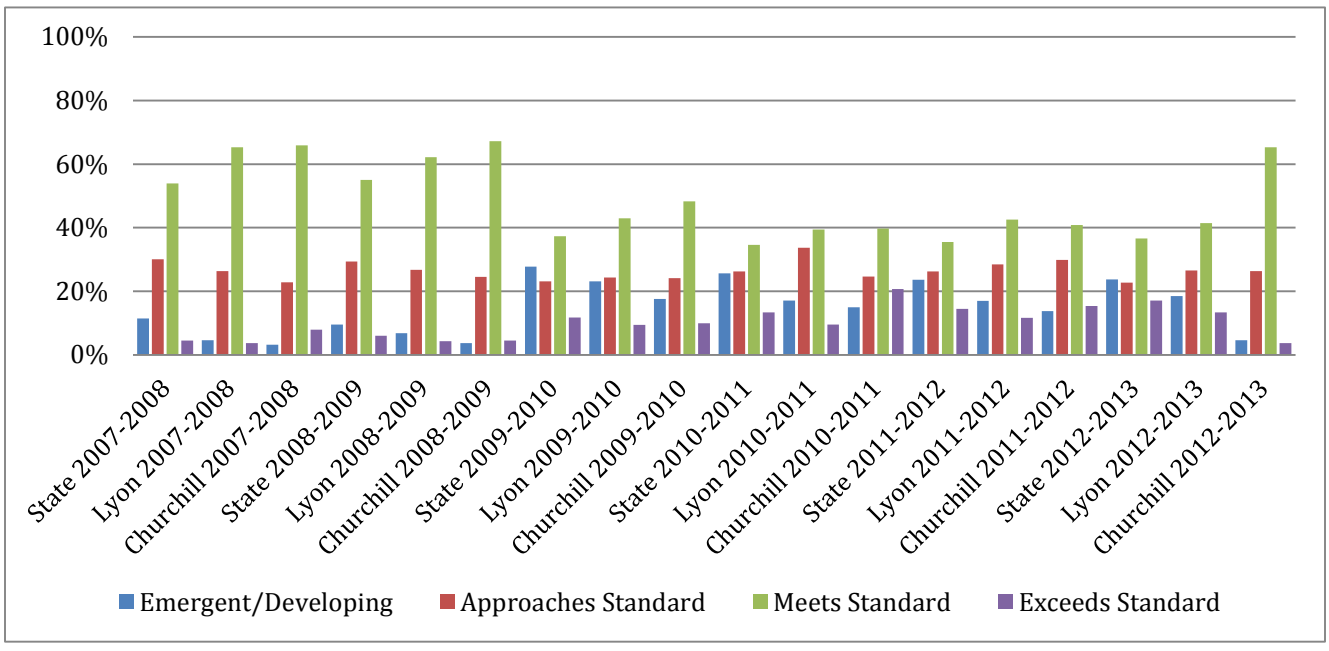


Table 2. Lyon and Churchill Eighth Grade Science CRT Results, compared with state.



Review of the data indicated three major concerns: (1) Teachers needed to understand a common language and understanding around the NVACS-S; (2) Teachers needed to understand

how to link language and understanding to both practices and supports; and (3) A continuation of on-going data collection, district level conversations, and feedback from teachers would help to frame current and on-going work in supporting science and STEM professional development in Churchill and Lyon County School Districts.

The data review further concluded that teachers who possess deep content understanding and an ability to differentiate for the NVACS-S were more able to provide rich, student-centered instructional practices that positively increased student achievement. Based on the NVACS-S, the students were working at a higher rigor in 5th grade, and although there were currently 13.6% of students reaching "exceeds" level for the current standards, these students were anticipated to struggle to reach the same achievement level in 8th grade. Students were not being adequately prepared for the anticipated new standards and student achievement would decline if teachers were not given the supported professional development needed in order to maintain the higher academic rigor.

"I have learned so much! I have implemented many lessons and ideas this year. My students and I thank you!"

Initial Data and Planning

In August of 2014, teachers completed a trainer-designed 33 question assessment of their science content knowledge based on the NVACS-S, the 25 item Science Teaching Efficacy Belief Instrument (STEBI) to measure their science teaching self-efficacy, and a questionnaire about their perceptions of their knowledge in science and science teaching pedagogy addressed by the NVACS-S. The 33 question assessment would be administered again after the summer institute and then as a final posttest at the conclusion of the field trips and follow-up sessions. Data would be compared to assess the success of the training program.

Delivery of Services

The NWRPDP trainers, in collaboration with Lyon and Churchill County School District administrators and University of Nevada faculty, designed several trainings. The first was a 30 hour, week long, summer institute during August 4th through 8th, 2014, three Saturday field trips (October 25, 2014, January 10, and March 14, 2015) and five 90-minute follow-up sessions (September 16, October 14, November 18, 2014, January 13, February 10, 2015) to teach the science and STEM content as well as to model and practice the pedagogical strategies required by the more rigorous NVACS-S. In addition, teachers shared lessons, celebrations, concerns, and questions about the content and pedagogy involved in successful implementation of the NVACS-S in their classrooms.

"Thanks for the wonderful kit and the education to teach it."

Results and Reflection

The results of the initial assessment in August 2014 resulted in an average score of 11 correct, a high score of 20, and a low score of 1. The results of this assessment indicated a significant lack of science content knowledge. After the summer institute, teachers completed the same questionnaire and the average score was 26 correct, which indicated a great improvement from the initial test. On March 14, 2015, teachers completed the test a final time and the average score was 27 correct. This indicates that the teachers not only increased their content knowledge but they also retained it over time. Based on the data and teacher feedback, the NWRPDP facilitators look to provide more workshops following this effective model.

"Teachers not only increased their content knowledge but they also retained it over time."

Conclusion

Having the opportunity to offer a summer institute which provided all participating teachers the materials and resources required to implement the new NVACSS as well as with follow-up support sessions was critical to the overall success of this project. The main goal of the MSP grant was to increase content knowledge of educators. The data and teacher reflections indicated that this goal was met.

"What a great class. It has helped shape my science units."

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Appendix A: Standards for Professional Learning and NWRPDP Rubric for Implementation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Standard	4=Highly Effective	3=Effective	2=Somewhat Effective	1=Ineffective	0=Not Applicable
LEARNING COMMUNITIES: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement,	All participants engage in continuous improvement and follow up, take collective responsibility for the learning, and participate in creating	Most participants are engaged all of the time, or all participants are engaged at least 75% of the time	Some participants are engaged in all levels	Few participants are engaged in all levels	This category would not apply to this project

Standard	4=Highly Effective	3=Effective	2=Somewhat Effective	1=Ineffective	0=Not Applicable
collective responsibility, and goal alignment	alignment and accountability				
LEADERSHIP: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning	The project is designed to develop capacity in all participants and creates support systems for ongoing learning	The project develops capacity in most participants and creates support systems for ongoing learning	The project develops capacity in some participants, support systems are incomplete	The project fails to develop capacity in participants and does not result in support systems for ongoing learning	This category would not apply to this project
RESOURCES: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning	There is evidence of a system in place to prioritize, monitor and coordinate human, fiscal, material , technology and time resources to support the project longterm	There is evidence of a system in place to prioritize, monitor and coordinate human, fiscal, material , technology and time resources to support the project until all participants are trained	There is evidence of an inadequate system in place to prioritize, monitor and coordinate human, fiscal, material , technology and time resources to support the project	There is no evidence of a system in place to prioritize, monitor and coordinate human, fiscal, material , technology and time resources to support the project longterm	This category would not apply to this project
DATA: Professional learning that increase educator effectiveness and results for all students uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator and system data to pan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.	Student, educator and system data is continually analyzed to plan, assess progress and evaluated the project	Student, educator and system data is analyzed initially to plan the project, and at the end to evaluate the project	Data from any one source is analyzed prior to initiating the project and at the end of the project to determine improvement	Data is not used to determine the need for the project nor the success of the project	This category would not apply to this project
LEARNING DESIGNS: Professional learning that increase educator effectiveness and results for all students integrates theories, research, and odes of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes	Learning theories, research and models of human learning which emphasize active engagement are used consistently to plan the learning	Learning theories, research and models of human learning are used to plan the learning	Learning theories, research and models of human learning are used occasionally to plan the learning	Learning theories, research and models of human learning are not used to plan the learning	This category would not apply to this project

Standard	4=Highly Effective	3=Effective	2=Somewhat Effective	1=Ineffective	0=Not Applicable
IMPLEMENTATION: Professional learning that increase educator effectiveness and results for all students applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change	Change research is consistently applied, there are follow up systems in place to sustain implementation, and constructive feedback is provided regularly to participants as they implement the program	Change research is inconsistently applied follow up systems are loosely in place to sustain implementation, and constructive feedback is provided occasionally to participants as they implement the program	Change research is inconsistently applied, there are no follow up systems in place to sustain implementation, and constructive feedback is not provided regularly to participants as they implement the program	Change research is not applied, there are no follow up systems in place to sustain implementation, and no constructive feedback is provided to participants as they implement the program	This category would not apply to this project

Appendix B: Statewide Coordinating Council Evaluation Form

RPDP Activity Evaluation Form
2014-2015 School Year

PRINT Participant Name (optional except for Washoe County): _____
E-mail address: _____

Role **Select One**: ❑ Teacher ❑ Administrator ❑ Parent ❑ Other
Grade Level: ❑ Elementary ❑ Middle ❑ High School
Circle appropriate grades: K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
Teaching Assignment: ❑ Math ❑ Language Arts ❑ Science ❑ Social Studies ❑ Other: _____
School: _____District: _____
Activity/Training Title: _____Activity/Training Date: _____
Facilitator/Presenter: _____ Location: _____
Sponsored by: ❑ Southern Nevada RPDP (Clark, Esmeralda Lincoln, Nye, Mineral) ❑ Northeastern Nevada RPDP (Elko, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, White Pine, Pershing) ❑ Northwestern Nevada RPDP (Carson, Churchill, Douglas, Lyon, Storey, Washoe)

Please rate the following characteristics of the activity.

	Not at all		To some extent		To a great extent	Don't know	N/A
1. The activity matched my needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. The activity provided opportunities for interactions and reflections.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. The presenter/facilitator's experience and expertise enhanced the quality of the activity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. The presenter/facilitator efficiently managed time and pacing of activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. The presenter/facilitator modeled effective teaching strategies.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. This activity added to my knowledge of standards and/or subject matter content.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. The activity will improve my teaching skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I will use the knowledge and skills from this activity in my classroom or professional duties.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. This activity will help me meet the needs of diverse student populations (e.g., gifted and talented, ELL, special ed., at-risk students).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Comments: _____
_____

Please use the back of this form if you need more writing space

Appendix C: The NWRPDP Professional Development Contact Form

NWRPDP CONTACT FORM 2014-2015

GENERAL INFORMATION					
Title of Class/Work:					
Date(s):					
Length of Services: hours **(rounded to the nearest .5 hour)**					
Trainer(s):					
COUNTY		**# OF TEACHERS EACH COUNTY**	**GROUP DEMOGRAPHICS**		
☐	Washoe County			# of elementary teachers	
☐	Storey County			# of middle school teachers	
☐	Carson County			# of high school teachers	
☐	Lyon County			# of administrators	
☐	Churchill County			# of parents	
☐	Douglas County			# of other *(paraprofessionals, subs, district-level certified staff, HS counselors, etc.)*	
☐	Other County(ies) - List:			Total number of participants	

TYPE OF INTERACTION (CHECK 1)					
☐	Training/In-service Class	☐	Observing	☐	Follow-up visit
☐	Consulting/Collaboration	☐	Coaching		
☐	Work with a School	☐	Observing and Coaching		

FOCUS OF SERVICE (CHECK 1)			
☐	Interventions	☐	Instructional Strategies/Pedagogy
☐	Assessment	☐	NVACS Literacy Content
☐	STEM	☐	NVACS Math Content
☐	Sheltered Instruction	☐	Social Studies Content
☐	T4S	☐	Science Content
☐	PLCs	☐	Writing Instruction
☐	School Performance	☐	Nevada Performance Framework
☐	Parent/ Family Engagement	☐	Other

Please attach this form to a readable participant list (include: <u>first name, last name, school, position</u> <u>and county</u>) and evaluation (if primary service was training).

Submitted by: **Date:**

Notes:

Appendix D: The NWRPDP Governing Board Meeting Agendas

Northwest RPDP Governing Board
AGENDA

September 11, 2014
9:00 – 12:00 PM
Gleason Building, Room 4
604 W. Musser Street
Carson City, NV

1.	Welcome and Introductions	
2.	Public Comment (Comments from the public are invited at this time on topics not specifically addressed elsewhere in the agenda.)	
3.	Review/approval of meeting notes from May 8, 2014	Possible Action Item
4.	Approval of today's agenda	Possible Action Item
5.	Review of NWRPDP Self-evaluation Report	Information and Discussion
6.	Update on Statewide Coordinating Council	Information and Discussion
7.	State (NDE) Update	Information and Discussion
8.	Administrator Training Funds 2013-2014	Information and Discussion
9.	Superintendents' Update	Information and Discussion
10.	District Members' Announcements	Information and Discussion
11.	Next Meeting: November 6, 2014	Information and Discussion
12.	Public Comment (Comments from the public are invited at this time on topics not specifically addressed elsewhere in the agenda.)	
13.	Adjournment	Possible Action Item

Members of the public who are disabled and require special accommodations or assistance at the meeting are requested to notify Pam Mills, in writing at the NWRPDP, 380 – A Edison Way, Reno, NV 89502 or by calling (775) 861 – 4470.

This agenda has been posted at the following locations:
Southern Nevada RPDP, 515 West Cheyenne, Suite C, North Las Vegas, NV 89030
Douglas County School District, 751 Mono, Minden, NV 89423
Nevada State Department of Education, 700 E. Fifth Street, Carson City, NV 89701
Carson City School District, 1402 West King Street, Carson City, NV 89703
Churchill County School District, 690 S. Maine Street, Fallon, NV 89406
Washoe County School District, Administration Building, 425 East Ninth, Reno, NV 89512
Washoe County School District, Regional Center for Teaching and Learning, 380 Edison Way, Reno, NV 89502
Storey County School District, P.O. Box C, Virginia City, NV 89440
Lyon County School District, 25 E. Goldfield Avenue, Yerington, NV 89447
Northern Nevada RPDP, 1290 Burns Road, High Tech Center Room 119, Elko, NV 89801

Northwest RPDP Governing Board
AGENDA

November 3, 2014
9:00 – 12:00 PM
Gleason Building, Room 4
604 W. Musser Street
Carson City, NV

1.	Welcome and Introductions	
2.	Public Comment (Comments from the public are invited at this time on topics not specifically addressed elsewhere in the agenda.)	
3.	Review/approval of meeting notes from September 11, 2014	Possible Action Item
4.	Approval of today's agenda	Possible Action Item
5.	Professional Learning Standards	Possible Action Item
6.	NWRPDP 2014-2015 Evaluation Report	Information and Discussion
7.	Budget Update	Possible Action Item
8.	State (NDE) Update	Information and Discussion
9.	Superintendents' Update	Information and Discussion
10.	District Members' Announcements	Information and Discussion
11.	Next Meeting: January 15, 2015	Information and Discussion
12.	Public Comment (Comments from the public are invited at this time on topics not specifically addressed elsewhere in the agenda.)	
13.	Adjournment	Possible Action Item

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Storey County School District, P.O. Box C, Virginia City, NV 89440
Lyon County School District, 25 E. Goldfield Avenue, Yerington, NV 89447
Northern Nevada RPDP, 1290 Burns Road, High Tech Center Room 119, Elko, NV 89801

Northwest RPDP Governing Board
AGENDA

January 15, 2015
9:00 – 12:00 PM
Gleason Building, Room 4
604 W. Musser Street
Carson City, NV

1.	Welcome and Introductions	
2.	Public Comment (Comments from the public are invited at this time on topics not specifically addressed elsewhere in the agenda.)	
3.	Review/approval of meeting notes from November 3, 2015	Possible Action Item
4.	Approval of today's agenda	Possible Action Item
5.	State (NDE) Update	Information and Discussion
6.	Superintendents' Update	Information and Discussion
7.	District Members' Announcements	Information and Discussion
8.	Next Meeting: March 12, 2015	Information and Discussion
9.	Public Comment (Comments from the public are invited at this time on topics not specifically addressed elsewhere in the agenda.)	
10.	Adjournment	Possible Action Item

Members of the public who are disabled and require special accommodations or assistance at the meeting are requested to notify Pam Mills, in writing at the NWRPDP, 380 – A Edison Way, Reno, NV 89502 or by calling (775) 861 – 4470.

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Lyon County School District, 25 E. Goldfield Avenue, Yerington, NV 89447
Northern Nevada RPDP, 1290 Burns Road, High Tech Center Room 119, Elko, NV 89801

Northwest RPDP Governing Board
AGENDA

March 12, 2015
9:00 – 12:00 PM
Gleason Building, Room 4
604 W. Musser Street
Carson City, NV

1.	Welcome and Introductions	
2.	Public Comment (Comments from the public are invited at this time on topics not specifically addressed elsewhere in the agenda.)	
3.	Review/approval of meeting notes from January 15, 2015	Possible Action Item
4.	Approval of today's agenda	Possible Action Item
5.	State (NDE) Update	Information and Discussion
6.	RPDP Evaluation System	Information and Discussion
7.	Competitive Grants	Information and Discussion
8.	Budget Updates	Information and Discussion
9.	Superintendents' Update	Information and Discussion
10.	District Members' Announcements	Information and Discussion
11.	Next Meeting: Tentative May 6, 2015	Information and Discussion
12.	Public Comment (Comments from the public are invited at this time on topics not specifically addressed elsewhere in the agenda.)	
13.	Adjournment	Possible Action Item

Members of the public who are disabled and require special accommodations or assistance at the meeting are requested to notify Pam Mills, in writing at the NWRPDP, 380 – A Edison Way, Reno, NV 89502 or by calling (775) 861 – 4470.

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Lyon County School District, 25 E. Goldfield Avenue, Yerington, NV 89447
Northern Nevada RPDP, 1290 Burns Road, High Tech Center Room 119, Elko, NV 89801

Northwest RPDP Governing Board

AGENDA

May 6, 2015
9:00 – 12:00 PM
Rose Bullis Center for Teaching and Learning
North Training Room
380 Edison Way
Reno, NV 89502

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Public Comment (Comments from the public are invited at this time on topics not specifically addressed elsewhere in the agenda.)
3. Review/approval of meeting notes from January 15 and March 12, 2015 — Possible Action Item
4. Approval of today's agenda — Possible Action Item
5. Election of New Chairperson — Information and Discussion; Possible Action Item
6. State (NDE) Update — Information and Discussion
7. Budget Updates — Information and Discussion; Possible Action Item
8. Legislative Updates — Information and Discussion
9. Superintendents' Update — Information and Discussion
10. District Members' Announcements — Information and Discussion
11. 2015-2016 Meeting Dates — Information and Discussion; Possible Action Item
12. Public Comment (Comments from the public are invited at this time on topics not specifically addressed elsewhere in the agenda.)
13. Adjournment — Possible Action Item

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STATE COORDINATING COUNCIL
REGIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Statewide Coordinating Council
Regional Professional Development Program

Plan for Professional Development

2010-2015

PURPOSE....MISSION...Why we exist...

Core Elements of the Mission of the State Coordinating Council of the Regional Professional Development Programs (SCCRPDP)
To strengthen the Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDPs) through ongoing collaboration, communication, and networking
To promote the design and provision of high quality professional development aligned with the Nevada Professional Development Standards as a foundation for continuous school improvement
To increase student achievement through support for the provision of high quality professional development for teachers and administrators addressing issues of equity, access, and excellence in education for all students

FUTURE DIRECTION....VISION....Our future...

Core Vision Elements
SCCRPDP will facilitate collaboration and communication of the RPDPs for continued growth and improvement in the quality of services provided.
Teachers will have the pedagogy, content, and assessment strategies to improve student achievement. High quality professional development will deepen and enhance teacher practice through embedded activities and follow-up.
School leaders will provide effective instructional leadership that supports teacher professional growth and development for improved student achievement.
All RPDP professional development will be aligned to the Nevada Professional Development Standards.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION.... LONG-TERM GOALS....Getting to where we want to be…

KEY GOALS...STRATEGIC DIRECTION
Goal 1: To implement the Nevada Professional Development Standards
Goal 2: To design and implement high quality professional development for teachers to improve student achievement
Goal 3: To design and implement high quality professional development for school administrators that increases their instructional leadership skills to improve student achievement
Goal 4: To implement systems to measure impact of RPDP professional development on teacher effectiveness and student achievement

KEY STRATEGIES....ACTION STEPS...How to get it done...

Key Strategies
Goal 1: To support the use of the Nevada Professional Development Standards in the design and delivery of professional development for educators statewide
Strategies: ▪ Identify common services, actions, and practices of the RPDPs ▪ Establish a collective voice on professional development issues as appropriate ▪ Promote delivery of high quality professional development aligned with the Nevada Professional Development Standards. ▪ Support opportunities for regional trainers to share expertise between and within regions and participate in their own personal professional development
Goal 2: Oversee the design and implementation of high quality professional development aligned with the Nevada Professional Development Standards in order for educators to improve student achievement and close achievement gaps
Strategies: ▪ Utilize a third-part evaluator to monitor the provision of high quality professional development focused on the Nevada Academic Standards to improve teaching and learning ▪ Provide support to educators in the development, implementation, and evaluation of their school improvement initiatives
Goal 3: Oversee the development and implementation of high quality professional development for school administrators that increases their knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to improve teaching and learning
Strategies: ▪ Provide for the delivery of high quality professional development on instructional leadership skills that has sustained impact on teacher effectiveness and student achievement ▪ Oversee support to school administrators in the development, implementation and evaluation of their school improvement initiatives ▪ Ensure professional development supports the school leadership responsibilities in the areas of: curriculum/instruction, assessment/accountability, vision/culture, and operations/management
Goal 4: To implement systems by region to measure impact of RPDP professional development on educator effectiveness and student achievement
Strategies: ▪ Provide a forum for the discussion and refinement of evaluation practices that can most effectively measure the impact of professional development on teacher effectiveness and student achievement ▪ Oversee systems for communicating and reporting findings ▪ Review evaluation data for analysis, decision-making, future offerings, goal-setting, and continuous improvement

Appendix F: Carson City School District Services Summary

Carson City School District has 11 schools: six elementary schools, two middle schools, one comprehensive high school, one alternative high school, and one charter school. Carson has 7% of the schools in the NWRPDP Region, which includes 154 schools. One full-time learning facilitator is housed in Carson.

Training focused mainly on the Nevada Educator Performance Framework and Nevada Academic Content Standards in math.

Participant Mean Ratings on Quality of RPDP Trainings

(Scale: 1 = not at all, 3 = to some extent, 5 = to a great extent)	CCSD	Region
The activity matched my needs	4.4	4.4
The activity provided opportunities for interactions and reflections	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator's experience and expertise enhanced the quality of the activity.	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator efficiently managed time and pacing of activities.	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator modeled effective teaching strategies.	4.6	4.6
This activity added to my knowledge of standards and/or subject matter content.	4.5	4.5
The activity will improve my teaching skills.	4.5	4.4
I will use the knowledge and skills from this activity in my classroom or professional duties.	4.5	4.5
This activity will help me meet the needs of diverse student populations (e.g., gifted and talented, ELL, special education, at-risk students).	4.4	4.4

Number of Educators Trained by NWRPDP

	Unduplicated	Duplicated
ES Teachers	261	1017
MS Teachers	119	354
HS Teachers	36	98
Administrators	40	225
Others	31	122
Totals	487	1816

Carson educators were 14.8% of the educators served in the region (Using the unduplicated regional count of 3288 educators).

Regional Learning Facilitator (LF) Productivity:

- LFs spent 1,221 hours planning for CCSD interactions.
    - This was 21.2% of the total planning time (5,764 hours).
- LFs spent 1,449.8 hours in interactions with CCSD employees.
    - This was 21.3% of total interaction time (6,791.5 hours).
- LFs spent 21.3% of their time working with educators in CCSD.
- LFs spent 10.2% of their time with the Nevada Department of Education and other state committees on Nevada Academic Content Standards, NEPF, and STEM initiatives.

Figure 1: Types of Services Provided

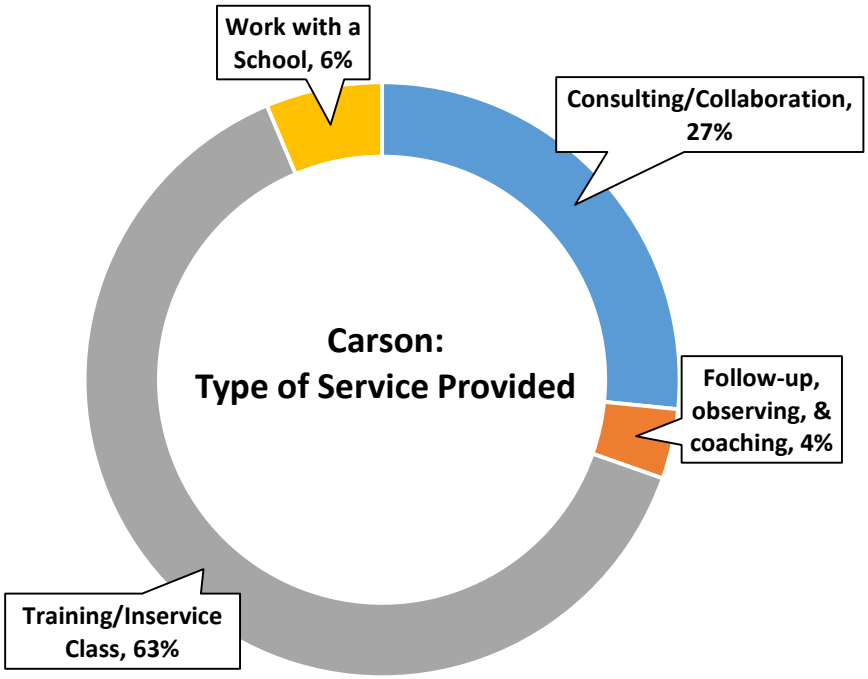
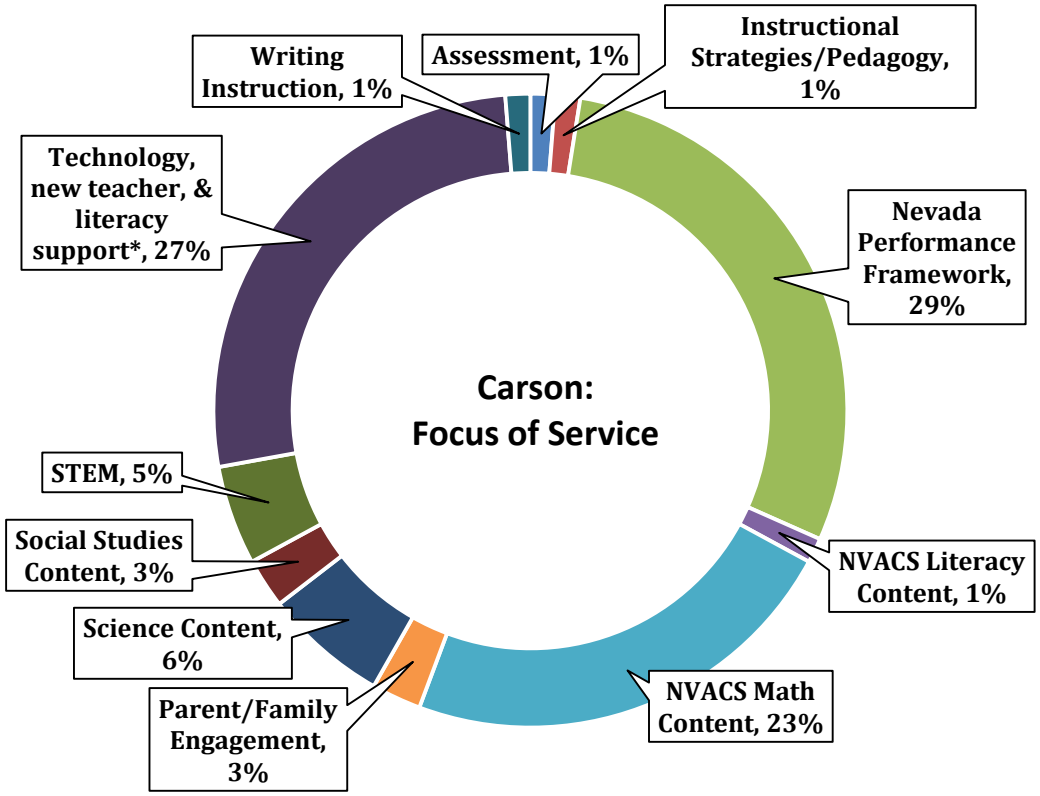


Figure 2: Focus of Services



Appendix G: Churchill County School District Services Summary

Churchill County School District has six schools: one pre-K and Kindergarten school, three elementary schools, one middle school, and one comprehensive high school. A full-time Learning Facilitator coordinates services for Churchill County.

Primary areas supported by regional learning facilitators this year were Instructional Strategies and Pedagogy, Nevada Academic Content Standards in math, and the Nevada Educator Performance Framework followed by science and STEM.

Participant Mean Ratings on Quality of RPDP Trainings

(Scale: 1 = not at all, 3 = to some extent, 5 = to a great extent)	CCSD	Region
The activity matched my needs	4.4	4.4
The activity provided opportunities for interactions and reflections	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator's experience and expertise enhanced the quality of the activity.	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator efficiently managed time and pacing of activities.	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator modeled effective teaching strategies.	4.6	4.6
This activity added to my knowledge of standards and/or subject matter content.	4.5	4.5
The activity will improve my teaching skills.	4.5	4.4
I will use the knowledge and skills from this activity in my classroom or professional duties.	4.5	4.5
This activity will help me meet the needs of diverse student populations (e.g., gifted and talented, ELL, special education, at-risk students).	4.4	4.4

Number of Educators Trained by NWRPDP

	Unduplicated	Duplicated
ES Teachers	98	468
MS Teachers	31	137
HS Teachers	37	96
Administrators	8	21
Others	12	25
Totals	186	747

Churchill educators were 5.7% of the educators trained in the region (Using the Unduplicated regional count of 3288 educators).

Regional Learning Facilitator (LF) Productivity:

- LFs spent 1,604.5 hours planning for ChCSD interactions.
    - This was 27.8% of the total planning time (5,764 hours).
- LFs spent 1,705.3 hours in interactions with ChCSD employees.
    - This was 25.1% of total interaction time (6,791.5 hours).
- LFs spent 26.4% of their time working with educators in ChCSD.
- LFs spent 10.2% of their time with the Nevada Department of Education and other state committees on Nevada Academic Content Standards, NEPF, and other initiatives.

Figure 1: Types of Services Provided

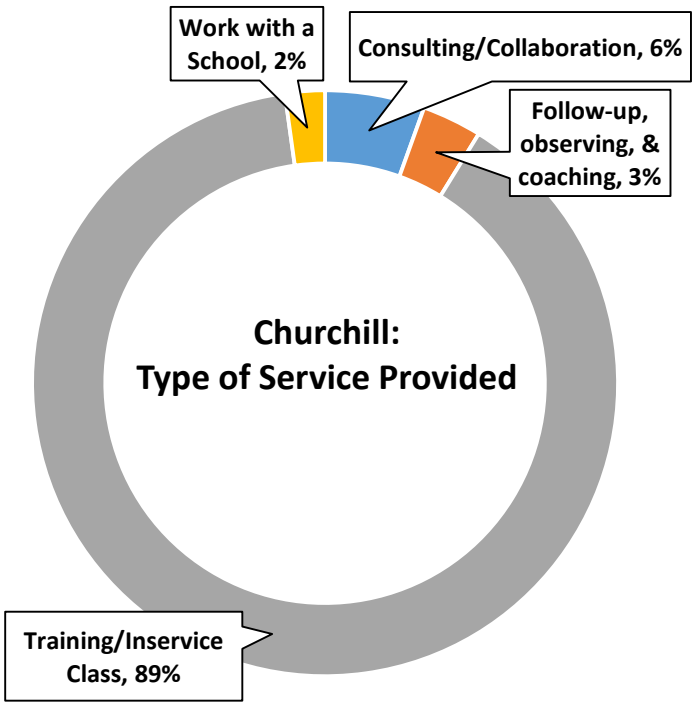
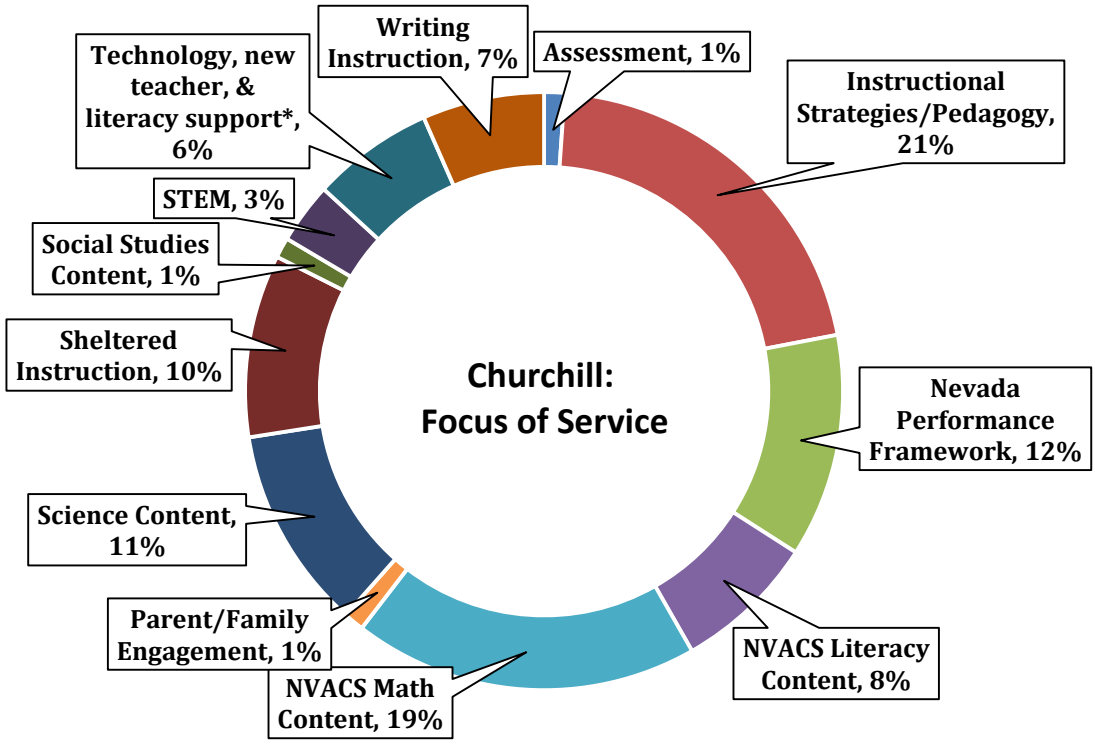


Figure 2: Focus of Services



Appendix H: Douglas County School District Services Summary

Douglas County School District has 14 schools: seven elementary schools, three middle schools, and four high school schools. Douglas has 9% of the schools in the NWRPDP Region, which includes 154 schools. A full-time Learning Facilitator coordinated services for Douglas County.

The majority of services provided this year were in support of the Nevada Educator Performance Framework and implementation of the Nevada Academic Content Standards in math.

Participant Mean Ratings on Quality of RPDP Trainings

(Scale: 1 = not at all, 3 = to some extent, 5 = to a great extent)	DCSD	Region
The activity matched my needs	4.4	4.4
The activity provided opportunities for interactions and reflections	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator's experience and expertise enhanced the quality of the activity.	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator efficiently managed time and pacing of activities.	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator modeled effective teaching strategies.	4.6	4.6
This activity added to my knowledge of standards and/or subject matter content.	4.5	4.5
The activity will improve my teaching skills.	4.5	4.4
I will use the knowledge and skills from this activity in my classroom or professional duties.	4.5	4.5
This activity will help me meet the needs of diverse student populations (e.g., gifted and talented, ELL, special education, at-risk students).	4.4	4.4

Number of Educators Trained by NWRPDP

	Unduplicated	Duplicated
ES Teachers	234	784
MS Teachers	54	99
HS Teachers	85	112
Administrators	30	132
Others	37	63
Totals	440	1190

Douglas educators were 13.4% of the educators trained in the region (Using the Unduplicated regional count of 3288 educators).

Regional Learning Facilitator (LF) Productivity:

- LFs spent 1,179.3 hours for DCSD interactions.
    - This was 20.5% of the total planning time (5,764 hours).
- LFs spent 1,489 hours in interactions with DCSD employees.
    - This was 21.9% of total interaction time (6,791.5 hours).
- LFs spent 21.3% of their time working with educators in DCSD.
- LFs spent 10.2% of their time with the Nevada Department of Education and other state committees on Nevada Academic Content Standards, NEPF, and other initiatives.

Figure 1: Types of Services Provided

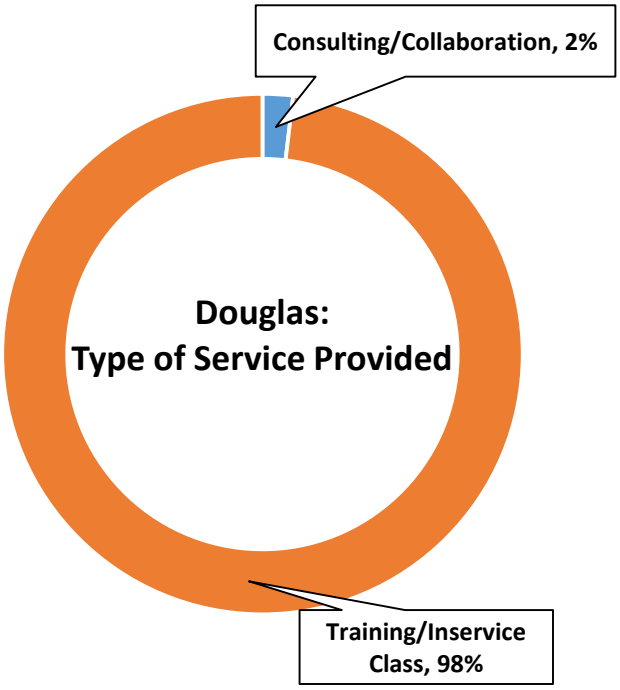
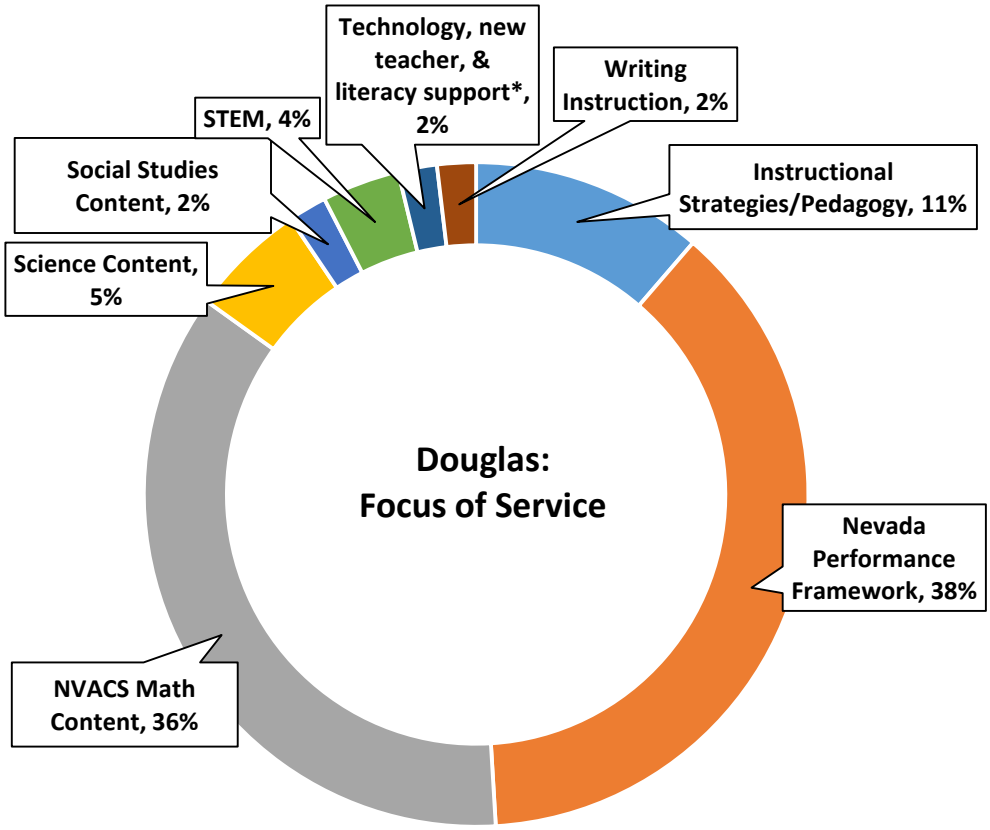


Figure 2: Focus of Services



Appendix I: Lyon County School District Services Summary

Lyon County School District has 17 schools in five communities (Yerington, Dayton, Fernley, Smith Valley and Silver Springs): eight elementary schools, four intermediate schools, four high schools, one K-8 school, and one K-12 school. Lyon has 11% of the schools in the NWRPDP Region, which includes 154 schools. A full-time facilitator coordinates services for Lyon County.

Services were focused this year on the Nevada Educator Performance Framework followed by the Nevada Academic Content Standards in math.

Participant Mean Ratings on Quality of RPDP Trainings

(Scale: 1 = not at all, 3 = to some extent, 5 = to a great extent)	LCSD	Region
The activity matched my needs	4.4	4.4
The activity provided opportunities for interactions and reflections	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator's experience and expertise enhanced the quality of the activity.	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator efficiently managed time and pacing of activities.	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator modeled effective teaching strategies.	4.6	4.6
This activity added to my knowledge of standards and/or subject matter content.	4.5	4.5
The activity will improve my teaching skills.	4.5	4.4
I will use the knowledge and skills from this activity in my classroom or professional duties.	4.5	4.5
This activity will help me meet the needs of diverse student populations (e.g., gifted and talented, ELL, special education, at-risk students).	4.4	4.4

Number of Educators Trained by NWRPDP

	Unduplicated	Duplicated
ES Teachers	290	800
MS Teachers	110	302
HS Teachers	133	226
Administrators	32	121
Others	21	48
Totals	586	1497

Lyon educators were 17.8% of the educators trained in the region (Using the Unduplicated regional count of 3288 teachers).

Regional Learning Facilitator (LF) Productivity:

- LFs spent 1,581.3 hours planning for LCSD interactions.
    - This was 27.4% of the total planning time (5,764 hours).
- LFs spent 580 hours in interactions with LCSD employees.
    - This was 19.7% of total interaction time (6,791.5 hours).
- LFs spent 23.2% of their time working with educators in LCSD.
- LFs spent 10.2of their time with the Nevada Department of Education and other state committees on Nevada Academic Content Standards, NEPF, and other initiatives.

Figure 1: Types of Services Provided

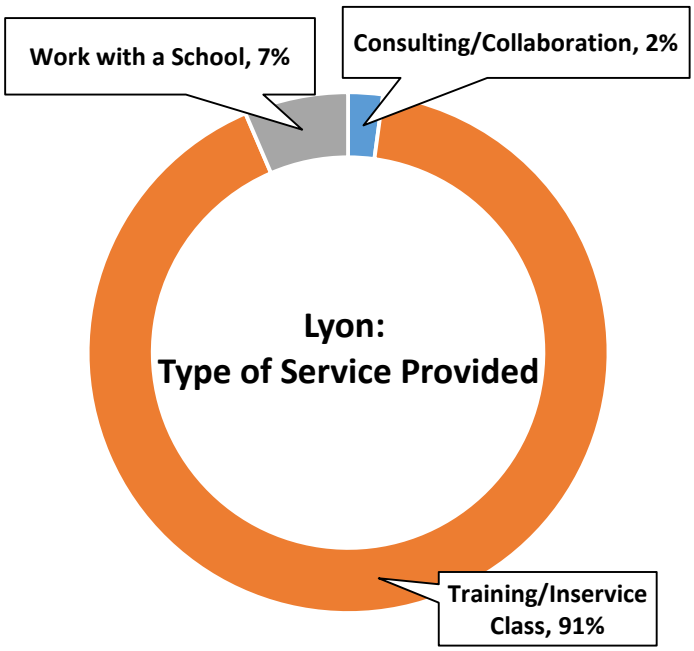
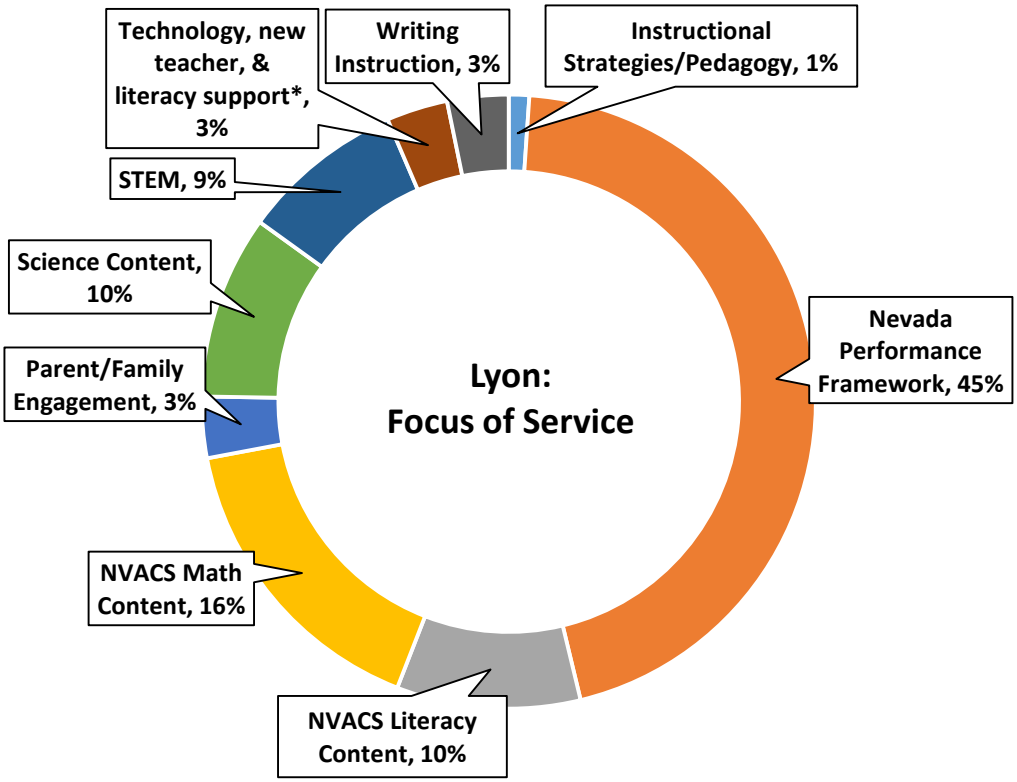


Figure 2: Focus of Services



Appendix J: Storey County School District Services Summary

Storey County School District has four schools and one part-time trainer dedicated to its professional development. It offers two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. Storey County has 2.6% of the schools in the NWRPDP Region, which includes 154 schools.

Storey County received services in implementing the Nevada Academic Content Standards in math and the Nevada Educator Performance Framework

Participant Mean Ratings on Quality of RPDP Trainings

(Scale: 1 = not at all, 3 = to some extent, 5 = to a great extent)	SCSD	Region
The activity matched my needs	4.4	4.4
The activity provided opportunities for interactions and reflections	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator's experience and expertise enhanced the quality of the activity.	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator efficiently managed time and pacing of activities.	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator modeled effective teaching strategies.	4.6	4.6
This activity added to my knowledge of standards and/or subject matter content.	4.5	4.5
The activity will improve my teaching skills.	4.5	4.4
I will use the knowledge and skills from this activity in my classroom or professional duties.	4.5	4.5
This activity will help me meet the needs of diverse student populations (e.g., gifted and talented, ELL, special education, at-risk students).	4.4	4.4

Number of Educators Trained by NWRPDP

	Unduplicated	Duplicated
ES Teachers	11	30
MS Teachers	12	30
HS Teachers	14	28
Administrators	2	4
Others	2	2
Totals	41	94

Storey educators were 1.3% of the educators trained in the region (Using the Unduplicated regional count of 3288 educators).

Regional Learning Facilitator (LF) Productivity:

- LFs spent 250.3 hours planning for SCSD interactions.
    - This was 4.3% of the total planning time (5,764 hours).
- LFs spent 307.8 hours in interactions with SCSD employees.
    - This was 4.5% of total interaction time (6,791.5 hours).
- LFs spent 4.4% of their time working with educators in SCSD.
- LFs spent 10.2% of their time with the Nevada Department of Education and other state committees on Nevada Academic Content Standards, NEPF, and other initiatives.

Figure 1: Types of Services Provided

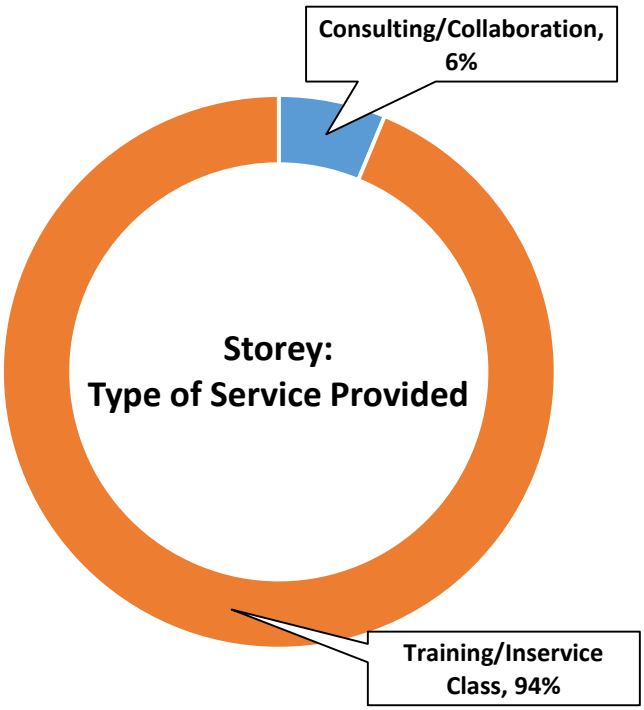
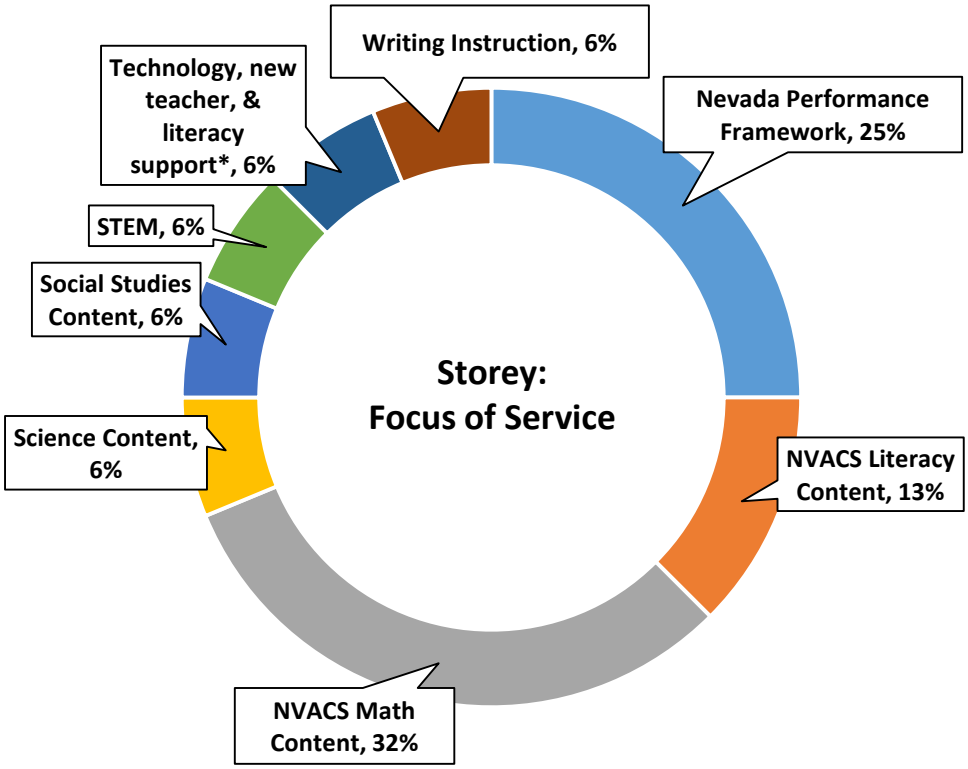


Figure 2: Focus of Services



Appendix K: Washoe County School District Services Summary

Washoe County School District is the largest school district in the region with 102 schools: 62 elementary schools, 15 middle schools, 15 high schools, two schools for special populations, and eight charter schools. Washoe has 66% of the schools in the NWRPDP Region, which includes 154 schools.

Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS) in math and literacy (including writing) and introduction of the Nevada Educator Performance Framework for administrators were the main focus of training.

Participant Mean Ratings on Quality of RPDP Trainings

(Scale: 1 = not at all, 3 = to some extent, 5 = to a great extent)	WCSD	Region
The activity matched my needs	4.4	4.4
The activity provided opportunities for interactions and reflections	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator's experience and expertise enhanced the quality of the activity.	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator efficiently managed time and pacing of activities.	4.7	4.7
The presenter/facilitator modeled effective teaching strategies.	4.6	4.6
This activity added to my knowledge of standards and/or subject matter content.	4.5	4.5
The activity will improve my teaching skills.	4.5	4.4
I will use the knowledge and skills from this activity in my classroom or professional duties.	4.5	4.5
This activity will help me meet the needs of diverse student populations (e.g., gifted and talented, ELL, special education, at-risk students).	4.4	4.4

Number of Educators Trained by NWRPDP

	Unduplicated	Duplicated
ES Teachers	883	1665
MS Teachers	178	258
HS Teachers	131	187
Administrators	200	340
Others	156	242
Totals	1548	2692

Washoe educators were 47% of the educators trained in the region (Using the Unduplicated regional count of 3288 educators).

Regional Learning Facilitator (LF) Productivity:

- LFs spent 1,984 hours planning for WCSD interactions.
    - This was 34.4% of the total planning time (5,764 hours).
- LFs spent 2,223.5 hours in interactions with WCSD employees.
    - This was 32.7% of total interaction time (6,791.5 hours).
- LFs spent 33.5% of their time working with educators in WCSD.
- LFs spent 10.2% of their time with the Nevada Department of Education and other state committees on Nevada Academic Content Standards, NEPF, and other initiatives.

Figure 1: Types of Services Provided

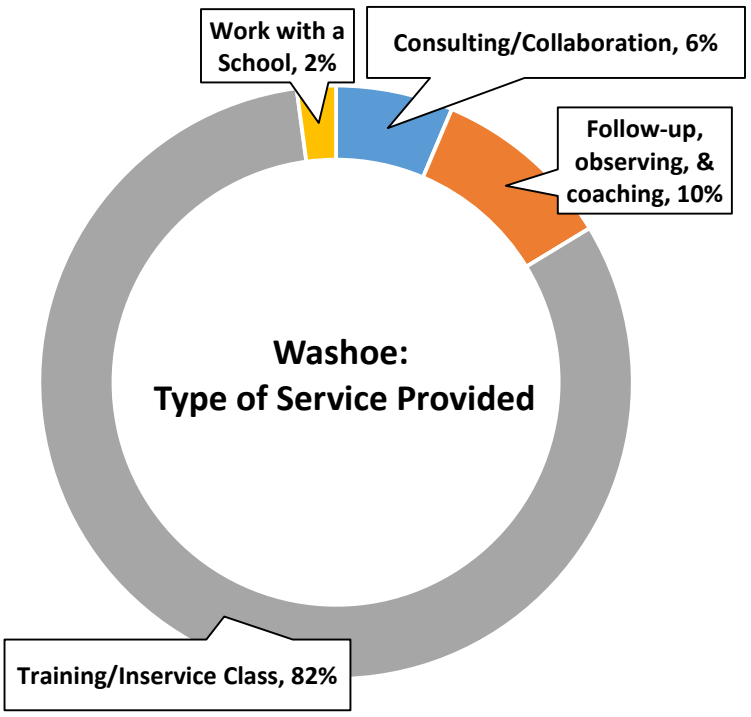


Figure 2: Focus of Services