



AALPD Recommended Policies to Support Professional Development for Adult Basic Education Practitioners

Goal: The adoption of policies at national, state and local levels that adequately support the participation of adult basic education, adult ESOL, and adult secondary education practitioners (including paraprofessionals and learner leaders who are staff members) in professional development that will help them be effective teachers, tutors, counselors, and administrators. These policies offer recommendations for the *minimum* necessary to support practitioners in getting the professional development they need to do their jobs well.

Policy	Rationale	Practices/Examples
<p>1. <u>Orientation/Induction for Teachers New to Adult Education</u>: All teachers new to adult education should have an orientation to teaching in the field of adult basic education within at least the first six months of their teaching.</p>	<p>Smith & Hofer (2003) found that most adult basic education teachers do not have formal training in teaching adults (even if they have been K-12 teachers). Therefore, all new adult basic education teachers, whether they have previously taught in K-12 before, need initial training in the basics of teaching adults and an orientation to the field of adult basic education.</p>	<p><u>Practice:</u> <u>The state develops an orientation for teachers new to ABE, and teachers participate on paid time.</u> The orientation requirement could be in addition to the standard requirement for paid participation in professional development. The orientation might include: an introduction to adult learning; a brief history/overview of the funding, structure, institutions and history of the field; and an introduction to curriculum and lesson planning. The orientation could be provided on site, and/or using a distance learning or blended approach (some face-to-face, some distance learning) with in-person follow up. Teachers from the same program participate as a group or individually. Teachers include evidence of their learning in a PD portfolio or folder that illustrates teacher achievement and a copy is kept in program files. The state could include a review of teacher PD portfolios as a part of the state monitoring process.</p> <p>The orientation could be extended to include mentoring and induction into the local program.</p>

FINAL

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		<p><u>Examples:</u> Connecticut: CT has a CD for New Teacher Orientation http://www.crec.org/atdn/resources/cdrom.shtml</p> <p>Massachusetts: Program directors participate in a required “Orientation for New Directors” and teachers participate in a required “Orientation for New Teachers.” http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/abeguide.doc</p>
<p>2. <u>Expectations for Participation in Professional Development:</u> Every state and program should expect that all practitioners, no matter how experienced, will continue professional learning throughout their careers. Teachers should have access to up-to-date knowledge of research and teaching methods in the content areas they are required to teach (e.g. ABE reading, ESOL reading math) as well as general methods of adult teaching and learning.</p>	<p>Smith, et al (2003) found that teachers who had more experience teaching in the field changed less after participating in professional development than did teachers who were new to the field. Researchers found that teachers with less experience, with less formal education, and who had never taught before were more motivated to learn about the topic and to learn theories of teaching and learning. Researchers hypothesized that more experienced teachers sometimes felt they had less to learn from professional development, were more “settled”. Therefore, every state and program needs to convey to all practitioners and program administrators that they are expected to continue learning and developing throughout their careers.</p>	<p><u>Practices:</u> State Level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a policy to pay teachers for participating in professional development. • Provide incentives for staff to develop PD plans and folders or other portfolios that document learning/achievement. • Create a process, professional development framework, or other statewide mechanism for recognizing teachers for their participation in professional development. <p>Program Level: Administrators, supervisors, and other colleagues encourage teachers to grow professionally by: providing paid work time for PD; including PD activities as part of a teacher job description; adding PD on the agenda at staff meetings; or setting aside a time (a day a month, for example) for PD work and staff discussion about it.</p> <p><u>Example:</u> Tennessee Professional Development Framework: http://aeonline.coe.utk.edu/pdf/frame.htm#first</p>

FINAL

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<p>3. <u>Professional Development Plans</u>: Each program should be funded a minimum of 0.5% (up to 8 hours) of its annual staff hours to support teachers in developing an annual professional development plan that begins with a practitioner needs assessment and dovetails with its program improvement process. All teachers should have PD plans, and programs should be monitored to see that these are real and meaningful to teachers and to the program.</p>	<p>Smith et al (2003) found that teachers’ motivation to attend professional development, whether that motivation is related to learning more about the topic or to building their theories of learning and student success, was a strong factor in how much teachers changed after participating in professional development. Therefore, if teachers have a plan which helps them identify problems they face in their teaching, or areas of teaching and learning about which they feel they need to know more, that may lead them to attend professional development in line with that plan, rather than attending whatever professional development is convenient or available.</p>	<p><u>Practice</u>: <u>Every teacher has an individual PD plan, with PD goals and activities planned for the year.</u> Beginning with the need for improvements in instruction and related services, teachers work with program directors in assessing these needs, setting and prioritizing PD goals, and making a professional development plan to achieve the goals. Programs use methods to ensure that professional development plans are aligned with the strategic goals of the program while allowing adequate room for staff development that enhances an individual practitioner's skills or helps them develop a special interest. Teachers implement their plans, document learning and achievement, reflect upon and evaluate their professional development efforts. In some instances, teachers might choose to design multi-year PD plans.</p> <p>Examples: Needs Assessment examples http://wiki.literacytent.org/index.php/Staff_Development_Needs_Assessment</p>
<p>4. <u>Paid Professional Development Release Time</u>: Each program should be funded such that all practitioners receive a minimum of 2.5% of their annual working time as paid professional development.¹ Paid professional development includes any professional learning activity (group or individual) that</p>	<p>Smith, et al (2003) found that teachers who received more <u>paid</u> professional development time attended professional development for more hours, and teachers who attended more hours changed more. Additionally, to create a system of high quality adult literacy, language, and lifelong learning services, The National Literacy Summit 2000 Action Agenda calls for the field to “require a minimum number of hours per year of</p>	<p><u>Practices</u>: <u>Write policy into Requests for Proposals (RFPs)</u>: The state communicates to programs in its Requests for Proposals (RFPs) that programs must allocate 2.5% of each teacher’s total annual teaching hours for staff development, and the program director includes that in the program’s budget in the proposal. Then, the state funds the program’s budget, which includes the 2.5% for each teacher, and the program spends</p>

¹ e.g., A full-time teacher, working 40 hours a week at 40 weeks a year – summers and holidays off – would work 1600 hours a year, so 2.5% would equal 40 hours of paid professional development a year -- equivalent to 5 paid days).

FINAL

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<p>advances practitioners towards achieving the goals outlined in their professional development plans.</p>	<p>paid professional development for all instructional staff” (p. 8). Therefore, all practitioners should be paid to attend professional development at least 10-12 hours minimum per year, no matter how part time the teacher is.</p>	<p>funds accordingly.</p> <p>Further, if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.5% is allocated for developing a PD plan for each teacher; • 2.0% is allocated for teachers to be involved in program improvement; • 2.5% is allocated for each teacher to participate in professional development; and • 1.0% is allocated for teachers to participate as members of the field, <p>then...</p> <p>For full-time teachers, who teach 40 weeks a year at 40 hours a week (1600 hours a year) this would be 96 hours a year: 40 hours of Paid PD, 8 hours to develop their PD plans, 32 hours to be involved in program improvement, and 16 hours to participate as a member of the field. If a teacher teaches for 40 weeks a year, that's 2 1/2 hours a week out of her full-time job spent on professional development and program improvement.</p> <p><i>For part-time teachers, while all of this is proportional, there should be a minimum:</i></p> <p>If a teacher teaches 8 hours a week or less over 40 weeks, then the teacher would be able to participate a minimum of 12 hours of PD for the year, and a minimum of 8 hours to be involved in PI. The full percent would be in place if a teacher teaches over 8 hours per week. For example, if a teacher teaches 15 hours a week or more, then the full % is in play (15 X 40 = 600 hours teaching = 15 hours Paid PD, 3 hours</p>

FINAL

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		<p>developing a PD plan, 12 hours participating in program improvement, and 6 hours participating as a member of the field).</p> <p><i>The total for all policies that indicate % funding allocations is 6% of the salary of a full-time teacher.</i></p> <p><u>Paid PD Example:</u> Massachusetts http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/abeguide.doc</p> <p><u>Examples of Paid PD Activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • curriculum development (not just lesson planning); • adding a major new set of teaching skills; • learning a major new area of content to teach; • peer evaluation, peer mentoring, and/or systematic supervision; • conducting classroom and other kinds of research; • writing a journal article; learning to use -- and integrate -- new technology for student learning; or • adding a new dimension to the role of teacher such as counselor, public policy advocate, assessment specialist, or LD specialist. <p>http://www.nifl.gov/nifl-aalpd/2005/0158.html</p>
<p>5. <u>Participation in Program Improvement:</u> Each program should be funded a minimum of 2% of its annual staff hours for teachers to participate and take leadership in program improvement. Teachers should be encouraged to collectively review standardized test data and classroom or program-based assessment data for</p>	<p>Garet, et al (2001), in a national study of K-12 professional development, found that teachers reported gaining more from professional development when the professional development they attended was “coherent” (related to) state and district standards or reform. Therefore, teachers who are aware of and involved in program improvement will gain more from professional development that is in line with program improvement priorities. Additionally,</p>	<p><u>Practice:</u> Participation in program improvement starts with the need for improving program structures and services. Programs use a sound planning process to systematically set and evaluate program improvement goals, one in which teachers (and possibly students) are involved. As part of program improvement plans, programs describe the role, resources and major activities of professional development which will enable teachers to acquire</p>

FINAL

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<p>program improvement purposes and participate in other program improvement activities such as informing program policies, designing a new curriculum or assessments (not just lesson planning), improving recruiting, or designing a new student orientation.</p>	<p>K-12 literature indicates that teacher retention may be related to working conditions which include teachers involvement in decision making (Rosenholtz, 1986; Gonzalez, 1995; Ingersoll, 2001) and that professional development is more effective when it is coupled with school reform efforts (Smylie, 1988).</p>	<p>the needed knowledge and skills for meeting both program goals and practitioners’ individual skill needs and special interests. http://www.nifl.gov/nifl-aalpd/2005/0158.html <u>Example:</u> Using Teacher Observation Projects to integrate PD and PI: http://www.nifl.gov/nifl-aalpd/2005/0166.html</p>
<p>6. <u>Participation in the Field of Adult Education:</u> All full-time practitioners should be funded for at least 1% of their annual working time to participate in activities as a member of the field (ultimately to improve the quality of programs and services), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ providing professional development to other teachers inside or outside of the program, ◆ working towards addressing students’ needs (transportation, child care, health services, job assistance, etc.) that may prevent students from participating in the program, ◆ building community partnerships (with the health care system, K-12 system, libraries, local businesses, career centers, etc.) to improve services to adult learners, and ◆ informing state adult education policies and state initiatives. 	<p>Smith & Hofer (2003) found that many practitioners did not understand that adult basic education is a field and a profession, did not know what it meant to be a member and contributor to the field, or did not participate in advocating for the field or learners’ needs. One reason practitioners gave for not being involved as a member of the field was that they were neither funded nor encouraged to train others, support student needs, or build partnerships beneficial to adults’ learning. Therefore, a professional development system needs to support teachers to play a role outside of their program and contribute to the development of the field in which they are a professional.</p>	<p><u>Practices:</u> Teachers are paid to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in/facilitate at literacy council meetings; • participate in peer mentoring • participate in grass roots state or local public policy efforts such as the Policy Education Engagement and Response Project http://peer.mwapolicy.org/ • engage in community partnerships on behalf of the adult education program; • partner with adult learners in developing learner leadership opportunities within and outside of the program; • present at conferences or other professional venues and earn state PD credits for attendance; • write a journal or newspaper article; • network with teachers outside of the state, for example, by actively participating in national electronic discussion lists or in distance learning forums.

FINAL

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<p>7. <u>Teachers' Working Conditions</u>: In addition to paid professional development time, programs should have sufficient resources to provide working conditions that will allow teachers to stay in the field, find the work satisfying, and grow professionally, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Adequate teacher salaries² ◆ benefits for all teachers (including part-time), ◆ access to full-time employment, ◆ paid prep time for all teachers (including part-time), ◆ paid access for all teachers to at least one hour a week of professional sharing time with either colleagues or a coordinator who supports their teaching, and ◆ at least monthly mechanisms (staff meetings, meetings with director) for voicing their ideas and participating in decisions about the program. 	<p>Smith, et al (2003) found that paid prep time, benefits, decision making in the program, and collegiality with other teachers were important factors in how much teachers changed their thinking and acting after participating in professional development. Smith & Hofer (2003) found that working conditions were some of the main reasons why teachers said they would leave the field of adult basic education. Therefore, working conditions may be related both to the efficiency of the professional development system and to the retention of teachers in the field.</p>	<p><u>Practices</u>:</p> <p>Emphasize quality over quantity. Serve fewer students but serve them better.</p> <p>Make adult education a field in which teachers can afford to stay. If a state increases salaries, offers benefits, and improves working conditions, teacher turnover rate may be lessened.</p> <p>Pay adult education teachers from community college-based programs on the same pay scale as community college faculty and staff.</p> <p>Pay adult education teachers on the same pay scale as local K-12 teachers in the same school system.</p> <p>Pay all adult education teachers preparation time proportionate to the number of hours they teach.</p> <p>Develop program strategies for teacher-sharing and for having a meaningful say in program decision making.</p>
<p>8. <u>Tuition Reimbursement</u>: Programs should be funded to provide tuition reimbursement at the equivalent of one college course per semester to teachers who have higher education attainment as a part of their professional development plans.</p>		<p><u>Practice</u>:</p> <p><u>Implement a policy such that teachers are reimbursed tuition</u> upon providing evidence of satisfactory course completion in the current or next fiscal year. Some K-12 districts practice reimbursing tuition and may provide good models.</p>

² ABE teachers should be paid the equivalent salary earned by K-12 full and part time professionals in the ABE teacher's city or county of employment. Pay should be more than what the city/county pays a substitute teacher.

FINAL

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<p>9. <u>Performance Evaluation and Professional Improvement:</u> Programs should conduct performance evaluations of practitioners, who should show evidence of achievement, including: application of learning and reflection, or acquisition of new skills and knowledge, as described in the goals of their professional development plans. The performance evaluation results should be used to inform practitioners’ future PD planning.</p>		<p><u>Practice:</u> <u>Programs conduct annual staff performance evaluations.</u> Performance evaluations are included in a PD portfolio or folder along with the PD plans. These are used by teachers in making upcoming professional development plans.</p>
<p>10. <u>Professional Development System:</u> Each state should have a funded state literacy resource center or other agency that provides direct professional development to practitioners <i>and</i> technical assistance to help programs organize in-house professional development. A person should be designated in each program and paid to be the (most often part-time) coordinator of program and professional development.</p>	<p>In-house professional development is supported by research about collective participation: Smith, et al (2003) found that adult basic education teachers participating in professional development with other teachers from their same program (“co-participation”) contributed to change. They also found that access to colleagues during and after participating in professional development supported change. Garet, et al (2001) also found among K-12 teachers that “collective participation” contributed to knowledge and practice change, although not as much as length of time spent in professional development activities. Additionally, paying a practitioner in each program who is designated to coordinate program and professional development advances the agenda from The National Literacy Summit 2000: “Ensure instructional leadership in every locality by providing support for at least one full-time teacher who can serve as instructor and resource</p>	<p><u>Practices:</u> <u>State Level:</u> State literacy resource centers are structured to operate in collaboration with regional support centers (For some examples, see Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Ohio, and California). <u>Program Level:</u> A paid program-level coordinator of program and professional development (lead teacher/master teacher) serves as a liaison between the state/regional literacy resource center and the program. The coordinator is not supervised by the state center, but facilitates communication between the program and state PD. The coordinator assists teachers with developing their PD plans and portfolios, and alerts them to resources relevant to their needs.</p>

FINAL

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<p>11. <u>Balance between State-driven and Teacher-Driven Professional Development</u>: Every state literacy resource center or professional development system/agency and every program should use the professional development plans of the practitioners in their state or program and/or use needs assessments (in which teachers, administrators, and adult learners have participated) to plan professional development activities relevant to and driven by teachers’ and (ultimately) students’ needs. The needs for professional development as defined by practitioners and adult learners, as well as the needs for program improvement, should be evenly balanced with the needs of the state ABE regulating agency/ies.</p>	<p>person for every 10 part-time teachers or 20 volunteer tutors.” (p. 5)</p> <p>Belzer, Drennon & Smith (2001) found that one of the challenges states face in delivering professional development is balancing the needs of practitioners, based on their experience, the learners with whom they work, and the teaching problems they face, with the needs of state and federal mandates and initiatives. Smith et al (2003) found that teachers who were motivated to attend professional development, either because of an interest in the particular topic of the professional development or because of a need to learn more about theories of teaching and learning, changed more as a result of participating in professional development. Therefore, professional development systems need to have a way to offer professional development activities that are relevant to the needs of practitioners as they see them while at the same time offering professional development that helps the state meet its goals.</p>	<p><u>Practice:</u> A state professional development model is structured such that professional development content, methods, and approaches are based upon teacher-requested PD, a balance of teacher and program needs, and core PD that aligns with state goals.</p> <p>Teachers can complete an online needs assessment where they list their PD goals (from their PD plans) and describe the professional development they believe will help them achieve these goals. Professional development is designed to address teachers’ top PD needs and align with teachers’ PD goals. This process is revised annually, taking into careful consideration the time frame practitioners are asked to develop professional development plans and the time frame under which PD organizations are expected to develop their scope of services and determine in what ways one can best inform the other.</p>
<p>12. <u>Access to Professional Development Activities</u>: The state literacy resource center or statewide professional development agency/system should have the mandate and funding to ensure that every practitioner (new and experienced, part-time and full-time) has access to professional development, throughout the year, both inside and outside of his/her</p>	<p>Smith et al (2003) found that practitioners preferred specific professional development based on a number of factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model of professional development: new teachers tended to choose workshops/training while more experienced teachers tended to choose more in-depth models such as mentor teacher groups or practitioner research. • “Selective” collegiality: some teachers wanted to attend professional development to work 	<p><u>Practice:</u> The state literacy resource center or professional development agency ensures that there are a variety of mechanisms (internet, newsletter, direct mailing, etc.) for letting teachers know about the range of professional development activities available in their region and in their state, on a continual basis.</p> <p>For in-house PD, a program director or program staff development leader polls teachers to find out what topics they are interested in exploring together. The</p>

FINAL

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<p>program, and that every practitioner has access to a variety of types of professional development (conferences, workshops, study circles, courses, teacher research and other forms of more sustained PD, etc.) with a variety of content, organized at a variety of times and locations, including on-line options.</p>	<p>with practitioners in the same teaching area (e.g., ESOL, GED), or with practitioners who are equally or more experienced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers who had access to other practitioners in their own programs during and after the professional development changed more after participating in professional development. • “Co-participation” (more than one teacher from the same program participating in the same professional development) supported change. 	<p>leader then contacts the state professional development system to see if they have any study circles or sharing circle guides or workshops that could be planned in the program. If not, the leader facilitates or arranges to pay one of the teachers to facilitate an on-going sharing circle on that topic. Every teacher in the program has an opportunity to join one or more of these activities throughout the year.</p> <p><u>Example:</u> Canton, Ohio: Offering Program-Based Professional Development http://lists.literacytent.org/pipermail/aaace-nla/2004/002067.html</p>
<p>13. <u>Quality of Professional Development:</u> Full-time facilitators of professional development should complete an annual plan for organizing and delivering professional development, based on discussions with and needs assessments of practitioners and adult learners. Professional developers should be funded to stay grounded in the field, such as spending a minimum of 2% of their time each year teaching in the ABE/ESOL classroom. States should also have an on-going formative evaluation system for gauging how well the PD system is reaching and serving all adult basic education practitioners and program directors.</p>	<p>Smith et al (2003) found that the quality of the professional development in which practitioners participated was related to how much they changed (knowledge and practice). Quality was rated according to facilitation, group dynamics, and faithfulness to professional development model coupled with flexibility to adapt to the needs of the particular teachers participating in the professional development activity.</p>	<p><u>Practices:</u> The director or supervisor of full-time facilitators of professional development routinely supports resource center staff in continuing to teach by providing paid work time to teach in programs, and reviews this work during their annual evaluations.</p> <p>The state literacy resource center or PD agency has an on-going mechanism for collecting information about the quality, reach and coherence (how well the PD offerings balance needs of practitioners with needs driven by state or federal goals) of the professional development offered each year.</p>

FINAL

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<p>14. <u>Adult Learner Voice in Professional Development</u>: The state professional development agency and each individual program should have dedicated funding to ensure that adult learners’ voices are included in developing professional development policies and in delivering professional development at the local program, state, and federal levels.</p>	<p>Though little research exists about learner involvement in programs and professional development, the National Literacy Summit 2000 action agenda identifies the need for learner involvement in professional development if the field is to create a strong adult education, language, and literacy system. Learner involvement is a quality practice. As evidenced by ProLiteracy’s Accreditation Standards, learner involvement is recognized as a national standard for improving the quality of volunteer literacy services and achieving organizational success (http://www.proliteracy.org/proliteracy_america/accreditation.asp). Involving adult learners in professional development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides teachers formal opportunities to learn how to work with and understand adult learners; • values teachers and learners as partners in learning; • provides (more) opportunities for learners to become involved as members of the field in varied and meaningful ways; and • helps shape the future direction of professional development for our field. 	<p><u>Practices</u>: Invite adult learners to lead teacher PD at the program, regional, and state levels about understanding and working with adult students. Conduct action research with adult learners, and use that data to inform professional development. Develop regional and state student advisory boards to inform program and state adult education policies. Adopt a philosophy of learner involvement in programs, identify how learner leadership aligns with state goals, and ask for/fund the VALUE training for your state.</p> <p><u>Examples</u>: New Mexico: Conducting statewide action research with adult learners http://www.nifl.gov/nifl-aalpd/2005/0238.html</p> <p>Vermont: Regional/state student advisory boards http://www.nifl.gov/nifl-aalpd/2005/0263.html</p> <p>New Mexico: Workshop model of learner-led PD http://www.nifl.gov/nifl-aalpd/2005/0221.html</p> <p>Panel discussions with adult learners as panelists Washington, D.C.: http://www.nifl.gov/nifl-aalpd/2005/0230.html Massachusetts: http://www.nifl.gov/nifl-aalpd/2005/0233.html</p> <p>Pennsylvania: http://www.philaliteracy.org/volunteer/index.html</p>
<p>15. <u>Professional Development for Learner Leaders Who Work in the Field</u>: Current or former students who are tutors, administrators,</p>	<p>Adult learners who work in the field are members of the field. Therefore, they should be afforded the same access to and benefit from the practitioner-driven professional development our</p>	<p><u>Practices</u>: State Level: Offer opportunities for learner leaders who become permanent staff to participate in state and regional</p>

FINAL

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<p>program coordinators, and counselors, should have access to professional development offered by state professional development and technical assistance agencies, given additional PD to meet their needs if necessary, and/ or granted internships to work and learn within the program.</p>	<p>field provides.</p>	<p>professional development. Identify their needs, and provide targeted professional development as needed.</p> <p>Program Level: Through informal observation, identify learners who are becoming learner leaders. Invite them (former/current) to become paid program staff (coordinators/counselors/tutor trainers) by providing temporary internships for their work and paid participation in professional development. Retain those who work out well in a permanent staff position. (WAITT House, Boston, MA)</p>
<p>16. <u>Data Collection Regarding Teacher Characteristics</u>: In addition to using the professional development plans of practitioners to make decisions about professional development offerings, states should collect data each year about the characteristics of their teachers that would enable them to determine a schedule of professional development that would reach the largest number of practitioners with appropriate professional development opportunities. Data should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the experience level of practitioners (years in the field); ◆ the type of teaching or population of students they teach (GED, ESOL, etc.); ◆ the times, days and months during 		<p>Practices:</p> <p>The state collects minimal information about teachers through a standard mechanism, such as: a survey of randomly-selected practitioners, through the submission of this information along with PD plans for each teacher, through data points in each program’s annual data submission to the state, or through other targeted collection.</p>

FINAL

Policy	Rationale	Practices/Examples
<p>the year that practitioners would prefer to attend PD;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ preferred types or models of PD in which they would be willing to participate (workshops, study circles, practitioner research, conferences, etc.); ◆ number of hours, annually, of paid professional development they receive (from the state or from the program); and ◆ practitioners' current addresses and/or e-mail (for keeping them abreast of PD opportunities). 		

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FINAL

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