

**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

**MR. JAMES F. NOTTER
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

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Approved memorandum with signatures is on file.

May 2, 2008

TO: School Board Members

FROM: Katherine Blasik, Ph.D., Associate Superintendent
Research, Evaluation, Assessment & Boundaries

VIA: James F. Notter
Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: HIGH SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL STUDY DAYS STATUS REPORT, 2007-08

The School Board of Broward County, Florida, approved waivers for Professional Study Days (PSD) for 23 high schools and centers for the 2007-08 school year. Participating schools were able to schedule additional professional development for up to eight additional early release days, for the purpose of high school reform. The 2006-07 PSD evaluation documented numerous implementation, data collection, and monitoring issues and made recommendations for improvement. As a follow-up, this report examines the progress made with regard to the District Considerations from the previous report, the process used to implement PSD at participating schools, the alignment of PSD activities with high school reform, and the perceived benefit and impact of PSD during the 2007-08 school year.

High school reform professional development is intended to empower teachers to identify their own needs and differentiate PSD activities to meet those needs. However, change associated with instituting new processes, such as incorporating high school reform with professional development, requires time to build fidelity and realize an impact on classroom practices. The effect of this change process is evident in the disparity of attitudes found between teachers and administrators regarding PSD. Administrators responded more positively than teachers regarding the benefits of PSD, alignment of PSD with high school reform, and that teachers defined their own professional development needs. Similarly, when asked the critical question as to whether the benefits of PSD outweighed the loss of instructional time, most administrators, but only half of the teachers, responded positively. Both groups identified collegiality/sharing as the most beneficial aspect of PSD, with the use of new strategies as the most frequently implemented classroom change.

Findings suggest that progress has been made by Human Resources Development (HRD) staff in addressing the District Considerations contained in the 2006-07 evaluation report. A review of data collection processes indicated variation in the practices and data entered into the Professional Learning Community (PLC) database. Activities reported in the database were found to be aligned with high school reform; however, missing data pertaining to measurement, evaluation, and results of PSD limited the analyses examining the impact of PSD on classroom practices.

High School Professional Study Days Status Report, 2007-08

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The lack of measurable high school reform objectives concerning the impact of professional development on classroom practices and student achievement will be addressed through the continuous improvement model with the goal of ensuring the fidelity of implementation in District schools. This recommendation is intended to facilitate the development of measurable objectives that will link professional development activities to student achievement. Oversight of professional development in the District should also ensure that high school reform objectives are well articulated to schools, and methods for determining whether the PSD activities align with those objectives should be developed. Recommendations are also made to improve processes for recording professional development data with specific attention to revising the database to capture needed staff development data, providing adequate training to ensure uniformity across schools related to the input of data and determination of outcomes measuring the impact of professional development, and instituting monitoring mechanisms to manage the data collection process.

Student achievement data is not included in this report because of the discrepancy in timing for the 2008-09 waiver reviews (May) and the availability of 2007-08 academic achievement data in June. A second installment of this report that examines promotion rates, Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Reading and Mathematics learning gains, and FCAT Writing and Science proficiency will be available this summer. These data analyses will be conducted at the aggregated school level, as available information does not allow verification of alignment between PSD and classroom activity. If you have any questions or comments regarding this report, **please contact me at 754-321-2470 or Dr. Russell Clement, Director, Research Services at 754-321-2500.** This report may be accessed via the Research Services Web site (http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/research_evaluation/newmain.htm).

JFN/KAB/RWC:dvw

Attachment

cc: Executive Leadership Team
Area Directors
High School Principals
Center Principals

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

GRACIE M. DIAZ
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

Signature on file.

May 1, 2008

TO: James F. Notter
Superintendent of Schools

FROM: Gracie M. Diaz, Assistant Superintendent
Human Resource Development

SUBJECT: **RESPONSE TO HIGH SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL STUDY DAYS STATUS
REPORT, 2007-08**

In response to the list of recommendations:

Recommendation 1: To further improve the fidelity of implementation of professional development in District schools, a joint PSD Committee co-chaired by the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resource Development (HRD) and the Point Person for High School Reform, and consisting of high school principals, teacher representatives, a Broward Teachers Union representative, Area Superintendents, Educational Technology Services staff, and HRD staff will be convened. Following the continuous improvement model (Plan, Do, Study, Act), the committee will review the findings in this report, along with disaggregated data to be provided during the summer of 2008 to identify implementation barriers, develop measurable objectives and provide improved procedures to be implemented during the 2008-09 school year. The committee's recommendations will be presented to Instructional Council by August 1, 2008.

Response: The ad hoc committee will be convened and adhere to the recommendations in this report. The committee will focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the data and the tools used to collect it. It will provide recommendations to ensure fidelity of implementation and outcomes as outlined in the Broward Schools' HS Reform Blueprint and the School Board and BTU approved Memorandum of Understanding. The roles and responsibilities of the Point Person for HS Reform, schools, supporting District departments such as HRD and ETS will be clearly defined.

Recommendation 2: Processes for recording PSD professional development data should be improved. The PSD Committee will address the weaknesses and ambiguities found in the Professional Learning Community (PLC) database and make recommendations to Instructional Council by August 1, 2008. Specific attention should be given to:

- Revising the database to include classification categories similar to the ones utilized in this report in addition to the current open-ended detail.
- Providing extensive instructions and training on the proper determination of outcomes, evaluation measures, and results reporting, including extensive examples. The evaluation measures should be keyed to the outcomes expected and have an ability to be

measured, observed, or documented shortly after the completion of the professional development activity. These instructions and training activities should also include explicit guidance in the standard definitions and data entry requirements of the revised PLC database to ensure uniformity across all schools.

- Requiring that all professional development activities be recorded by learning community, and that the results be documented in the PLC database. PLC participant and attendance data should also be recorded in the PLC database. Schools' PLC databases should be integrated to a central online location to facilitate the regular monitoring of professional development content by HRD staff. A periodic audit (e.g., quarterly) by HRD staff would ensure that the schools are populating the database as designed.

Response: The PSD Committee will review the issues identified in the recommendation and develop a plan to implement the appropriate modifications to the database, training, and periodic database audits.

Recommendation 3: Oversight of PSD by HRD staff should continue to ensure compliance with District policy and to determine the value of PSD to the District. The Assistant Superintendent of HRD should ensure a method for determining whether the PSD activities aligned with objectives developed from the HS Reform Blueprint Core Beliefs and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). A self-assessment process for monitoring the impact of professional development on student achievement should be created and implemented by the start of the 2008-09 school year.

Response: The MOU states professional development activities shall be defined as those activities focused on improving student achievement and include-but are not limited to-collegial conversations, curriculum discussions, teacher training, collaborative planning, department meetings focusing on student achievement, analysis of data for student improvement, etc. The school administration—working collaboratively with the Faculty Council or teachers appointed by BTU in the absence of a Faculty Council—shall conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of the current professional development activities.

HRD will ensure that a method for determining whether the PSD activities are aligned with the HS Reform Blueprint Core Beliefs and with the School Improvement Plan is followed. In addition, a self-assessment process for monitoring the impact of professional development on student achievement will be created for implementation by the start of the 2008-09 school year. HRD will support Professional Development Teams in the planning and implementing of quality professional development.

Should you have any further questions or concerns, please contact my office at 754-321-5044.

GMD:dlh

The School Board of Broward County, Florida

**High School Professional Study Days
Status Report**



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May 2008

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High School Professional Study Days Status Report

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The School Board of Broward County, Florida

High School Professional Study Days Status Report

Executive Summary

The School Board of Broward County, Florida has approved waivers for Professional Study Days (PSD) for 23 high schools and centers during the 2007-08 school year. This initiative, began during the 2006-07 school year, enabled high schools to schedule additional time for teacher professional development and training for any portion of up to eight additional early release days, for the purpose of supporting and implementing school-wide plans for high school reform.

High school professional development is intended to empower teachers to identify their own needs and provide differentiated activities to meet those needs. However, change associated with instituting new practices, such as incorporating high school reform with professional development, requires time to build fidelity and realize an impact on classroom practices. The findings detailed in this report reflect this ongoing change process.

Purpose of the Evaluation

The first PSD evaluation, conducted after one year of implementation, documented numerous implementation, data collection, and monitoring issues that needed to be addressed. As a follow-up to the prior evaluation, this status report examines implementation issues specific to PSD to provide information to the School Board, as they review the waiver requests for the 2008-09 school year. Specifically, this report examines:

- The extent to which the District Considerations from the previous report have been implemented,
- The process for implementing PSD at participating schools,
- The extent to which PSD activities were aligned with high school reform, and
- The perceived benefit and impact of the additional staff development time granted through the PSD waivers.

Student achievement data is not included in this status report because of the discrepancy in timing for the 2008-09 waiver reviews (May) and the availability of 2007-08 academic achievement data in June. However, a second installment of this status report will be produced this summer to examine promotion rates, Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Reading and Mathematics learning gains, and FCAT Writing and Science proficiency. These data analyses will be conducted at the aggregated school level, as available information does not allow verification of alignment between PSD and classroom activity.

Methods

As an empirical inquiry that investigated the PSD program within its real-life context, this evaluation was designed primarily as a case study (Yin, 1984). As such, multiple sources of evidence and a combination of approaches were used to collect data to answer the questions posed in this report. Interviews were conducted with Broward County Public Schools (BCPS)

administrators; telephone interviews were conducted with the five Human Resource Department (HRD) representatives that supported the schools approved for PSD; a telephone focus group interview with select principals was conducted; online surveys were administered to all high school and center principals approved for PSD, and a sample of teachers in those schools that had requested and utilized PSD; and a content analysis of the Professional Learning Community (PLC) database for all activities held on the designated professional development days was performed. The scheduled professional study day of May 15, 2008, is not included in this report because this study was completed prior to that date. Additionally, the only middle school to have a PSD waiver was not included, because their experiences would not be relevant to high school reform, and a sample size of one would not provide meaningful information.

Summary and Conclusions

High school reform, as the name implies, is a change process that takes time to implement and for the results of the change to demonstrate a positive outcome. The professional development piece of high school reform, represented in part by the PSD, has been described by both principals and HRD staff as a significant culture change. The goal of having teachers “empowered with authority to define professional development needs and to make decisions about curriculum, teaching methods, and classroom environment” is a radical change. These changes imply that there be differentiated instruction for teachers as well as students. For this change to occur in an uneven manner is to be expected. For example, the most significant finding of this review is the disparity in attitudes between principals and teachers responding to the surveys regarding the PSD. Neither the principals nor the HRD staff were surprised by this disparity in attitudes, due to the newness of teachers being responsible for their own professional development and to the magnitude of change anticipated by high school reform. The variation in implementation, organization, and reporting of these professional development activities indicate additional reasons for these differences. Suggestions for improvement of PSD, particularly as mentioned by the teachers, include better organization, teacher surveys, increase subject area relevance, use of outside experts, and differentiated instruction for teacher needs.

Principals and HRD staff reported that, historically, teachers are not accustomed to taking responsibility for their own professional development and are not accustomed to looking to their colleagues for ideas, help, and mutual development. These factors are changing, as evidenced by the fact that collaboration/sharing was mentioned most frequently as the most beneficial aspect of PSD by both administrators (73.9%) and teachers (50.2%). There is a portion of the teachers who observed PSD to be poorly organized, repetitive, boring, and not relevant to them. While teachers, as a whole, were the driving force in the determination of the content of the PSD, it appeared that there were a number of individual teachers who felt ignored and left out of the process. The positive nature of the administrator responses provide a strong indication that there have been observable, beneficial impacts on the schools because of the PSD.

Principals responded positively to the questions regarding benefits at a mean rate of 90.6%, while the teachers responded positively at a mean rate of 59.5%. Regarding the issue of alignment with high school reform, principals responded positively at a mean rate of 94.2%, while the teachers responded at a mean rate of 66.3%. The issues of whether teachers were able to provide input for the content of the PSD and were able to define their own professional development needs received a mean 95.7% agreement rate from principals and a mean 69.7% agreement rate from teachers. The teachers and administrators did concur in identifying collegiality/sharing as the most

beneficial part of the PSD, and the utilization of new strategies as the most frequently implemented classroom change.

Less than two-thirds of the teachers agreed that the PSD were aligned with the needs of students (65.7%), while 95.7% of the principals agreed. Perhaps for this study, the crucial question is whether “the benefit of having additional days of training outweighed the loss of instructional time.” The administrators responding had an agreement rate of 91.3%, while the teachers had an agreement rate of 50.8%. As the administrators had a return rate of 100%, we can be sure that the PSD school administrators, as a whole, felt that the days were worth the lost instructional time. The faculty registered a survey return rate of 63.6%, which is below the 80% commonly accepted to justify a representative sample, suggesting that results may not be reflective of the attitudes of all the teachers in the PSD schools. There is evidence for this concern in the fact that, of the teacher survey respondents, 62.5% indicated that they had voted to approve their school’s waiver request, whereas the mean faculty approval rate as recorded on waiver request forms for the PSD schools was 78.6%. The teacher response rate was not so low as to warrant invalidation of the teacher survey findings, however, they should be interpreted in light of the anticipated initial impacts of the change process as well as these return concerns.

Interviews with Human Resource Development (HRD) department staff suggested that the District Considerations contained in the 2006-07 evaluation report have been reviewed and addressed. An HRD representative has been assigned to work with each school, and the department has focused on providing training for schools in the development and implementation of high quality professional development programs aligned with high school reform. Evaluation indicators are being developed to support a comprehensive evaluation of professional development planned for the 2008-09 school year. Following a review of the 2006-07 report, and conversations with high school principals, the PLC database for the 2007-08 school year was revised to capture more accurate information on the activities being conducted. The quality improvement process for each of these considerations will continue, as a result of findings described in this current report.

The PLC database indicated that only 0.3% of the activities reported could not be easily included in the categories of anticipated activities contained in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (1.8% of the records were blank). This indicated that the activities were aligned with the needs of high school reform, as anticipated in that document. The database did indicate that there was a great variation in the way activities were being recorded, particularly in the measurement; evaluation; and results categories. For example, 84% of the activity records in the database did not contain any results information.

The results revealed that there is an opportunity (and a need) to assist faculties in the process of defining and producing high quality staff development that involves and motivates the entire staff. The variation in the reporting and evaluation process also presents opportunities for guidance and improvement.

Recommendations

1. To further improve the fidelity of implementation of professional development in District schools, a joint PSD Committee co-chaired by the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resource Development (HRD) and the Point Person for High School Reform, and consisting of high school principals, teacher representatives, a Broward Teachers Union representative, Area Superintendents, Educational Technology Services staff, and HRD staff will be convened. Following the continuous improvement model (Plan, Do, Study, Act), the committee will review the findings in this report, along with disaggregated data to be provided during the summer of 2008 to identify implementation barriers, develop measurable objectives and provide improved procedures to be implemented during the 2008-09 school year. The committee's recommendations will be presented to Instructional Council by August 1, 2008.
2. Processes for recording PSD professional development data should be improved. The PSD Committee will address the weaknesses and ambiguities found in the Professional Learning Community (PLC) database and make recommendations to Instructional Council by August 1, 2008. Specific attention should be given to:
 - Revising the database to include classification categories similar to the ones utilized in this report in addition to the current open-ended detail.
 - Providing extensive instructions and training on the proper determination of outcomes, evaluation measures, and results reporting, including extensive examples. The evaluation measures should be keyed to the outcomes expected and have an ability to be measured, observed, or documented shortly after the completion of the professional development activity. These instructions and training activities should also include explicit guidance in the standard definitions and data entry requirements of the revised PLC database to ensure uniformity across all schools.
 - Requiring that all professional development activities be recorded by learning community, and that the results be documented in the PLC database. PLC participant and attendance data should also be recorded in the PLC database. Schools' PLC databases should be integrated to a central online location to facilitate the regular monitoring of professional development content by HRD staff. A periodic audit (e.g., quarterly) by HRD staff would ensure that the schools are populating the database as designed.
3. Oversight of PSD by HRD staff should continue to ensure compliance with District policy and to determine the value of PSD to the District. The Assistant Superintendent of HRD should ensure a method for determining whether the PSD activities aligned with objectives developed from the HS Reform Blueprint Core Beliefs and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). A self-assessment process for monitoring the impact of professional development on student achievement should be created and implemented by the start of the 2008-09 school year.

The School Board of Broward County, Florida

High School Professional Study Days Status Report

Introduction

The School Board of Broward County, Florida has approved waivers for Professional Study Days (PSD) for 24 schools and centers during the 2007-08 school year. This initiative, began during the 2006-07 school year, enabled high schools to schedule additional time for teacher professional development and training for any portion of up to eight additional early release days, for the purpose of supporting and implementing school-wide plans for high school reform.

High school professional development is intended to empower teachers to identify their own needs and provide differentiated activities to meet those needs. However, change associated with instituting new practices, such as incorporating high school reform with professional development, requires time to build fidelity and realize an impact on classroom practices. The findings detailed in this report reflect this ongoing change process.

Purpose of the Evaluation

The first PSD evaluation, conducted after one year of implementation, documented numerous implementation data collection and monitoring issues that needed to be addressed. As a follow-up to the prior evaluation, this status report examines implementation issues specific to PSD to provide information to the School Board, as they review the waiver requests for the 2008-09 school year. Specifically, this report examines:

- The extent to which the District Considerations from the previous report have been implemented,
- The process for implementing PSD at participating schools,
- The extent to which PSD activities were aligned with high school reform, and
- The perceived benefit and impact of the additional staff development time granted through the PSD waivers.

Student achievement data is not included in this status report because of the discrepancy in timing for the 2008-09 waiver reviews (May) and the availability of 2007-08 academic achievement data in June. However, a second installment of this status report will be produced this summer to examine promotion rates, Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Reading and Mathematics Learning gains, and FCAT Writing and Science proficiency. These data analyses will be conducted at the aggregated school level as available information does not allow verification of alignment between PSD and classroom activity.

Methods

As an empirical inquiry that investigated the PSD program within its real-life context, this evaluation was designed primarily as a case study (Yin, 1984). As such, multiple sources of evidence and a combination of approaches were used to collect data to answer the questions

posed in this report. Interviews were conducted with Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) administrators to obtain background information and knowledge of the development and operation of the PSD process, and the degree to which the recommendations of the previous evaluation have been implemented. The evaluator conducted telephone interviews with the five Human Resource Department (HRD) representatives that served as assigned support staff to the PSD schools to determine their perspectives on the conduct and impact of the PSD. The scheduled professional study day of May 15, 2008, is not included in this report because this study was completed prior to that date. Additionally, the only middle school to have a professional study day waiver was not included because their experiences would not provide meaningful information.

The evaluator conducted a telephone focus group interview with select principals to determine their perspectives of the program, the methods utilized in determining the content of the professional development, and the impact of the days on their school. These principals were selected as a convenience sample identified by the HRD representatives as principals who had been particularly involved in the program and would have representative experiences to share. While eight principals were invited to call into this conference, only three did.

Based on a review of the initial evaluation, the evaluator updated the Administrator and Teacher survey utilized in that effort. These surveys were administered online to the full population of high school and center principals, and a sample of teachers in those schools. All 23 principals surveyed completed the survey, resulting in a 100.0% response rate.¹ A total of 315 of the 495 teachers surveyed completed the teacher survey, resulting in a 63.6% response rate.² Of the teachers who responded to the survey, 62.5% voted to approve PSD at their schools, which is significantly below the overall teacher approval rate of 79% for all of the schools involved in this study.

The evaluator conducted a content analysis on the PLC database for all activities held on the designated professional development days. The activity records were coded, based on the content of the record, to reflect the type, target audience, outcome, needs assessment, evaluation measure, subject and results of each activity.

Cost Impact

There are additional transportation costs incurred as a result of implementing high school PSD during the 2007-08 school year. At schools approved for PSD, District bus drivers were required to work an additional two hours on each PSD date. Because bus drivers have three to four bus routes each day, a school approved for early release for PSD did not eliminate the cost associated with the remaining daily routes that bus drivers were required to complete. As shown in Table 1, the additional salary and benefits for bus drivers during PSD resulted in a total cost of \$174,455 for the 2007-08 school year.

¹ The principal from Lauderdale Lakes Middle was not surveyed, as only high schools and centers were part of this study to examine the effect of Professional Study Days on high school reform in participating schools.

² Although the teacher response rate was lower than the 80% generally accepted to ensure a representative sample, it was not so low as to warrant invalidation of the teacher survey findings.

Table 1
Summary of Transportation Costs by School, 2007-08

Schools	Hourly rate	Average daily hours	Number of PSD days	Number of buses/drivers	Total salaries/benefits (\$)
Anderson, Boyd H. High	25.61	2	8	35	14,341
Coconut Creek High	25.61	2	6	39	11,985
Coral Glades High	25.61	2	4	22	4,507
Cypress Bay High	25.61	2	8	33	13,522
Dave Thomas Education Center	25.61	2	8	17	6,966
Deerfield Beach High	25.61	2	4	27	5,532
Everglades High	25.61	2	8	31	12,703
Fort Lauderdale High	25.61	2	6	19	5,839
Hallandale High	25.61	2	5	21	5,378
Hallandale Adult	25.61	2	3	12	1,844
McArthur High	25.61	2	8	7	2,868
Monarch High	25.61	2	5	15	3,842
Northeast High	25.61	2	6	17	5,224
Nova High/McFatter Technical Ctr.	25.61	2	6	106	32,576
Piper High	25.61	2	4	22	4,507
Plantation High	25.61	2	6	23	7,068
Pompano Beach/Blanche Ely High	25.61	2	4	34	6,966
South Broward High	25.61	2	4	25	5,122
South Plantation High	25.61	2	6	39	11,985
Stranahan High	25.61	2	5	28	7,171
Whiddon-Rogers Education Center	25.61	2	8	11	4,507
Total					174,455

Note. Data supplied by the Transportation Services Department.

Results

1. *To what extent have the District Considerations of the 2006-07 report been implemented?*

The District Considerations contained in the 2006-07 report are:

Consideration 1: Identify options to ensure that professional development activities provided during PSD specifically address high school reform to improve fidelity of PSD planning and implementation of high school reform initiatives across the District. The task force may consider developing a tract of suggested high school reform training topics for PSD schools to use as guidance for conducting their own high school reform professional development activities.

Update 1: The High School Reform Blueprint contains a Core Belief of “Empowered Educators.” One of the indicators for this, contained in the Strategic Areas of Focus is:

“3.1 Empower instructional staff with authority to define professional development needs and to make decisions about curriculum, teaching methods, and classroom environment.”

This indicator implies that, at least in the case of professional development, alignment with high school reform is a process issue, not a product one. Activities and topics that are teacher defined and have a focus on student achievement are aligned with high school reform. Rather than attempting to develop a catalog of topics, HRD staff reported that representatives were assigned to work with each high school to focus on providing training for schools in the development and implementation of high quality professional development programs aligned with high school reform.

Consideration 2: Collaborate with a Research Services representative to develop evaluation indicators by January 2008. Indicators should measure whether techniques and/or skills learned in PSD professional development have been applied in the classroom. For example, an observation rubric could be developed that identifies high school reform professional development components that teachers implement in the classroom; PSD classroom observations could be conducted by school-based administrators as part of their periodic classroom walkthroughs.

Update 2: Evaluation indicators are being developed to support the comprehensive evaluation of professional development planned for the 2008-09 school year. However, a review of the types of professional development activities listed in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – “collegial conversations, curriculum discussions, teacher training, collaborative planning, department meetings focusing on student achievement, analysis of data for student improvement, etc.” – indicates that the outcomes of many of these activities may not be evaluated, most appropriately through classroom observation. For example, a total of 42% of the activities included in this report had, as their anticipated outcome, a written report, such as a curriculum map or a common exam. These activities might best be evaluated by the completion, use, and quality of the document. Collaboration was the implied outcome of 6.1% of the activities. This intangible result will be very difficult, if not impossible, to measure directly. HRD and Research Services staffs are focusing on developing guidance and examples for measurable objectives and documentable results that will relate directly to the expected outcomes of the professional development activities held.

Consideration 3: Develop standardized procedures and processes for recording professional development activities and attendance through the use of electronic media. Establishing a mandatory electronic professional development log—possibly using and/or modifying HRD’s current electronic *High School Reform-Professional Development* template—to capture all professional development data (i.e., preplanning, planning, early release, and waiver days) would standardize District practices. As part of these processes, electronic rosters of faculty and staff at each school should be employed to capture attendance at each professional development session in lieu of handwritten sign-in sheets. Additional data to be collected for training activities should include school name, date, topic, trainer, and hours. Electronic data collection tools should be field-tested for ease of use and processes should be established to ensure that schools comply with recording professional development data.

Update 3: As a result of this consideration and conversations with high school principals, the PLC database for the 2007-08 school year was revised to capture more accurate information on the activities being conducted. This review has revealed that, while the revised database

has been an improvement, there remains significant variation in the way that the schools report activities and structure the goals, outcomes, measurements, and results. Additionally, some data is currently not captured in the existing database (e.g., professional development attendance data), that further limits the monitoring capabilities by HRD staff.

2. *What has been the process of implementing the PSD at the schools?*

The process of requesting and gaining approval of the 2007-08 PSD at schools was initiated by a proposal developed and approved by the School Advisory Council (SAC), discussion at an advertised community forum, and approved by 66.7% of the faculty prior to submission to the School Board. A total of 23 high schools and centers successfully completed this process and obtained School Board approval on June 5, 2007. While all of the schools formalized their waiver request with a faculty vote, there were a number of processes utilized at the schools to reach this step. The school principals were asked to describe the process used by their school to determine whether to request additional PSD. Their responses are summarized in Table 2. All of the schools (100.0%, $n=23$), by policy, finalized their decision by a faculty vote. A total of ten (43.5%) administered a faculty survey (26.1%, $n=6$) or discussed the idea at a faculty meeting (17.4%, $n=4$).

Table 2

Summary of Administrator Responses Regarding the Processes Schools Undertook to Determine Whether to Request Professional Study Days Waivers for 2007-08

Action mentioned	<i>N</i>	%
Faculty vote	23	100.0
Administered faculty survey	6	26.1
Professional development committee took lead	5	21.7
Discussed at faculty meeting	4	17.4
Discussed in leadership team	3	13.0
Initial discussions with staff	2	8.7

Note. Administrators ($n=23$) were able to mention more than one action for a total of 53 responses.

The results of the faculty votes, the number of days requested and the number of hours each day, summarized from the waiver requests, are presented in Table 3. The percentage of teachers approved is based on the total numbers of teachers on staff, not the number of teachers that voted. Therefore, failure to vote is equivalent to a NO vote. The proportion of teachers that approved the PSD waiver request ranged from a low of 68% to a high of 99%. The mean approval rate for the schools participating in PSD was 78.6%. A total of 130 days were requested by the 23 schools, resulting in a total of 373 hours available.

Table 3

Summary of Schools Approved for Professional Study Days for the 2007-08 School Year

School	% of teachers approved	No. of days	Hours each day	Total No. of hours
Blanche Ely High	78	4	3	12
Anderson, Boyd H. High	84	8	3	24
Coconut Creek High	69	6	3	18
Coral Glades High	83	4	3	12
Cypress Bay High	73	8	3	24
Dave Thomas Education Center	83	8	3	24
Deerfield Beach High	74	4	3	12
Everglades High	88	8	3	24
Fort Lauderdale High	73	6	3	18
Hallandale High	79	5	3	15
Hallandale Adult Community Center	70	3	2	6
McArthur High	71	8	3	24
McFatter, William T. Technical Center	78	4	3	12
Monarch High	70	5	3	15
Northeast High	84	6	3	18
Nova High	67	6	3	18
Piper High	78	4	3	12
Plantation High	78	6	3	18
Pompano Beach High	91	4	3	12
South Broward High	99	4	3	12
South Plantation High	68	6	2	12
Stranahan High	75	5	3	15
Whiddon Rogers Education Center	96	8	2	16
Total		130	66	373

Note. The Percentage of Teachers Approved was taken from the School Improvement Waiver Request for each school.

Once the waiver requests were approved by the Board, school staffs worked on determining the content of the PSD. An open-ended question on the Administrator Survey asked about the process that the school used to determine the content of the PSD. These responses are summarized in Table 4. More than half (52.2%) of the administrators mentioned the utilization of a faculty survey. The next most frequently mentioned process was the professional development committee (34.8%). The remaining responses were evenly split between data analysis, observations, and department decisions (8.7% each).

Table 4

Summary of Administrator Responses Regarding the Processes Schools Used to Determine the Content of Request Professional Study Days

Action mentioned	<i>n</i>	%
Needs assessment/survey	12	52.2
Professional development committee	8	34.8
Teacher decisions	2	8.7
Data analysis	2	8.7
Observations	2	8.7
Department decisions	2	8.7

Note. Administrators (*n*=23) were able to mention more than one action for a total of 28 responses.

Both the teachers and administrators were asked, on their respective surveys, two questions regarding their perceptions of the degree of teacher involvement in the process of defining the activities for PSD. As shown in Table 5, administrators responded positively that teachers are able to provide input for the content and are able to define their own professional development needs at a rate of 95.7%. Teachers indicated less agreement with 69.7% responding positively to these questions.

Table 5

Comparison of Teacher and Administrator Perceptions Regarding Teacher Involvement in the Process of Defining the Activities for Professional Study Days

Survey item	Teacher agreement (<i>n</i> =315)		Administrator agreement (<i>n</i> =23)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Teachers are able to provide input for the content/subject matter of Professional Study Days.	129	72.7	22	95.7
Teachers are able to define their own professional development needs.	200	66.7	22	95.7

Pursuant to the District Considerations contained in the initial report, HRD revised the Professional Development reporting template; and it was distributed to the schools for their use. Table 6 summarizes the PSD scheduled by each school, the schools activity submission record and the total number of activities reported. Due to the timing of this report, only the activities held on PSD prior to April 2008 were included in the analyses presented in this report. A total of 111 out of the 117 days scheduled were reported by the schools, not including May 15, 2008, which occurred after the completion of this report. On these 111 days, the schools reported a total of 798 activities. The number of activities reported by the individual schools ranged from three to 107. Some schools reported one activity each day and some reported one activity each day for each PLC. A listing of the PLCs by school is contained in the Appendix. Out of the 23 schools, 10 appear to have organized their PLCs along departmental lines, 10 along the lines of pedagogical topics, two according to activities (e.g., curriculum mapping), and one in a combination (free form) manner.

Table 6

Summary of Professional Study Days and Activities Reported

School	Activities reported	Activity submission record	2007-08 Professional Study Days						
			9/20	10/17	11/27	12/13	2/12	3/13	3/14
Blanche Ely High	3	3/4	●	○	●	●			
Anderson, Boyd H. High	17	6/7	●	●	●	●	○	●	●
Coconut Creek High	43	5/5	●	●			●	●	●
Coral Glades High	25	3/4	○	●	●			●	
Cypress Bay High	77	7/7	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Dave Thomas Education Center	8	7/7	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Deerfield Beach High	4	4/4		●	●			●	●
Everglades High	70	7/7	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Fort Lauderdale High	74	5/5		●	●	●	●		●
Hallandale High	5	5/5		●	●		●	●	●
Hallandale Adult Comm. Ctr.	25	2/2	●			●			
McArthur High	22	6/7	●	●	●	●	●	○	●
McFatter, William T. Tech. Ctr.	5	4/4		●	●		●	●	
Monarch High	25	4/4	●	●	●		●		
Northeast High	93	6/6	●	●	●		●	●	●
Nova High	107	5/5	●	●	●	●	●		
Piper High	24	3/4	●	●			○		●
Plantation High	45	5/5		●	●		●	●	●
Pompano Beach High	30	4/4	●	●	●		●		
South Broward High	39	3/4		●		●	●		○
South Plantation High	17	5/5	●	●		●	●		●
Stranahan High	33	5/5		●	●		●	●	●
Whiddon Rogers Education Ctr.	7	7/7	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Total	798	111/117	16	22	18	12	19	14	16

Note. Coding: ● indicates a PSD scheduled by the school and reported on the PLC database.
○ indicates a PSD scheduled by the school and NOT reported on the PLC database.
Activity submission record is number of days reported/number of days scheduled.

The activities reported on the PLC database for the PSD were coded by the evaluator according to activity type, based on the information given on the database and using the activity types mentioned in the MOU. The distribution of activities by type is presented in Table 7. Nearly half (47%) of the activities reported were teacher training in nature followed by the collaborative planning activities which represented an additional 35.6%. The remainder of the activities were collegial conversations (5.5%), analysis of data (4.9%), curriculum discussions (4.8%), and department meetings focused on achievement (0.3%). A total of 14 records (1.8%) did not contain information to classify them by type, and only two (0.3%) did not fit into any of these categories.

Table 7
Professional Study Day Activities by Type

Type	<i>n</i>	%
Teacher training	375	47.0
Collaborative planning	284	35.6
Collegial conversations	44	5.5
Analysis of data	39	4.9
Curriculum discussions	38	4.8
Blank	14	1.8
Other	2	0.3
Department meeting focused on achievement	2	0.3

Note. Number of activities reported = 798.

The activities reported on the PLC database for the PSD were coded by the evaluator according to type of needs assessment listed on the database. The category of teacher request was utilized whether it was stated explicitly (e.g., teacher survey) or implicitly (the mathematics department wants to ...). The distribution of activities by type is presented in Table 8. The category of teacher request accounted for over half (57.8%) of the activities, followed by data analysis which accounted for 23.6%. A total of 101 records (12.7%) did not have any entry in this field.

Table 8
Professional Study Day Activities by Type of Needs Assessment

Needs assessment	<i>n</i>	%
Teacher request	461	57.8
Data analysis	188	23.6
Blank	101	12.7
Customer Survey	14	1.8
Observed need	12	1.5
Meet SBBC/state requirement	12	1.5
Meet special program requirement	6	0.8
Student survey	4	0.5

Note. Number of activities reported = 798.

The activities reported on the PLC database for the PSD were coded by the evaluator according to the outcome expected based on the information listed on the database. The distribution of activities by outcome is presented in Table 9. The attainment of teacher skills or knowledge accounted for 47.9% of the activities, while document or report production accounted for 42%. The remainder categories were collaboration (6.1%) and no response (4 %).

Table 9
Professional Study Day Activities by Outcome Expected

Outcome	<i>n</i>	%
Teacher skill/knowledge	382	47.9
Document/report production	335	42.0
Collaboration	49	6.1
No response	32	4.0

Note. Number of activities reported = 798.

The activities reported on the PLC database for the PSD were coded by the evaluator according to the type of evaluation measure based on the information listed on the database. There was observed to be confusion regarding whether the evaluation measure should be long term (e.g., student FCAT score increase) or short term (e.g., produce a PowerPoint-based lesson). The distribution of activities is presented in Table 10. The existence of a document represented 38.2% of the evaluation measures. Skill demonstration (22.9%) and observed classroom activity (17.5%) represented the remaining large categories. Student assessment and post assessment of the participants represented 6.9% and 4.6% (respectively) of the evaluation measures listed.

Table 10
Professional Study Day Activities by Evaluation Measure

Evaluation measure	<i>n</i>	%
Document produced	305	38.2
Demonstrate skill	183	22.9
Classroom activity	140	17.5
Student assessment	55	6.9
Post assessment	37	4.6
Blank	36	4.5
Observation	31	3.9
Survey	11	1.4

Note. Number of activities reported = 798.

The activities reported on the PLC database for the PSD were coded by the evaluator according to the results of the activities based on the information listed on the database. Most (84%) of the activity records did not contain any results information.

Table 11
Professional Study Day Activities by Results

Activity result	<i>n</i>	%
Blank	670	84.0
Product distribution	64	8.0
Activity observed	48	6.0
Student outcome	12	1.5
Request for more/continuation	4	0.5

Note. Number of activities reported = 798.

The activities reported on the PLC database for the PSD were coded by the evaluator according to the subject of the activity based on the information listed on the database. The subject of the activity was based on the content of the activity and not necessarily on the group involved (e.g., a technology training for the science department was coded as technology, while a planning session designed to produce common exams in mathematics was coded as mathematics). The topics of reading (15%), instructional strategies (14.7%), and technology (13.2%) had the highest frequencies. Review of recorded subject areas suggested that some PSD activities may have targeted specialized groups with few teachers, such as ROTC and Health (*n*'s =3).

Table 12

Professional Study Day Activities by Subject

Subject	<i>n</i>	%	Subject	<i>n</i>	%
Reading	120	15.0	ESE	25	3.1
Instructional Strategies	117	14.7	Guidance	20	2.5
Technology	105	13.2	Student Support	18	2.3
No Response	62	7.8	Physical Education	16	2.0
Mathematics	57	7.1	Behavior Management	6	0.8
Science	57	7.1	Library Media	5	0.6
Language Arts	43	5.4	ESOL	4	0.5
Social Studies	42	5.3	International Baccalaureate	4	0.5
Foreign Language	35	4.4	Health	3	0.4
Arts	30	3.8	ROTC	3	0.4
Vocational	26	3.3			

Note. Number of activities reported = 798.

The schools also submitted participation data for each of the activities held. The results of these reports are summarized in Table 13. There is variation between the number of days approved and the number of days that participation data was reported. In addition, there is variation between the number of activities reported on the PLC database and the participation record. Additionally, it appears that the schools used different criteria for reporting participation data. One school, for example, included the entire staff in the number involved in each PLC but reported attendance individually. This made the calculation of attendance rates for that school impossible. Other schools reported more attendees than PLC participants on some records. In this case, the attendance was adjusted to reflect the participation numbers. Conversely, some schools reported activities with few or no participants. These issues render the school level participation rates meaningless, and make the overall participation rate of 91.1% a rough, possibly understated, estimate.

Table 13

Summary of Professional Study Day Activities and Participation Reported

School	No. of days approved	No. of days for participation	Activities on PLC database	Activities for participation	Overall participation rate
Blanche Ely High	4	4	3	4	96.1
Anderson, Boyd H. High	8	6	17	17	N/A
Coconut Creek High	6	6	43	50	88.2
Coral Glades High	4	5	25	25	95.6
Cypress Bay High	8	7	77	77	73.9
Dave Thomas Education Center	8	8	8	8	95.9
Deerfield Beach High	4	4	4	2	91.6
Everglades High	8	7	70	70	93.4
Fort Lauderdale High	6	6	74	74	88.3
Hallandale High	5	3	5	5	78.9
Hallandale Adult Community Center	3	5	25	25	90.4

(table continues)

Table 13 (continued).

School	No. of days approved	No. of days for participation	Activities on PLC database	Activities for participation	Overall participation rate
McArthur High	8	6	22	22	100.0
McFatter, William T. Technical Ctr.	4	4	5	4	100.0
Monarch High	5	5	25	25	92.0
Northeast High	6	12	93	93	90.7
Nova High	6	5	107	114	90.4
Piper High	4	4	24	24	89.4
Plantation High	6	5	45	50	95.2
Pompano Beach High	4	4	30	31	96.2
South Broward High	4	3	39	39	80.6
South Plantation High	6	5	17	17	92.6
Stranahan High	5	5	33	33	90.5
Whiddon Rogers Education Center	8	7	7	7	99.7
Total/Overall	130	126	798	816	91.1

3. To what degree have the PSD activities been aligned with high school reform?

The evaluator attempted to find and/or develop a list of topics that would indicate alignment with high school reform. The evaluator spoke with HRD staff, the District Coordinator, Smaller Learning Communities, Secondary School Reform, and reviewed the High School Reform Blueprint and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between The School Board of Broward County, Florida and the Broward Teachers Union. As a result of these conversations and document reviews, it was concluded that it was difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between professional development activities that were and were not aligned with high school reform based on topic. The High School Reform Blueprint contains a Core Belief of “Empowered Educators.” One of the indicators for this Core Belief contained in the Strategic Areas of Focus is:

“3.1 Empower instructional staff with authority to define professional development needs and to make decisions about curriculum, teaching methods, and classroom environment.”

This would imply that, at least in the case of professional development, alignment with high school reform is a process issue, not a product one. The discussion of the process contained in evaluation question two indicates that teachers were “empowered with authority to define professional development needs.”

The MOU provides more guidance in its definition of high school reform initiatives:

“Professional development activities shall be defined as those activities focused on quality staff development that serves at improving student achievement and include – but are not limited to – collegial conversations, curriculum discussions, teacher training, collaborative planning, department meetings focusing on student achievement, analysis of data for student improvement, etc.”

Even though the “but not limited to” phrase makes this list less than definitive, the evaluator used these categories to define the activity type used in the content analysis. The results of this

analysis are presented in Table 7 and reveal that only 0.3% of the activities reported by the schools did not fit neatly into this list of activities.

Both the teachers and administrators were asked on their respective surveys three questions regarding their perceptions of the degree of teacher involvement of alignment of the activities of the PSD with high school reform. The results of these surveys are contained in Table 14. The administrators responded positively that the additional days helped to communicate the goals of high school reform, were aligned with high school reform efforts, and were aligned to meet the needs of students at a mean rate of 94.2%. Teachers responded positively to these questions at a mean rate of 66.3%. Less than two-thirds (65.7%, $n=207$) of the teachers responding to the survey agreed that the PSD were aligned with the needs of the students.

Table 14

Comparison of Teacher and Administrator Perceptions of the Alignment of Professional Study Days with High School Reform

Survey item	Teacher agreement ($N=315$)		Administrator agreement ($N=23$)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Professional Study Days helped to communicate the goals of high school reform to teachers.	173	64.9	21	91.3
The activities undertaken during Professional Study Days aligned with high school reform efforts.	215	68.3	22	95.7
Professional Study Days were aligned to meet the needs of students.	207	65.7	22	95.7

4. *What has been the perceived benefit/impact of the PSD?*

Twelve questions were included on both the teacher and administrator surveys (appropriately worded for each audience) to determine their perceptions of the benefit of the PSD. The results of these surveys are contained in Table 15. Positive agreement rates are presented to reflect the perceived presence of each impact. The administrators' responses demonstrated agreement rates exceeding 90% for all of the items except "increase student achievement" (73.9% agreement), "positive impact on the classroom" (87% agreement), and "satisfaction with the quality of activities" (78.3%). The mean administrator agreement rate for these questions was 90.6%. The agreement rates of the teachers responding were significantly lower, ranging from 42.5% to 68.9% and averaging 59.5%. The mean agreement rates observed last year for these questions was 88.3% for administrators and 59.4% for teachers. The administrator agreement rate rose slightly (approximately 2 percentage points), while the teacher agreement rate was not significantly different. Importantly, only half (50.8%) of the teachers indicated that they felt the benefit from the PSD outweighed lost instructional time, virtually unchanged from their responses in 2006-07 (50.4%).

During the interviews neither the principals nor the HRD staff were surprised by this disparity in attitudes. They identified the changes anticipated to a "culture change" in the schools. They attributed the unevenness of the teacher responses to the newness of teachers being responsible

for their own professional development and to the magnitude of change anticipated by high school reform

Table 15
Comparison of Teacher and Administrator Perceptions of the Benefits of Professional Study Days

Survey item	2006-07				2007-08			
	Teacher agreement (N=224)		Administrator agreement (N=21)		Teacher agreement (N=315)		Administrator agreement (N=23)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Professional Study Days were needed to achieve the goals of the School Improvement Plan (SIP).	118	52.7	21	100.0	207	65.7	22	95.7
Professional Study Days helped to increase student achievement.	122	54.5	17	81.0	165	52.4	17	73.9
The training that was provided during Professional Study Days helped teachers become better teachers.	138	61.6	17	81.0	190	60.3	21	91.3
The Professional Study Days have had a positive impact in the classroom.	--	--	--	--	192	61.0	20	87.0
Professional Study Days helped to facilitate curriculum discussions.	165	73.7	20	95.2	217	68.9	23	100.0
Professional Study Days helped to facilitate collaborative planning.	147	65.6	19	90.5	201	63.8	22	95.7
Professional Study Days helped develop collegiality.	162	72.3	19	90.5	217	68.9	22	95.7
Professional Study Days encouraged reflective practice.	156	69.6	19	90.5	217	68.9	22	95.7
Professional Study Days enhanced teachers' pedagogic knowledge.	125	55.8	18	85.7	175	55.6	21	91.3
Professional Study Days increased teachers' understanding of the content area they teach.	92	41.1	16	76.2	134	42.5	21	91.3
I am satisfied with the quality of the activities provided during Professional Study Days.	126	56.3	20	95.2	172	54.6	18	78.3
The benefit of having additional days of training outweighed the loss of instructional time.	113	50.4	18	85.7	160	50.8	21	91.3

Both the administrators and the teachers were asked open-ended questions regarding the changes that they had observed (or made) in the classroom as a result of the PSD. These responses are summarized in Tables 16 and 17. The most frequently mentioned item by both administrators (56.5%) and teachers (49.5%) is the use of the new strategies that the teachers had learned. Many of the other items mentioned by the administrators represented observations not made by teachers as classroom changes including increase collaboration (43.5%), improved student/teacher relationships (17.4%), move towards standards based curriculum (17.4%) and staff talking about pedagogy (13%). The increased use of technology was mentioned by both administrators (43.5%) and teachers (17.8%) even though at much different rates. The third most frequently mentioned response by teachers (13.3%, $n=42$) was that the days had no effect on classroom practices.

Table 16

Summary of Administrator Responses Regarding Changes in the Classroom they had Observed

Change mentioned	<i>n</i>	%
New strategies used	13	56.5
Increased collaboration	10	43.5
Increased use of technology	10	43.5
Improved teacher/student relationships	4	17.4
Move toward standards based curriculum	4	17.4
Staff is talking about pedagogy	3	13.0
Teachers examining and changing practices	2	8.7
Clear focus for all teachers	1	4.3

Note. Administrators ($n=23$) were able to mention more than one change for a total of 47 responses.

Table 17

Summary of Teacher Responses Regarding Changes in the Classroom that they had Implemented

Change mentioned	<i>n</i>	%
Used strategies learned	156	49.5
Increased use of technology	56	17.8
No impact	42	13.3
Used collaboratively-developed lessons/plans	19	6.0
Better use of data to drive instruction	6	1.9
Used FCAT prep materials	4	1.3
Caused me to get behind in my teaching	2	0.6
Engaged in grant writing	1	0.3

Note. *N* of Teachers = 315. Many teachers did not provide a response to this open-ended query.

The administrators were asked an open-ended question regarding the initiatives that had been developed at their school as a result of having PSD. The majority (56.5%) mentioned the use of new strategies by teachers. The development of professional learning communities was mentioned by 30.4% of the respondents, and 26.1% mentioned integrate technology and the development of a ninth grade academy. The remainders of the initiatives were literacy initiatives (17.4%), personalization (13%), career pathways (8.7%), and analyzing data (8.7%).

Table 18

Summary of Administrator Responses Regarding Initiatives Developed at their School

Initiative mentioned	<i>n</i>	%
Use of new strategies	13	56.5
Professional learning communities	7	30.4
Integrate technology	6	26.1
Ninth grade academy	6	26.1
Collaborative planning	5	21.7
Literacy initiatives	4	17.4
Personalization	3	13.0
Career pathways	2	8.7
Analyzing data	2	8.7

Note. Administrators ($n=23$) were able to mention more than one initiative for a total of 48 responses.

Both the administrators and the teachers were asked open-ended questions regarding the most beneficial aspect of the PSD. These responses are summarized in Tables 19 and 20. The most frequently mentioned item by both administrators (73.9%) and teachers (50.2%) is collaboration and sharing that occurred among the faculty, which is a crucial feature of the Core Belief of “empowered educators.” The next two items reflect the observed/implemented items of classroom change—training in new strategies (administrators 17.3%; teachers 24.1%) and technology (administrators 13%; teachers 10.1%).

Table 19

Summary of Administrator Responses Regarding the Most Beneficial Aspect of Professional Study Days

Most beneficial aspect	<i>n</i>	%
Collaboration/sharing	17	73.9
Teacher training in new strategies	4	17.3
Technology initiatives	3	13.0
Time to work on reform initiatives	1	4.3
Use of data	1	4.3
FCAT prep	1	4.3

Note. Some administrators ($n=23$) mentioned more than one aspect for a total of 26 responses.

Table 20

Summary of Teacher Responses Regarding the Most Beneficial Aspect of Professional Study Days

Most beneficial aspect	<i>n</i>	%
Collaboration/sharing	158	50.2
Strategies learned	76	24.1
Technology training	32	10.2
FCAT training	5	1.6
Use of data	4	1.3
Nothing	4	1.3
Planning time	4	1.3
ESOL information	2	0.6

Note. *N* of Teachers = 315. Many teachers did not provide a response to this open-ended query.

Both the administrators and the teachers were asked open-ended questions regarding the ways in which the PSD could be improved. These responses are summarized in Tables 21 and 22. Three administrators suggested scheduling the PSD away from testing days (13%). The suggestions that were made to train teachers on quality staff development, obtain more involvement from staff, and seek additional trainers were each mentioned by two administrators (8.7%). The teachers mentioned better organization (7.6%), survey teachers (7.3%), make more relevant to their discipline (7%), bring in outside experts (6.3%), differentiate instruction for teachers (6%) and eliminate PSDs (5.7%) most frequently.

Table 21

Summary of Administrator Responses Regarding the Ways in Which the Professional Study Days can be Improved

Improvement mentioned	<i>n</i>	%
Schedule away from testing days	3	13.0
Teacher training in development of quality staff development	2	8.7
More involvement and input from staff	2	8.7
Additional trainers	2	8.7
Sharing with other schools	1	4.3
Send out handbook of best practices at all levels	1	4.3
More technology training modules	1	4.3
Schedule monthly	1	4.3
HRD assistance	1	4.3
Develop PD plan as part of SIP	1	4.3

Note. Some administrators (*n*=23) did not suggest any improvements for a total of 15 responses.

Table 22

Summary of Teacher Responses Regarding the Ways in Which the Professional Study Days can be Improved

Improvement	<i>n</i>	%
Better organization	24	7.6
Survey teachers	23	7.3
More discipline relevance	22	7.0
Bring outside experts	20	6.3
Differentiate instruction for teachers	19	6.0
Eliminate them	18	5.7
More technology training	11	3.5
No need (great already)	8	2.5
Fewer days	6	1.9
More days	6	1.9
More, diverse instructors	4	1.3
Make activities more student achievement related	2	0.6

Note. *N* of Teachers = 315. Many teachers did not provide a response to this open-ended query.

At the end of both the administrator and teacher survey, the respondents were to provide any additional comments regarding PSD. These comments are summarized in Table 23 and

Table 24. Comments reflecting the value of the days dominated both the administrator responses (26.1%) and the teacher responses (20.3%).

Table 23

Summary of Administrator Comments Regarding Professional Study Days

Comment	<i>n</i>	%
Beneficial/crucial	6	26.1
Need more buy in/involvement	2	8.7
The effort was not worth it	1	4.3

Note. Some administrators (*n*=23) did not make any additional comments for a total of nine responses.

Table 24

Summary of Teacher Comments Regarding Professional Study Days

Outcome	<i>n</i>	%
Enjoyed them/keep them	64	20.3
Don't concentrate so much on FCAT	21	6.7
Some topics have been repeated too much	18	5.7
Benchmark training at other schools/businesses	3	1.0
Need time for planning	3	1.0
Non productive for students	3	1.0
Have fewer days	2	0.6
Need more days	2	0.6
The way to learn teaching is to teach	2	0.6
Have smaller groups	2	0.6
Need more teamwork	2	0.6
Prefer college coursework	1	0.3

Note. *N* of Teachers = 315. Many teachers did not provide a response to this open-ended query.

Summary and Conclusions

High school reform, as the name implies, is a change process that takes time to implement and for the results of the change to demonstrate a positive outcome. The professional development piece of high school reform, represented in part by the PSD, has been described by both principals and HRD staff as a significant culture change. The goal of having teachers “empowered with authority to define professional development needs and to make decisions about curriculum, teaching methods, and classroom environment” is a radical change. These changes imply that there be differentiated instruction for teachers as well as students. For this change to occur in an uneven manner is to be expected. For example, the most significant finding of this review is the disparity in attitudes between principals and teachers responding to the surveys regarding the PSD. Neither the principals nor the HRD staff were surprised by this disparity in attitudes, due to the newness of teachers being responsible for their own professional development and to the magnitude of change anticipated by high school reform. The variation in implementation, organization, and reporting of these professional development activities indicate additional reasons for these differences. Suggestions for improvement of PSD, particularly as mentioned by the teachers, include better organization, teacher surveys, increase subject area relevance, use of outside experts, and differentiated instruction for teacher needs.

Principals and HRD staff reported that, historically, teachers are not accustomed to taking responsibility for their own professional development and are not accustomed to looking to their colleagues for ideas, help, and mutual development. These factors are changing, as evidenced by the fact that collaboration/sharing was mentioned most frequently as the most beneficial aspect of PSD by both administrators (73.9%) and teachers (50.2%). There is a portion of the teachers who observed PSD to be poorly organized, repetitive, boring, and not relevant to them. While teachers, as a whole, were the driving force in the determination of the content of the PSD, it appeared that there were a number of individual teachers who felt ignored and left out of the process. The positive nature of the administrator responses provide a strong indication that there have been observable, beneficial impacts on the schools because of the PSD.

Principals responded positively to the questions regarding benefits at a mean rate of 90.6%, while the teachers responded positively at a mean rate of 59.5%. Regarding the issue of alignment with high school reform, principals responded positively at a mean rate of 94.2%, while the teachers responded at a mean rate of 66.3%. The issues of whether teachers were able to provide input for the content of the PSD and were able to define their own professional development needs received a mean 95.7% agreement rate from principals and a mean 69.7% agreement rate from teachers. The teachers and administrators did concur in identifying collegiality/sharing as the most beneficial part of the PSD, and the utilization of new strategies as the most frequently implemented classroom change.

Less than two-thirds of the teachers agreed that the PSD were aligned with the needs of students (65.7%), while 95.7% of the principals agreed. Perhaps for this study, the crucial question is whether “the benefit of having additional days of training outweighed the loss of instructional time.” The administrators responding had an agreement rate of 91.3%, while the teachers had an agreement rate of 50.8%. As the administrators had a return rate of 100%, we can be sure that the PSD school administrators, as a whole, felt that the days were worth the lost instructional time. The faculty registered a survey return rate of 63.6%, which is below the 80% commonly accepted to justify a representative sample, suggesting that results may not be reflective of the attitudes of all the teachers in the PSD schools. There is evidence for this concern in the fact that, of the teacher survey respondents, 62.5% indicated that they had voted to approve their school’s waiver request, whereas the mean faculty approval rate as recorded on waiver request forms for the PSD schools was 78.6%. The teacher response rate was not so low as to warrant invalidation of the teacher survey findings, however, they should be interpreted in light of the anticipated initial impacts of the change process as well as these return concerns.

Interviews with Human Resource Development (HRD) department staff suggested that the District Considerations contained in the 2006-07 evaluation report have been reviewed and addressed. An HRD representative has been assigned to work with each school, and the department has focused on providing training for schools in the development and implementation of high quality professional development programs aligned with high school reform. Evaluation indicators are being developed to support a comprehensive evaluation of professional development planned for the 2008-09 school year. Following a review of the 2006-07 report, and conversations with high school principals, the PLC database for the 2007-08 school year was revised to capture more accurate information on the activities being conducted. The quality

improvement process for each of these considerations will continue, as a result of findings described in this current report.

The PLC database indicated that only 0.3% of the activities reported could not be easily included in the categories of anticipated activities contained in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (1.8% of the records were blank). This indicated that the activities were aligned with the needs of high school reform, as anticipated in that document. The database did indicate that there was a great variation in the way activities were being recorded, particularly in the measurement; evaluation; and results categories. For example, 84% of the activity records in the database did not contain any results information.

The results revealed that there is an opportunity (and a need) to assist faculties in the process of defining and producing high quality staff development that involves and motivates the entire staff. The variation in the reporting and evaluation process also presents opportunities for guidance and improvement.

Recommendations

1. To further improve the fidelity of implementation of professional development in District schools, a joint PSD Committee co-chaired by the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resource Development (HRD) and the Point Person for High School Reform, and consisting of high school principals, teacher representatives, a Broward Teachers Union representative, Area Superintendents, Educational Technology Services staff, and HRD staff will be convened. Following the continuous improvement model (Plan, Do, Study, Act), the committee will review the findings in this report, along with disaggregated data to be provided during the summer of 2008 to identify implementation barriers, develop measurable objectives and provide improved procedures to be implemented during the 2008-09 school year. The committee's recommendations will be presented to Instructional Council by August 1, 2008.
2. Processes for recording PSD professional development data should be improved. The PSD Committee will address the weaknesses and ambiguities found in the Professional Learning Community (PLC) database and make recommendations to Instructional Council by August 1, 2008. Specific attention should be given to:
 - Revising the database to include classification categories similar to the ones utilized in this report in addition to the current open-ended detail.
 - Providing extensive instructions and training on the proper determination of outcomes, evaluation measures, and results reporting, including extensive examples. The evaluation measures should be keyed to the outcomes expected and have an ability to be measured, observed, or documented shortly after the completion of the professional development activity. These instructions and training activities should also include explicit guidance in the standard definitions and data entry requirements of the revised PLC database to ensure uniformity across all schools.
 - Requiring that all professional development activities be recorded by learning community, and that the results be documented in the PLC database. PLC participant and attendance data should also be recorded in the PLC database. Schools' PLC

- databases should be integrated to a central online location to facilitate the regular monitoring of professional development content by HRD staff. A periodic audit (e.g., quarterly) by HRD staff would ensure that the schools are populating the database as designed.
3. Oversight of PSD by HRD staff should continue to ensure compliance with District policy and to determine the value of PSD to the District. The Assistant Superintendent of HRD should ensure a method for determining whether the PSD activities aligned with objectives developed from the HS Reform Blueprint Core Beliefs and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). A self-assessment process for monitoring the impact of professional development on student achievement should be created and implemented by the start of the 2008-09 school year.

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Appendix
Listing of Professional Learning Communities by School

Name of School	Learning Community Name
Blanche Ely High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blanche Ely High PLC • Understanding Technology • Reading - Great Start • Math – Focus • English – Grammar • Writing - "The Write Approach" • Science - Meeting of the Minds • Social Studies – Imagine • Foreign Language – Creations • Vocational - Hands On!
Boyd H. Anderson High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum Mapping • Interdepartmental Planning • Instructional Focus • Technology Training
Coconut Creek High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology Department • Unified Arts Department • Math Department • Language Arts Department • Foreign Language Department • PE/Health Department • ESE Department • Guidance Department • Science Department • Social Studies Department • Reading Department • Clerical • ALL STAFF
Coral Glades High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy Team • Critical Thinking Focus Group • Differentiated Instruction Focus Group • Horizontal/Vertical Teaming • CRISS Focus Group
Cypress Bay High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career & Technical Small Learning Community • ESE Small Learning Community • Fine Arts Small Learning Community • Language Arts Small Learning Community • Math Small Learning Community • Physical Education Small Learning Community • Reading Small Learning Community • ROTC Small Learning Community • Science Small Learning Community

(Appendix continues)

Appendix (*continued*).

Name of School	Learning Community Name
Cypress Bay High (<i>continued</i>).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Studies Small Learning Community • World Language Small Learning Community • Administrative Small Learning Community
Dave Thomas Education Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Technology • Professional Development
Deerfield Beach High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Art Within Us • Meet the Parent Afternoon • The Struggling Reader • Differentiated Instruction
Everglades High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math Focus Group • Vocational Focus Group • World Languages Focus Group • 9th & 10th Grade English Focus Group • 11th & 12th Grade English Focus Group • Social Studies Focus Group • Science Focus Group • JROTC & PE Focus Group • Humanities Focus Group • ESE Focus Group
Fort Lauderdale High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology Development • Math Focus • Science Focus • World Languages • Language Arts Focus • Business Focus • Fine Arts • Social Science Focus • Student Support • Whole Faculty
Hallandale Adult Community Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math Focus • Science Focus • Language Arts Focus • Technology Focus • FCAT Focus • Faculty and Staff • Teachers • Tech Training • Guidance Focus
Hallandale High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Practices • Foundations • Literacy • Technology • Transition

(*Appendix continues*)

Appendix (*continued*).

Name of School	Learning Community Name
McArthur High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ninth-Grade Transition Team • Career Development • LA Focus Group • PE Focus Group • Social Studies Focus Group • Entire School • Guidance Counselors • World Languages • ESE Focus Group
McFatter Technical Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Study Day's BEST Practices
Monarch High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and Careers • Literacy • Reading Endorsement • Research • Technology
Northeast High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture & Design Academy PLC • Business & Entrepreneurship PLC • Latin School PLC • Ninth-Grade Academy PLC • ESE PLC • Fine Arts PLC • Guidance PLC • Health/PE/JROTC PLC • Language Arts PLC • Math PLC • Media PLC • National Academy Foundation PLC • Reading PLC • Science PLC • Social Studies PLC • Vocational PLC
Nova High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESE • Dem Guyz • Just Art • 9th & 10th Grade Social Studies • Algebra I • Tea for Two: High Tea • Super Fresh Kids • Rockin' Foreign Language Researcher • Miller and Kiger • Spanish I • 9th and 10th grade Novel Group • The Mavericks • Promethean Group

(*Appendix continues*)

Appendix (*continued*).

Name of School	Learning Community Name
Nova High (<i>continued</i>).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Queen/Soufrine • FM • Team Tuning Protocols • NBC • Tea for Two - Low Tea • Morgan Paideia • Intensive Math • Bio-Techies(CMSC) • PE • Team FCAT Enrichment • Math PowerPoint Quad • Math VT • Team Guidance • Grade Level Communities • Integrating Technology/Media
Piper High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using Data as a School Improvement Tool - Closing the Achievement Gap • Using Assessment to Guide Instruction - Strengthen your Knowledge of Effective Assessment • Piper's Professional Learning Team (PPLT) - A Probe into teacher Practice • Technology Team - Exploring Innovative Ways of Using Instructional Technology • Reading Across the Content Areas - All Teachers are Reading Teachers • Differentiated Instruction - Emphasis on ESE/ESOL students • Writing Across the Content Areas - Primarily for the soc. st., sci., math and electives • Understanding and Implementing Rubrics-Dissecting FCAT Rubrics
Plantation High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESE PLC • Fine and Performing Arts PLC • Language Arts PLC • Math PLC • Reading PLC • Science PLC • Social Studies PLC • Technical Education PLC • World Language PLC • Whole Faculty
Pompano Beach High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALL STAFF • Social Studies Department • Language Arts Department • Math Department • Technology Department • Unified Arts Department

(*Appendix continues*)

Appendix (*continued*).

Name of School	Learning Community Name
Pompano Beach High (<i>continued</i>).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance Department • World Languages Department • Science Department
South Broward High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A House Divided • Algebra 2 Team • Algebra Achievers • American Ensemble • Apocalypso • Effective FCAT Strategies • Effective Science FCAT Strategies • F.I.T.T. • Infinite Learning • Language of History • Literacy Team • Nine to Five • Project Based Learning Community • S.O.S. • The Language of History • The Motivators
South Plantation High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance Focus Team • Transitions Focus Team • Data Focus Team • Literacy Focus Team • Small Learning Communities Focus Team • Community Relations Focus Team • Curriculum & Instruction Focus Team • Professional Learning Focus Team • Department Based Teams
Stranahan High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 1 -CRISS Training • Module 2 - Alternative Assessments • Module 3A - Advanced Technology • Module 3B - Basic Technology • Module 4 - Differentiated Learning • Module 5 - Action Research/Teacher Talk • CREST • Health Pavilion • Downtown • The Studio • Sci-Tech • Science/PE and Health/Fine Arts • English/ESE • Reading/JROTC • Social Studies/Career Tech • Mathematics • Whole-School (divided into groups)

(Appendix continues)

Appendix (*continued*).

Name of School	Learning Community Name
Whiddon-Rogers Education Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cadres1A thru Main Jail• Cadres 1^a• Cadres 1B• Cadre 2A 3B• Cadre 4• Cadre 5^a• Cadre 5B• Cadre 6A• Cadre 6B• MSA• DJJ• Thompson• Main Jail
