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|  | Report to the Legislature: *Statewide Assistance in the Preparation and Implementation of Professional Development Plans - FY2012* |
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| M.G.L. Chapter 71 Section 38Q  June 2014 |
| Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906  Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370  www.doe.mass.edu |
| This document was prepared by the  Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.  Commissioner  **Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Members**  Ms. Maura Banta, Chair, Melrose  Ms. Harneen Chernow, Vice Chair, Jamaica Plain  Mr. Daniel Brogan, Chair, Student Advisory Council, Dennis  Dr. Vanessa Calderón-Rosado, Milton  Ms. Karen Daniels, Milton  Ms. Ruth Kaplan, Brookline  Dr. Matthew Malone, Secretary of Education, Roslindale  Mr. James O'S. Morton, Springfield  Dr. Pendred E. Noyce, Weston  Mr. David Roach, Sutton  Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner and Secretary to the Board  The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, an affirmative action employer, is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public.  We do not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.  Inquiries regarding the Department’s compliance with Title IX and other civil rights laws may be directed to the  Human Resources Director, 75 Pleasant St., Malden, MA 02148-4906. Phone: 781-338-6105.  © 2014 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  Permission is hereby granted to copy any or all parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes. Please credit the “Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.”  This document printed on recycled paper  Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906  Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370  www.doe.mass.edu | | |

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| Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.  *Commissioner* |  |

June 2014

Dear Members of the General Court:

I am pleased to submit this ***Report to the Legislature: Statewide Assistance in the Development and Implementation of Professional Development Plans*** pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 71 Section 38Q that reads in part:

*[T]he commissioner of education of the commonwealth shall prepare each year a plan for providing statewide assistance in the preparation and implementation of professional development plans…*

Students depend on the expertise of the professionals around them to support their learning needs. Education professionals play an important role in promoting student development, growth, and achievement. It is for this reason that all educators have the responsibility to continually build their knowledge, skills, and expertise. Professional development provides powerful opportunities for educators to engage in deep learning that supports the needs of all students.

In FY12, as in years past, the Legislature allocated funds to enable the Department to provide high quality professional development through grant-funded activities. The Department’s predominantly grant-funded professional development opportunities use a combination of state and/or federal funds. Currently, the Department’s assistance to districts in the development of local professional development plans is limited largely to review and approval of proposed plans consistent with grant funding priorities. These approved plans are typically targeted to particular schools rather than the district as a whole and, for the most part, are directed toward improving educator practice in the highest need communities across the Commonwealth.

As relevant as the Department’s professional development opportunities are, however, they vary across disciplines and are largely directed to the highest need communities in the state. Resources also impact the extent to which the Department is able to provide direct assistance to districts in designing professional development plans. Currently, this assistance is limited to those districts that receive state or federal grants. The Department does not have the capacity to establish professional development partnerships with all of the districts and schools that are not meeting Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) goals.

The Department’s Center for Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) will convene a steering committee composed of representatives from all units engaged in professional development activities to redesign a statewide professional development plan that will be part of the state’s comprehensive system of support. In addition the Department will mobilize a wide-range of external partners including institutions of higher education, consultants, collaboratives, and other organizations with professional development expertise that are interested in collaborating with the Department and districts to deliver high quality professional development across the Commonwealth. Massachusetts will benefit from coherence in its professional development system in order to achieve a unity of purpose in state, district, and individual educator plans.

If you would like to discuss this further, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.

Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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# Introduction

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education respectfully submits this Report to the Legislature on: ***Statewide Assistance in the Preparation and Implementation of Professional Development Plans*** pursuant to **M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 38Q (last paragraph):**

***[T]****he commissioner of education of the commonwealth shall prepare each year a plan for providing statewide assistance in the preparation and implementation of professional development plans. The plan shall include data that demonstrates, statewide and by school district, the types of professional development provided for educators who work with limited English proficient students. The commissioner shall consult with the board of higher education in developing said plan. This plan shall evaluate the feasibility of obtaining assistance from institutions of higher education and private service providers. The plan shall be submitted to the board of education for approval. A copy of said plan shall be submitted to the joint committee on education, arts, and humanities of the general court….*

As referenced in Chapter 71, Section 38Q of the Massachusetts General Laws, professional development plans include training on curriculum frameworks, pre-referral services within regular education, and training for teachers including those who work with students with limited English proficiency. It is the effective implementation of standards-based and research-informed instructional practices that contributes substantially to the likely success of Massachusetts students in achieving proficiency on the state’s standards-based assessments and demonstrating readiness for post-secondary education and the demands of the 21st century workforce.

# Background

## State Professional Development (PD) Activities

In FY12, as in years past, the Legislature allocated funds to enable the Department to provide High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD) through grant-funded activities. The Department’s predominantly grant-funded professional development opportunities use a combination of state and/or federal funds to sponsor professional development activities. Most recently, the Department received a boost to fund activities such as professional development through the federal Race to the Top (RTTT) grant initiative (approximately $5 million). As in past years, the Department’s assistance to districts in the development of local professional development plans is largely limited to review and approval of proposed plans consistent with grant funding priorities. These approved plans have typically been directed toward improving educator practice in the highest need communities across the Commonwealth. With the RTTT grant award, the Department is presently able to provide support for professional development plans through grant programs to additional districts. Over 200 districts have received awards in grant funding. In addition, the Department has endeavored to expand its professional development efforts.

While many of the Department’s offices provide high quality grant-funded professional development, the professional development activities of the Center for Curriculum and Instruction (C&I), the Center for Leadership and School Redesign, the District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs), and the Center for Special Programs, are highlighted as examples of the Department’s offices with professional development offerings. The report provides a summary of the professional development opportunities offered in each of these centers.

### Center for Curriculum and Instruction

#### Literacy

Through the FY10, FY11, and FY12 budgets, the legislature provided nearly $13.5 million in funding through the Consolidated Literary Program line item 7010-0033 to support these efforts. This legislative report covers the FY12 work, including literacy professional development grant awards for districts and their external partners and statewide and regional professional development programs. It also offers an evaluation of the district grants and ESE-sponsored professional development supported through the FY11 budget. The Consolidated Literary Program line item in FY12 has helped the Department to:

* Fund professional development projects in 110 districts with identified literacy proficiency gaps. Districts applied individually or as a group with a designated district as the fiscal agent. Three collaboratives[[1]](#footnote-1) submitted proposals on behalf of groups of districts.
* Support adolescent literacy professional development. Prior to FY10, all state funding for literacy was focused on early literacy programs.
* Enable districts to choose their own professional development providers with recognized expertise in particular areas of need as determined through data analysis and alignment with state identified priorities.

In working to close achievement gaps, particularly by third grade by strengthening literacy professional development, the Office of Literacy targets its grants to districts with identified literacy proficiency gaps. In FY12, more than $2.5 million dollars of state funds supported grants for 69 K-3 and 88 adolescent[[2]](#footnote-2) literacy professional development projects in 110 public school districts and charter schools and several districts have both K-3 and adolescent projects (see Appendix A for a list of grant recipients by district). Collectively, they reach about 8,400 teachers in over 380 schools and impact about 165,000 students – approximately 17 percent of the state’s total student enrollment.

The primary purpose of the grant program is to support professional development in critical PK-12 literacy issues. The Office created a review sheet for evaluating proposals and shared it with districts to guide the development of their proposals. The Office identified five priority areas, consistent across all grade levels, based on its analysis of statewide literacy data for elementary, middle, and high schools, and asked districts to prioritize their proposed professional development according to these areas:

1. Teaching close reading of grade-level complex informational and literary texts;
2. Providing tiered systems of curriculum delivery including the use of data to inform instruction, core and intervention instruction, and enhancements to core instruction;
3. Embedding language and literacy skills in content learning with a focus on vocabulary instruction, including oral language development for English learners and reading comprehension, especially of science content;
4. Teaching writing;
5. Developing literacy plans at the district and school level to encourage the strategic use of literacy resources to help all students become proficient readers and writers.

The awarded grants addressed all five priority areas. Tiered curriculum is the priority area focused on by the greatest number of grantees (49). Content learning and literacy was a close second with 46 grantees focusing on embedding language and literacy skills in the content areas. Thirty-four grants included teaching writing as a priority area. Teaching complex and informational text is a priority area of 27 of the grants and a slightly fewer number of grants – 26 – focus on literacy planning.

Table 1: FY2012 Literacy Partnership Grants by Priority Area

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| --- | --- |
| Priority Area | Number of Grants |
| 1: Complex text and informational literacy | 27 |
| 2: Tiered curriculum | 49 |
| 3: Content learning and literacy | 46 |
| 4: Writing | 34 |
| 5: Literacy planning | 26 |
| Total | 182 |

#### Mathematics and Science

The Office for Mathematics, Science, Technology and Engineering (OMSTE) in the Center for C&I, oversees the Mathematics and Science Teacher Content-Based Professional Development state budget line-item, 7061-9804. For FY12, $346,162 was allocated to primarily support the 2012 Professional Development Institutes Program. The mathematics and science professional development courses are designed to be scaled-up and are also offered regionally as part of a statewide system of support.

* The Professional Development Institute Program[[3]](#footnote-3) is a statewide program that has been offered by the Department for 17 years. Each summer the Department funds approximately 15-20 graduate level courses in mathematics and science, providing free professional development to 300-500 Massachusetts educators, based on available funding. Each course in mathematics and science is comprised of 45 hours of direct instruction and an additional 10-15 hours that support implementation of the course content into the participants’ classrooms. In FY12, this program offered 15 Professional Development Institutes to approximately 350 mathematics and science educators across the state.
* The Office for Mathematics and Science also manages the federal No Child Left Behind Act: Title IIB Mathematics and Science Partnership Program. This competitive program awards three-year grants to partnerships of higher education STEM departments with high-need school districts. These partnerships offer a course or a series of content-based courses to teachers in the partner districts. Each course is a graduate level course of at least 45 hours; teachers are pre/post tested for content knowledge gain, and in some partnerships the series of courses lead to the attainment of a Master’s Degree.

During FY12, approximately 14 courses were offered to educators from more than 17 mainly high-need districts, serving over 300 mathematics and science teachers.

* Through the RTTT grant, districts can participate in the Advancing College Readiness Program and receive pre-AP teacher training in science, mathematics, and English Language Arts (ELA). Pre-AP teacher training is high-quality professional development designed to assist vertical teams[[4]](#footnote-4) of teachers in developing curricula, instruction, and performance expectations that prepare students for AP and other higher level coursework. Vertical teams of teachers in a content area matriculate through the pre-AP teacher training together and then meet back at their district to align curriculum, implement pre-AP lessons and strategies, and create more rigorous, standards-based curriculum. The training is 12 days over 3 years (4 days per summer) and offered to middle school and high school teachers in ELA, mathematics, general science, biology, physics, and chemistry. The vendor for this program, Mass Insight Education, works with Laying the Foundation trainers and materials to implement the program. In the summer of 2011, 317 teachers were trained in 17 districts. In the summer of 2012, 778 teachers were enrolled from over 48 districts in training events. This program will be offered through the summer of 2014.
* Additionally, a substantial amount of mathematics professional development is offered as part of a statewide system of support for mathematics.These graduate level courses are primarily offered to Level 3 districts and made available through funds associated with the regional DSACs. Districts that are participating in the federal RTTT grant may also fund teachers to attend these courses. The OMSTE established the menu of available courses and coordinated with professional development providers to match course offerings with district requests. In FY12, approximately 40 courses were offered through the statewide system of support, serving over 1,000 mathematics educators.

#### English Language Acquisition

The Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement (OELAAA) in the Center for C&I oversees the English Language Acquisition Professional Development state budget line-item 7027-1004. In FY12, approximately $364,937 was appropriated to support professional development for educators of English language learners (ELLs) implementing sheltered English immersion and teaching English language acquisition.

This funding supported the professional development of approximately 3,500 teachers. The Department used this funding to help develop professional development capability within districts in multiple ways:

1. Hosted several train-the-trainer workshops in which 105 educators from approximately 50 districts participated to become Sheltered English Immersion Professional Development trainers.
2. Funded three partnership initiatives between districts and higher education institutions in order to build capacity within districts to prepare teachers to work with ELLs.

These initiatives supported the collaboration between the University of Massachusetts Lowell and Lawrence Public Schools, the University of Massachusetts-Boston and Brockton Public Schools, and Westfield State University and several low-incidence districts in the western part of the state.

1. Implemented World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA), which is a statewide initiative to introduce and implement a new set of standards across all content areas and assessment for English language learners. Two “WIDA weeks” were organized and approximately 200 educators participated in the workshops, which introduced them to the new standards and their implementation.
2. Enabled a group of 15 ELL Directors from different districts to participate in leadership training under National Institute for School Leadership (NISL).
3. Enabled over 200 educators to participate in different workshops and symposiums organized by OELAAA about English language education and different English language learners’ populations.

### Center for Educator Policy, Preparation, and Leadership

The Office of Educator Policy, Preparation, and Leadership oversees the National Institute for School Leadership instructional leadership training for school and district leaders. In FY12, districts were responsible for allocating funds, RTTT or other, towards the training of their leaders. In FY12, 230 school and district leaders in 46 districts began NISL training in cohorts across the state.  For more information, please visit: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/edleadership/nisl/>.

### District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs)

The District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs)[[5]](#footnote-5) oversee state-funded School and District Assistance funding, as well as the federal No Child Left Behind Title I School Improvement funding. The DSACs provided $2,940,724 in grant assistance to 61 Level 3 districts and districts exiting Level 3 in 2011 ($600,000 in state targeted assistance funds and $2,340,724 in federal Title I and Title IIA funds). Districts were expected to work collaboratively with their regional DSAC team to develop plans for grant fund use that effectively supported their District and School Improvement Plans and would assist in their efforts to address the District Standards and the Conditions for School Effectiveness[[6]](#footnote-6). Districts are using funds in three broad areas to:

1. Support educator participation in DSAC-approved Literacy and Mathematics Professional Development.
2. Support educator participation in targeted assistance activities with their regional DSAC team.
3. Fund other professional development in areas not addressed by DSAC-approved coursework or to support other types of district initiatives.

In 2011, nearly one third (32.4 percent) of total grant funds were used to purchase seats for over 1,600 educators in high-quality DSAC-approved mathematics and literacy professional development offerings. The percentage of state Targeted Assistance funds (29 percent) used for that purpose mirrored that of the overall grant and funded over 200 seats in those courses. Districts also used a substantial proportion of state Targeted Assistance funds for stipends and/or substitutes to support educator participation in professional development, other targeted assistance activities with DSAC teams, such as engagement in the Conditions for School Effectiveness Self-Assessment process, or other district initiatives, e.g., developing formative assessments to address the new Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. A third major use of state Targeted Assistance funds paid for contractors to deliver professional development not offered through the DSACs or to support the implementation of other district initiatives identified through a rigorous planning process.

### Center for Special Programs

The Center for Special Programs, Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office oversees professional development supported by federal special education funds. In FY12, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): Part B: Technical Assistance funds supported the following professional development activities:

* Program Improvement Grant(Fund Code 274).In FY12, $11,000,000 was allocated to support program improvement grants to advance the skills of educators working with students with disabilities through high-quality, intensive, and sustained professional development activities. All public school districts and educational collaboratives are eligible to apply for this grant. This grant has four priorities:

1. Induction, mentoring, and retention
2. Inclusive practices with students with autism spectrum disorders
3. Curriculum development, assessment, and instruction
4. Positive behavioral and social skills strategies for the classroom

* Program Improvement Grant (Fund Code 249). In FY12, $260,000 was allocated to enhance program-based induction, mentoring, and retention programs to advance the skills of educators through professional development activities. All approved private special education schools are eligible to apply for this grant program. This grant has two priorities:

1. Induction, mentoring, and recruitment
2. Curriculum development, instruction, and classroom assessment

* Massachusetts FOCUS Academy (MFA). In FY12, a federal personnel development grant provided $1,860,768 for the 2011-2012 Massachusetts FOCUS Academy that is housed on MASSONE, which is a professional development portal with a “sunset date” of July 2013, as an integrated statewide online professional development system. Courses are free to the individual educator, resulting in Professional Development Points, and college credits are available at a reduced rate. In summer 2011, four courses were made available to DSAC districts serving 122 educators; in fall 2011, 131 districts were represented by 450 educators; in spring 2012, 149 districts were represented by 505 educators. This project provides online professional development on:
* Career Development and Competitive Employment
* Creating and Sustaining Positive School and Classroom Learning Environments I & II
* Developing Teacher-Leaders Course
* Differentiated Instruction
* Generalist Transition I & II
* How to Partner With Families of Middle and High School Students with Disabilities
* Implementing Collaborative Teaching
* Parent and Professional Partnerships: Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities in Middle and High School
* Parent/Professional Leadership Institutes
* Post-secondary Education
* Professional Development for Early Intervention Specialists and Allied Health Workers
* Universal Design for Learning I & II
* Universal Design for Learning/Mathematics
* Massachusetts Special Education Leadership Academies. In FY12, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds in the amount of $427,300 were allocated to provide leadership academies that make available professional development to special education administrators and their teams intended to inform participants of the laws that regulate special education, develop leadership skills, and help administrators become change agents within their school system, which will lead to positive educational outcomes for students with disabilities and their families. Each academy has been developed to meet the unique needs of the organizations they represent:
* Special Education Leadership Academy
* Special Education Leadership Academy: Vocational Technical Education Programs
* Special Education Leadership Academy: Level 3 districts served by the six regionally-based District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs)
* Massachusetts Licensure Academy. The Massachusetts Licensure Academy (MLA) has been created by the Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office and OELAAA to assist teachers to meet the qualifications needed to become a licensed educator.

The MLA provides graduate-level courses that address the competencies for the preliminary licensure of Teacher of Students with Moderate Disabilities, as well as the content information included in the ESL/MTEL. In FY12, the first year of this initiative, $115,000 was allocated from special education. Individual districts had RTTT funds available to provide for mentoring, substitutes and other costs associated with the program. Courses provided in the first year of this program included:

* Assessment for Determination of Education Needs, Curriculum, Services and Programs, Including Augmentative and Alternative Communication and Other Assistive Technologies
* Federal and State Laws, Educational Terminology and the Role of Other Agencies Pertaining to the Education of Students with IEPs

The following courses were offered during the spring and summer of 2012:

* Second Language Acquisition
* Methods and Approaches to English Language Teaching
* Special Education Professional Development Institutes. In FY12, $738,779 was allocated for special education professional development institutes designed to provide sustained, High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD) for educators who work with students with disabilities in selected districts across the state. This grant has the following priorities:
* Accessible Learning Through Technology
* Assessing English Language Learners (ELL) With Disabilities
* Collaborative Evaluation Led By Local Educators
* Current Issues in School-Based Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy
* Improving Spoken and Written Language: From Research to Practice
* Literacy for Students who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing
* Making Assistive Technology Happen: Assistive Technology for Teaching and Learning
* Managing Behavior in an Inclusive Classroom
* Meeting the Academic and Non-Academic Needs of Students with Asperger Syndrome
* Strategies for Students with Sensory Processing Disorders in Inclusive School Settings
* Technology for Children with Visual Impairments and Multiple Disabilities
* National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) Satellite Series. In FY12, $4,500 was allocated to the NASDSE Satellite Series for distance learning opportunities in 38 districts. This project includes:
* Resources for students with autism and their families
* Partners in progress: youth and young adult leaders
* From computers to classrooms: tackling bullies in today’s schools
* Understanding federal policy and its impact on the classroom

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s offices that oversee Department-sponsored grant-funded professional development maintain provider lists that document the qualifications of providers to deliver specified professional development. Moreover, the Department maintains a database of professional development providers who offer opportunities to obtain Professional Development Points (PDPs) for re-certification and advancement.

# Continuous Improvement of State Professional Development (PD) Plan

As is clear from the preceding description of grant-funded professional development, the Department provides many high quality grant-funded opportunities for educators to improve content knowledge and pedagogical skills. As relevant as the Department’s professional development opportunities are, however, they vary considerably across disciplines and are largely directed to the highest need communities in the state. Nonetheless, the federal RTTT grant award given to the Department has been helpful in mitigating our funding shortage and, subsequently, has allowed a larger number of districts to receive certain professional development supports.

In the past, limited resources affected the extent to which the Department was able to provide direct assistance to districts in designing professional development plans. For this reason, assistance has been limited to those districts that receive state or federal grants. With the federal RTTT initiative, the Department has made an attempt to expand its professional development reach. For example, the Center for C&I is engaged in a project to provide **model curriculum units[[7]](#footnote-7)**, **lesson plans**, and **curriculum maps** to districts and teachers in the state. These resources will serve as exemplars of standards-based tools and curricular resources.

The Department, in its effort to ensure that districts have access to quality professional development providers, has taken advantage of a federal RTTT grant to create a **set of** **standards** **for professional development**. These standards will help guide the work around creating a new system for provider quality assurance. The quality assurance system will help identify knowledgeable providers and will support the Department’s efforts to ensure the quality of service from professional development providers. One goal of such a system is that districts will be aware of the professional development providers who have an established track record of providing HQPD on specified topics.

Another effort undertaken by the Department in FY12 using the RTTT grant, is to develop a **coherent professional development system** for the Department. Massachusetts will benefit from coherence in its professional development system in order to achieve a unity of purpose in state, district, and individual educator plans. The Department envisions a coherent statewide system of professional development as part of a comprehensive, statewide system of support. The following key ideas underlie this initiative:

1. A **coherent, centralized statewide system of professional development** is a central component of a statewide system of support. It will offer all educators in Massachusetts public school districts current information, tools, and resources to enhance research-informed and standards-based teaching. The goal is to ensure that the Department adds value to the work of districts and schools in their efforts to help all students achieve proficiency on the state’s standards-based assessments and success in post-secondary education and careers.
2. The Center for C&I is working to ensure the coherence of a statewide system of professional development by:
3. Convening a department-wide committee of staff with professional development responsibilities to develop a statewide professional development plan
4. Overseeing the statewide system of professional development as approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE)
5. Working with the Department’s Center for Targeted Assistance to ensure that the goals of professional development and targeted support are complementary and consistent
6. Working with external partners to develop mutually beneficial relationships to enhance the state’s capacity to serve all of its public school districts
7. Establishing procedures for maintaining a database of professional development partners and procedures for monitoring the quality of professional development offerings
8. Establishing procedures in collaboration with the Office of Educator Licensure regarding the monitoring of awarded professional development points (PDPs) for completion of high quality and appropriate professional development opportunities consistent with Department priorities
9. Maintaining and disseminating current information about the Department’s professional development initiatives to all stakeholders within the Department and in public school districts
10. The Department continues to recognize that given its current staffing and resources, there is a critical need to **mobilize external partners** in a statewide system of professional development. The identification of one or more organizing entities for regional professional development may be a useful strategy for bringing together external partners; however, the success of this model may hinge on the extent to which these entities work closely with the Department and local districts to ensure consistency of strategies for achieving mutually agreed upon goals. Developing mutually beneficial relationships with institutions of higher education, consultants, collaboratives, and other organizations with professional development expertise requires identification of the most pressing problems that face the state and local districts and a collaborative approach between professional development providers, state staff, and local practitioners to solve these problems.

For example, educational research that contributes to improvements in student achievement is one form of partnership that benefits both the interests of university faculty and the needs of public schools. Similarly, opportunities for pre-service students to work as tutors or interventionists in schools advance the interests of higher education and public schools.

1. In 1995, the Department published a registry of all professional development providers in the state. Currently, the Department maintains a database of registered professional development providers, but this database is not widely distributed. In the next two years, the Department will **redesign a publicly disseminated registry** that monitors the quality of providers for specific content and pedagogy. These providers should have expertise in those topics and strategies articulated as the focus of the Department’s current efforts to close achievement gaps. Periodic review of providers to ensure that they continue to be qualified to provide professional development on specified topics should be part of this process. Casting a wide net for providers who are regionally located and are interested in working closely with the Department to deliver professional development topics consistent with the strategies identified as part of the annual summit will require the coordination of offices across the Department. This information will be shared across the units of the Department, as well as with districts.
2. Similarly, it is important for **the Department to monitor the appropriateness of professional development for PDPs leading to re-certification and advancement**. Working closely with school principals for the review and monitoring of the quality of Educator Professional Development Plans will help to ensure that PDPs are awarded for professional development consistent with the Department’s and district’s current goals and priorities to close achievement gaps and prepare students for success in post-secondary education and careers.

# FY13 State Plan for Professional Development (PD)

As required by the [Education Reform Law of 1993](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edreform/), the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) herein presents its 2012-2013 Massachusetts Plan for Professional Development. This Plan supports the implementation of the state [curriculum frameworks](http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/), particularly the new English Language Arts and Mathematics Frameworks, through curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices, and promotes professional development as an integral part of Department activities. The Plan is based on the premise that strong classroom teachers, visionary instructional leaders, and high quality professional development (HQPD) are essential to the reform of public education and to the improvement of student learning. This Plan addresses the following topics:

* Priorities for Educator Professional Development
* Features of Effective Professional Development
* Responsibilities of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
* Responsibilities of School Districts
* Responsibility of External Professional Development Partner

This Plan calls for the development of a coherent, unified, and comprehensive professional development system with aligned statewide, district, and individual educator professional development goals. The purpose of this Plan is to improve educator knowledge of research-informed and standards-based content, pedagogy, and related practices that will contribute to student proficiency and success in post-secondary education and careers.

## Priorities for Educator Professional Development (PD)

The Department has identified six priorities for statewide, district, and individual educator professional development. The Plan calls for the Department, districts, and external partners, including institutions of higher education, consultants, collaboratives, and other organizations with professional development expertise, to prioritize the following:

1. College and Career Readiness
2. Early literacy and sustained excellence in research-based literacy practices in K-12 instruction
3. Addressing gaps in mathematical knowledge, particularly at the middle school level
4. The use of data to inform decision-making and instruction at the school and district level
5. Educator effectiveness
6. District and school turnaround for the lowest performing schools and districts

## Features of Effective Professional Development (PD)

There is general agreement that effective professional development includes not just the acquisition of research-informed content knowledge from informed experts, but more importantly, multiple opportunities to engage actively in applying content knowledge to everyday practice. Participation in professional learning communities, cross-district meetings, and opportunities to practice implementing recommended instructional practices with feedback from peer or expert coaches are essential elements of a comprehensive, unified, and coherent professional development program. Through such opportunities, educators become confident in their ability to incorporate best practices into daily instruction.

The Department has drafted **10 High-Quality Professional Development Standards** that define quality and are based on research of effective professional development. The Standards have been vetted by a committee of professional development stakeholders at the Department and submitted to districts for feedback. To underscore the message that effectiveness and quality matters, the Department employs the term High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD) in the nomenclature of the Standards, which are:

1. HQPD has clear goals and objectives relevant to desired student outcomes.
2. HQPD aligns with state, district, school, and/or educator goals or priorities.
3. HQPD is designed based on the analysis of data relevant to the identified goals, objectives, and audience.
4. HQPD is assessed to ensure that it is meeting the targeted goals and objectives.
5. HQPD promotes collaboration among educators to encourage sharing of ideas and working together to achieve the identified goals and objectives.
6. HQPD advances an educator’s ability to apply learning from the professional development to his or her particular content and/or context.
7. HQPD models good pedagogical practice and applies knowledge of adult learning theory to engage educators.
8. HQPD makes use of relevant resources to ensure that the identified goals and objectives are met.
9. HQPD is taught or facilitated by a professional who is knowledgeable about the identified objectives.
10. HQPD sessions connect and build upon each other to provide a coherent and useful learning experience for educators.

The Department released the draft standards, along with related tools, to the field in the winter of 2013. The Department has also developed indicators that further elaborate on each standard[[8]](#footnote-8). Furthermore, the Department has partnered with a national organization dedicated to the improvement of educator professional development to provide some technical assistance to districts and to create the tools needed to implement the standards.

## Responsibilities of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

A coherent statewide system of professional development offers all educators in Massachusetts public school districts current information, tools, and resources to enhance research-informed and standards-based teaching and ensure that all students graduate from Massachusetts public schools ready for success in post-secondary education and careers. This system is envisioned as three tiers, or levels, of increasingly more intensive professional development based on the needs of districts to close achievement gaps and expand expectations for learning:

**Level 1: Statewide Professional Development** is provided to all public school districts across the Commonwealth and is driven by the annual analysis of student data, particularly MCAS data, to identify ongoing challenges and establish priority goals for the following school year. All public school districts are encouraged to participate in the following Department opportunities:

* + - An annual C&I Summit that identifies current challenges in closing achievement gaps and establishes the Department’s strategies for addressing these performance gaps.
    - Ongoing professional development available to all public school districts including:
* Webinars on critical topics
* Use of the Department’s web-based tools and resources aligned with the state’s curriculum standards, including exemplars of student work, research reports, lesson plans, video clips of high quality instructional practices, and formative assessments aligned with the standards-based MCAS assessment
* Online courses, summer courses, content institutes, leadership training, and conferences offered by the Department and its external partners consistent with the year’s priorities for novice, experienced, and mentor teachers as part of the Massachusetts Educator Academy

Effective statewide professional development requires an extensive network of external providers who may be called upon to assist the state in its statewide efforts, as well as to serve as content developers, presenters, and advisers. Presently, partners submit proposals to the individual content offices to serve as Department professional development providers for specified purposes. In FY13, the Department streamlined this system so that content offices approve proposals and share this information with the Center for C&I, which will update the database.

**Level 2: Regional Professional Development** is offered for high need, low performing districts in which one or more of a district’s schools have not met AYP targets and is offered in a regional system of professional development. These districts may be eligible for grant-funded professional development opportunities, as well as Level 1 opportunities described above.

In addition to the above, these districts are encouraged to participate in periodic regional conferences and meetings, the content of which is intended to address current challenges as identified in state and district data.

To assist districts in developing professional development opportunities, the professional development staff of the Department’s content offices serve as curriculum and instruction leaders within the established regions. Responsibilities may include:

* Assisting in the development of district professional development plans, including local professional learning community activities consistent with state and district priorities
  + Developing and disseminating critical messages regarding research-informed and standards-based instructional practices
  + Collaborating with external partners identified by the Department in ongoing regional professional development
  + Collaborating with external partners identified by districts for district-based professional development consistent with Department goals and priorities
  + Arranging networking opportunities to enable district and school staff to share experiences, showcase exemplary practice, and learn from one another

**Level 3: District-Based Professional Development** is offered for the highest need, lowest performing districts in which the district and/or one or more of its schools are identified for failing to meet AYP targets.[[9]](#footnote-9) These districts are eligible for grant-funded professional development opportunities, as well as Level 1 and Level 2 opportunities described above. Department professional development providers, along with targeted assistance staff, are assigned to each district to provide assistance with district-based professional development. In addition to Level 1 statewide professional development support, the Department’s professional development providers may also provide more intensive and direct support to develop and disseminate standards-based curriculum and research-informed instructional practices and to sustain successful practices.

To encourage HQPD in each of the tiers described above, the Department

* **Maintains a current database of approved external professional development providers** that is updated annually with course offerings and related information. This database will be available to all state and district staff
* **Prepares an annual calendar** of all Department-sponsored professional development opportunities
* **Provides assistance to districts in developing local professional development plans**, including published guidance on the use of data to identify areas of challenge as the focus for professional development activities and on the state’s current strategies for closing achievement gaps
* **Designs rubrics** to assist districts and participants in evaluating professional development programs and providers
* **Maintains guidelines** for providers of professional development
* **Collaborates with Educator Licensure** to maintain educators’ PDP information. Part of this information may come from providers

## Responsibilities of School Districts

School districts are required annually to adopt and implement a professional development plan for all principals, teachers, other professional staff employed by the district, and school council members. The Department encourages districts to make use of [local professional development committees](http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/stateplan/default.html?printscreen=yes&#lpdc#lpdc) to strengthen the participation of all constituencies and to enhance professional development planning. Further, districts should be sure to recognize within their plans the overlapping and different needs of novice, experienced, and mentor educators.

The Department’s regional professional development providers are available to assist districts that have not met AYP targets with the development of local professional development plans consistent with the Department’s current goals and priorities. Districts that have not met AYP targets are required to share their plans with the Department ([Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 38Q](http://www.state.ma.us/legis/laws/mgl/71-38Q.htm)).

Districts will be encouraged to connect professional development with continuous district and school-improvement planning. This connection is strengthened by recertification, which requires educators to have professional development plans that are consistent with school and/or district improvement plans.

Districts are responsible for utilizing student data to identify areas of greatest need in professional development and for selecting providers of professional development who are of high quality and that address the identified learning needs in the district. Districts are encouraged to partner with institutions of higher education, consultants, collaboratives, and organizations with professional development expertise, as well as with non-traditional providers, e.g., laboratories or corporations, via work externships, to provide professional development opportunities. Districts are responsible for identifying the data to be collected on professional growth and on the quality and impact of district-sponsored professional development activities.

The [recertification regulations](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr44.html) outline minimum requirements for professional development; however, the Department encourages educators to participate in professional experiences that support and expand their content and professional skills beyond the minimum requirements. Accordingly, districts may choose to offer additional incentives, through collective bargaining, for educators to go beyond the minimum requirements for recertification and to continue to participate in professionally-relevant and academically-meaningful professional development.

### Elements of an Effective District Plan

#### Plan Development

* Focuses on clearly defined goals and priorities for district-sponsored professional development consistent with the state’s goals and priorities and based on an analysis of student achievement data
* Aligns professional development resources with district academic goals
* Allows for the evaluation of professional development activities
* Ensures that professional development activities are coordinated across the district
* Identifies external partners with expertise in specified topics that are the focus of current improvement efforts, utilizing the Department’s professional development provider database as a resource
* For districts that have not met AYP, utilizes the services of the Department’s professional development providers to develop district professional development plans consistent with the state’s goals and priorities

#### Plan Structure

* Fosters a professional learning community that encourages teachers to work together, not in isolation
* Encourages networking of district and school staff with peers in neighboring districts and schools
* Encourages educators to solicit feedback from each other to improve their practice
* Identifies the primary models for delivering professional development in order to accomplish each of the indicated plan priorities
* Emphasizes content-based offerings
* Requires individual school-improvement plans to outline how professional development is to be linked to improving student achievement
* Provides ongoing assistance to educators
* Includes methods and procedures for evaluating quality of professional development opportunities

#### Financial Aspects of Plan

* Includes analysis of current spending
* Focuses spending on priority areas
* Uses external funding sources to support the overall district plan, rather than implementing separate systems for utilizing each source of funding
* Ensures that spending is aligned with district goals

#### Elements of Effective District-Based Professional Development

* Aligns with district, school, and state improvement goals
* Encourages teams of teachers working together in professional learning communities
* Focuses on content knowledge and application of content knowledge to practice
* Provides on-the-job, ongoing support throughout the school year
* Includes follow-up activities in the educator's own classroom
* Connects professional development to the workplace and encourages teachers to develop curriculum and lesson plans that show students real world applications of their learning
* Utilizes in-class observation of educator by mentors or peers
* Includes pre- and post-assessments
* Requires products from participants, such as lesson plans or curriculum units

### School Councils

#### The [Education Reform Law](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edreform/) requires school councils to annually draft School Improvement Plans, which focus on meeting the identified learning needs of all students. These plans should include professional development to support staff in meeting these needs.

### Local Professional Development Committees

Many districts form professional development committees that include administrators, teachers, parents, and community members. The Department encourages the formation of such committees. The collaboration of the different constituencies represented in such a committee is essential to the success of a comprehensive and effective professional development program. Such committees are most effective when they are empowered to make meaningful decisions.

These district-wide committees may be responsible for designing the district's annual professional development plan. The committee ensures that there are strong connections between district and school improvement plans and that professional development provides educators with opportunities to build on their subject-matter knowledge and learn additional effective practices that improve student learning and achievement. This group is often responsible for advising the school community on the professional development process, on local guidelines and policies, and on no-cost options to fulfill recertification requirements.

## Responsibilities of External Professional Development (PD) Partners

The primary responsibility of professional development providers is to assist educators in enhancing subject-matter knowledge and ways to develop student understanding of that subject through varied standards-oriented instructional and assessment practices. Professional development providers also assist districts in integrating professional development into system-wide and school improvement planning.

The goal is to establish mutually beneficial partnerships that serve the pressing needs of the state and its districts while affording partners sound opportunities to advance their professional skills. For example, educational research that is focused on solving critical problems identified by practitioners not only has the potential to help students improve their skills, but also to advance the knowledge base regarding best practices. In addition, involving college and university students in the work of schools as interventionists and tutors not only affords schools the opportunity to expand their pool of support staff, but provides students with hands-on experiences that will enhance their capacity to become confident and qualified educators, ready to take on the responsibilities of teachers more quickly than would otherwise be the case. Further, districts have many needs for partners who act as catalysts for professional learning communities, who assist with resource development, and who provide the link between research and implemented best practices.

For grant-funded professional development opportunities, qualified providers may be solicited by the Department or districts to provide specified professional development. In addition, there may be opportunities for districts to identify a provider from the state’s provider database and to submit a proposal in conjunction with that provider for funding to provide specified courses, training, etc. External professional development providers for the Department’s grant-funded opportunities are required to:

* + 1. Submit an application to the professional development provider database for the particular content area in which the provider would like to provide professional development.
    2. Specify their qualifications regarding specific topics and strategies, especially those identified by the Department at its Annual C&I Summit as important to close achievement gaps. Once approved by the content office, the provider’s information will be added to the Department’s professional development provider database. This information will be widely disseminated throughout the Department and to the state’s public school districts.
    3. Update this information periodically, including providing evaluation data that demonstrates that participants found the professional development to be appropriate for the intended purpose.

For professional development that is not grant funded, it is the responsibility of the district to select providers who are qualified to provide professional development on specified topics for PDPs. Districts are encouraged to review the state’s professional development provider database to identify appropriate providers for specified purposes; however, they may offer PDPs as long as the professional development satisfies the requirements for PDPs as outlined by the Department.

All external professional development providers are expected to:

* Evaluate the effectiveness of professional development offerings and to assess their impact, if any, on classroom practice
* Address the content of the relevant state Curriculum Frameworks
* Conduct professional development with clear objectives, relevant learning activities, and conclusions
* Conduct professional development that recognizes the overlapping and different needs of beginning and veteran educators
* Incorporate technology tools and appropriate media, as warranted
* Build on educators' prior knowledge and experience
* Use principles of adult learning theory to engage educators in professional growth
* Employ a variety of teaching techniques such as direct instruction, small group discussion, practice with peer feedback, problem-solving, Socratic dialogue, and research projects
* Provide many and varied opportunities for educators to incorporate new knowledge and skills into classroom practice or school and district management
* Evaluate teacher learning through an appropriate assessment. For example, this may be a written exam, a lesson plan or a curriculum unit

Examples of professional development services that external partners can provide include:

Statewide Professional Development

* Advise the Department’s content offices on professional development content
* Develop research-informed and standards-based resources to be linked to the state’s curriculum standards including web-based lesson plans, video clips, exemplars of student work, research reports, formative assessments and rubrics, and reviews of core and intervention programs for efficacy
* Develop and present courses for novice, experienced, and mentor educators as part of the Massachusetts Educator Academy including webinars, online courses, content institutes, and conference presentations for leaders and teachers
* Review materials and programs for evidence of effectiveness

Regional Professional Development

* Collaborate with the Department’s professional development providers on regional professional development presentations
* Assist districts with identified professional development needs, especially related to challenges identified through data analysis and to the state’s current strategies to address achievement gaps. This may include, for example, collaborative research of higher education faculty and practitioners that is intended to solve local educational problems and improve student achievement; presentations and workshops; standards-based alignment of curriculum and instruction; development of instructional resources; engaging students as tutors or interventionists; and evaluation of the effectiveness of programs or materials

District-Based Professional Development

* Collaborate with the Department’s professional development providers on district or school-based professional development, especially related to challenges identified through data analysis and the state’s current strategies to address achievement gaps. See Level 2 for examples of appropriate external professional development activities

# Appendix A

|  |
| --- |
| FY2012 Grant Recipient List |

* All **STATE** grants will be **969-Z.**
* For **Federal FY2012** grants, use the appropriate Budget Office required Unit Code to reflect the correct Fiscal Year funds used to pay the grants on this Recipient List.
* If the funds to be used are other than Distribution, use the appropriate alpha code from the Spending Plan Unit Code Chart.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Grant Program:** | K-12 Literacy Professional Development Partnerships |
| **Fund Code: (One Fund Code only.)** | 738 |
| **Unit Code:** | **969-Z** |
| **Name of Program Coordinator:** | Dorothy Earle |
| **Extension:** | 6265 |
| **Program Unit:** | Curriculum and Instruction |
| **Kind of Grant: Please Check.** | Entitlement Allocation X Continuation Other Non-Competitive |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Alphabetical List of Recipients**  **(List only the recipient agency that will receive funds.)** | **Amount Each**  **Recipient Received** |
| Amesbury Academy Charter Public School | $9,000 |
| Amesbury Public Schools | $23,000 |
| Athol-Royalston Regional School District | $13,000 |
| Auburn Public Schools | $23,000 |
| Ayer Shirley Regional School District | $13,000 |
| Bellingham Public Schools | $23,000 |
| Berkshire Arts and Technology Charter School (Adams) | $9,000 |
| Billerica Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Boston Public Schools | 53,500 |
| Boston Renaissance Charter School | 13,000 |
| Brockton Public Schools | 21,500 |
| Cambridge Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Canton Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Cape Cod Collaborative (Barnstable, Barnstable Horace Mann Charter (District), Bourne, Brewster, Dennis-Yarmouth, Falmouth, Nauset) | 111,500 |
| Carver Public Schools | 13,000 |
| Chelmsford Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Chelsea Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Chicopee Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Clinton Public Schools | 13,000 |
| Community Day Charter School (Lawrence) | 9,000 |
| Danvers Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District | 11,500 |
| Dracut Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Everett Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Fall River Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Framingham Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Gardner Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Gill Montague Regional School District | 13,000 |
| Gloucester Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical School | 13,000 |
| Greenfield Public Schools | 13,000 |
| Hampshire Education Collaborative (Agawam, Amherst, Berkshire Hills, Easthampton, Ludlow, New Leadership Charter School (Springfield), South Hadley, Southampton, Ware, Westhampton and West Springfield) |  |
| Hanover Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Harwich Public Schools | 13,000 |
| Haverhill Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Holbrook Public Schools | 13,000 |
| Holyoke Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Lawrence Public Schools | 43,000 |
| Leominster Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Lowell Community Charter School | 9,000 |
| Lowell Public Schools | 43,000 |
| Lynn Public Schools | 43,000 |
| Marlborough Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Martha’s Vineyard | 9,000 |
| Maynard Public Schools | 13,000 |
| Medfield Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Medford Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Middleborough Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Milford Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Nantucket Public Schools | 13,000 |
| Narragansett Public Schools | 13,000 |
| Neighborhood House Charter School (Dorchester) | 9,000 |
| New Bedford Public Schools | 43,000 |
| Newburyport Public Schools | 23,000 |
| North Adams Public Schools | 13,000 |
| North Central Charter Essential School (Fitchburg) | 9,000 |
| Northampton Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Northbridge Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Orange Public Schools | 9,000 |
| Peabody Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Pioneer Valley Regional School District | 13,000 |
| Pittsfield Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Prospect Hill Academy Charter (Somerville) | 9,000 |
| Quincy Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Randolph Public Schools | 23,000 |
| READS Collaborative (Bridgewater-Raynham, Dighton-Rehoboth, Freetown-Lakeville, Lakeville and Taunton) | 111,000 |
| Revere Public Schools (Attleboro, Beverly, Brockton, Fitchburg, Malden, Quaboag Regional, Revere, Westfield) | 222,500 |
| Rochester Public Schools | 9,000 |
| Rockland Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Salem Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Sandwich Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Saugus Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Seven Hills Charter School (Worcester) | 9,000 |
| Smith Leadership Academy (Dorchester) | 9,000 |
| Somerville Public Schools | 33,000 |
| South Shore Charter School (Norwell) | 9,000 |
| Southbridge Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Springfield Public Schools | 53,500 |
| Stoneham Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Tewksbury Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Tyngsboro Public Schools | 23,000 |
| Wachusett Regional School District | 33,000 |
| Wareham Public Schools |  |
| Winchendon Public Schools | 13,000 |
| Woburn Public Schools | 33,000 |
| Worcester Public Schools | 53,500 |
| **TOTAL AMOUNT AWARDED TO RECIPIENTS:** |  |

1. Cape Cod Collaborative, Hampshire Education Collaborative – now called Collaborative for Educational Services and READS Collaborative [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The US Department of Education currently defines adolescent literacy as grades 4-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/institutes/12/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. A vertical team is a team comprised of educators across grade levels, e.g., grades 6, 7, and 8 or by content area, e.g., mathematics, ELA, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Please visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/dsac/teams/default.html> for a list of DSAC districts. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/general/> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Please visit [www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model](http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model) for more information regarding this project. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Please visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/> for information regarding the draft standards, related tools, and indicators. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. These districts are Commissioner’s Districts. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)