

Teacher Development Grant Program Synthesis of Cohort I First Year Reports

January, 2002

~~~~~

Submitted to:

The Colorado Department of Education  
The Teacher Development Advisory Council  
The Colorado State Board of Education  
The Senate and House Education Committees

~~~~~

Prepared by Mary Jean Taylor, Ph.D.

- 4931 West Rowland Avenue • Littleton, CO 80128-6419 •
- Phone/FAX: 303-972-8955 • E-mail: MJSTaylor@aol.com •

TDG State Evaluation Report – Cohort I (2001 Grantees)

Executive Summary

The Teacher Development Grant Program (HB00-1173) awarded 106 grants in 2001, providing Grantees with up to \$20,000 of funding for two years. This report is a synthesis of the information provided by Grantees at the end of the first year (81% response rate). This State level analysis was designed to answer several key questions:

Who received the Colorado Teacher Development Grants? Two thirds of the grants (65%) were awarded to individual schools; the remainder went to consortia. Grantees included elementary (60%) and secondary (40%) schools, three primary schools and six charter schools.

Did Grantees focus on reading, writing, math and science? Yes. The majority focused on reading (78%) and/or writing (72%). A much smaller number of schools focused on math (38%) or science (14%).

Where are grant recipients located? Grants were well distributed geographically with 29% awarded to metropolitan schools and 71% to non-metropolitan schools. A complete list of the participating schools is provided in the body of this report.

What are Grantees doing with the money? The most commonly reported activities were workshops (70%) and study teams/discussion groups (43%). A number of schools were implementing *higher impact* professional development activities such as coaching (22%), demonstration teaching and/or observation of other schools/classrooms (19%), and/or analysis of student work/student data (16%).

Are Grantees reporting progress? Half of the schools reported progress on their first goal. A smaller number reported progress on other goals. Progress reports included comments about delivery of professional development activities, implementation in classrooms, and student gains.

Is the TDG Program having an impact? Yes. Grantees reported various kinds and degrees of teacher impact (84%), school impact (34%), and student impact (29%).

What role does TDG play in Grantees' access to professional development? TDG grants were the sole source of professional development funding for 32% of the grantees. The rest of the schools had additional resources for professional development from Foundations (5%), Local (41%), State (39%), and/or Federal (20%) sources.

How can the administration of the grants be improved? Overall, Grantees were very pleased with the availability and administration of the grants. Suggestions for improvements focused on the process of notification about reporting requirements and the process for submitting evaluation reports electronically.

How might CDE and the TDAC enhance benefits for students? Modifications in the proposal writing and project evaluation processes can encourage better alignment between student needs, professional development, implementation of more effective classroom practices, and student achievement. Providing for training in planning, implementing and evaluating effectiveness of professional development programs is another way in which student impact might be enhanced.

Colorado Teacher Development Grant Program State Evaluation – Cohort I (2001 Grantees)

Mary Jean Taylor, Ph.D.

Context: In 2001, Colorado Legislature created the Teacher Development Grant (TDG) Program and 106 two-year grants were awarded, providing up to \$20,000 of funding to 116 schools from 44 districts across the State. Two-thirds of the grants (65%) were awarded to individual schools, the remainder went to consortia (generally groups of relatively rural schools within a single district). Whether they used their funds as a single district or as part of a consortium, each participating school was treated as a separate entity for analysis. All data have been aggregated for this report. The purpose of the TDG program is *“to assist schools in providing opportunities for teachers to participate in school-based skills-development activities that are focused on mastering skills in instructing students in reading, writing, math and science”* (HB00-1173). This State level evaluation is a synthesis of the grantee electronic reports, assessing the impact and effectiveness of the TDG Program and identifying opportunities for improving grant administration and effectiveness.

Schedule and Response Rate: This report summarizes data from the first year of the two-year funding cycle for Teacher Development Grant Cohort I. The legislation prescribes a funding cycle that runs from October 1 through September 30: Initial funds for this cohort were awarded in February of 2001. Grantees submitted their evaluation reports online using a form that was developed by the External Evaluator and posted on the CDE web-site (The form and instructions can be viewed at http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdecomp/tdg_progressreport.asp). CDE staff sent notice of the reporting requirements, a sample form, and the instructions by regular mail in late August, but encountered a number of problems in getting the information to the appropriate individuals (due to school staff turnover, assignment changes, lost mail, *etc.*). As a result, the reporting deadline was extended and this report is about Grantees who responded by December 17, 2001. The final response rate of 81% represents 93 of the original 116 schools as follows:

<i>Level</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Reporting</i>	<i>Response Rate (%)</i>
Primary	3	2	--*
Elementary (with ES/MS)	62	52	84%
Middle (with MS/SH)	29	23	79%
Senior High	23	16	70%

* Small sample size

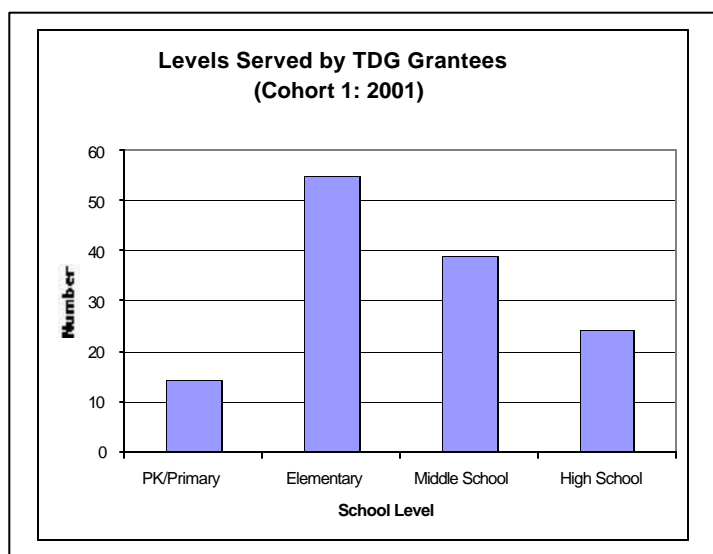
Evaluation Approach: The data used for this analysis came from two sources: 1) the reports filed by Grantees, and 2) State CSAP data. Participating Schools were treated as individual entities and data were analyzed using simple counts, percentages and averages. When a generic report was submitted on behalf of all members of a consortium it was entered for each school and treated as an individual entry. As a result, some results are skewed either in favor of or against the schools in the large consortia (e.g., if the consortium did not report classroom implementation none of the schools were counted as having provided implementation data).

Student data for the TDG schools and State averages were provided by the CDE Student Assessment Unit and/or obtained from the CDE web-site. Student performance data was summarized and averaged for all TDG schools (by content and grade level) regardless of the focus of their TDG activities, then compared to State averages. All student data in this report should be viewed as baseline since the instruction that resulted in the 2001 CSAP scores took place prior to the delivery or implementation of TDG activities.

State Report Requirements: The enabling statute requires a State report to the Governor, the Senate and House Education Committees, the Teacher Development Advisory Council, and the State Board of Education. Reporting requirements include: 1) a list of grant recipients and the year in which each grant was awarded; 2) a compilation and summary of grantees' annual reports; and 3) additional information that can be used to improve the implementation and effectiveness of the grant program. Accordingly, this report has been organized to provide answers to the following:

<i>Page</i>	
3	<i>Context, Schedule and Response Rate</i>
4	<i>Evaluation approach and State Report Requirements</i>
5 – 8	<i>Who received the Colorado Teacher Development Grants?</i>
5	<i>Did Grantees focus on reading, writing, math and science?</i>
9	<i>Where are grant recipients located?</i>
10	<i>What are Grantees doing with the money?</i>
12	<i>Are Grantees reporting progress on their goals?</i>
12	<i>Is the TDG Program having an impact?</i>
15	<i>What role does TDG play in Grantees' access to professional development?</i>
18	<i>How can the administration of the grants be improved?</i>
21	<i>How might CDE and the TDAC enhance benefits for students?</i>

Who Received the Colorado Teacher Development Grants?



Grants were awarded to elementary (60%) and secondary schools (40%) throughout Colorado. The chart to the left summarizes the number of schools at each level. Due to the variation in grades served by individual schools, the chart is based on averaged counts at each level. Among the schools awarded grants were three primary schools, one alternative school, and six charter schools. The

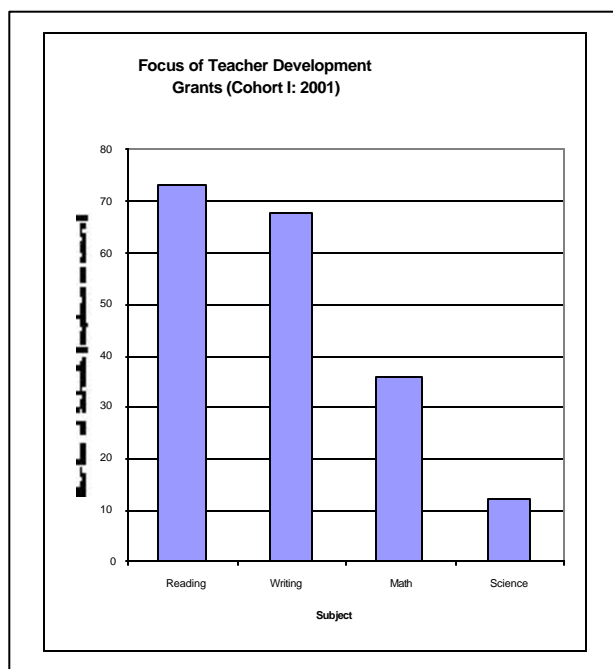
complete list of TDG grantees for Cohort I (2001) can be found on the following pages, organized by school district. The schools that were included in this analysis are identified by check mark in the left-hand column. Schools participating in consortia are indicated by shading in the “level” column; members of the NE Colorado BOCES Consortium have an asterisk following the location identifier (*i.e.*, NE*).

Did Grantees focus on Reading, Writing, Math and Science?

Yes. The majority of schools focused on Reading and Writing, reflecting the emphasis at the State level. The numbers presented in the chart to the right summarize the content focus across all schools and grade levels and are based on duplicated counts (*i.e.* if a grantee identified both reading and writing as their focus they were counted in both categories):

The same data as percentages:

- Reading 78%
- Writing 72%
- Mathematics 38%
- Science 14%



The chart on page 19 displays grant focus data organized by school level.

Cohort I: 2001 Grantees (alphabetically by district)

*	<i>district</i>	<i>school</i>	<i>level</i>	<i>location</i>
*	Adams 12 Five-Star (Northglenn-Thornton)	Horizon	HS	NE
*	Adams 14	Alsup Elementary	ES	Metro
*	Akron R-1	Akron	ES	NE
	Akron R-1	Akron	HS	NE
*	Alamosa RE-11J	Boyd	ES	SW
*	Boulder Valley RE-2	Peak to Peak Charter School	K-5	METRO
*	Brighton 27J	South	ES	METRO
*	Brighton 27J	Brighton	HS	Metro
*	Brush RE-2(J)	Beaver Valley ES	ES	NC
*	Brush RE-2(J)	Thomson	ES	NC
*	Brush RE-2(J)	Brush	HS	NC
*	Brush RE-2(J)	Brush	MS	NC
*	Centennial R-1	Centennial Schools (K-12)	ES	SW
*	Centennial R-1	Centennial Schools (K-12)	MS	SW
	Centennial R-1	Centennial Schools (K-12)	HS	SW
*	Colorado Springs 11	Trailblazer	ES	PPEAK
*	Del Norte C-7	Del Norte	MS	SW
*	Denver R-1	Barrett ES	ES	Metro
*	Denver R-1	Centennial	ES	Metro
*	Denver R-1	Columbian	ES	Metro
*	Denver R-1	Crofton	ES	METRO
	Denver R-1	Emily Griffith Opportunity School	HS	METRO
*	Denver R-1	Garden Place	ES	METRO
	Denver R-1	Hallet	ES	METRO
*	Denver R-1	Harrington	ES	METRO
*	Denver R-1	McGlone	ES	METRO
*	Denver R-1	Montclair	ES	METRO
	Denver R-1	Pioneer Charter School	ES	METRO
*	Denver R-1	Smith	ES	METRO
	Denver R-1	Stedman	ES	METRO
*	Denver R-1	Whittier	ES	METRO
*	Denver R-1	Wyman	ES	METRO
*	Douglas County RE-1	Renaissance Charter	PK-8	METRO
	Durango 9-R	Community of Learners Charter	K-12	SW
*	Durango 9-R	Durango	HS	SW
*	Durango 9-R	Escalante	MS	SW

*	<i>district</i>	<i>school</i>	<i>level</i>	<i>location</i>
*	Durango 9-R	EXCEL Charter School	K-8	SW
*	Durango 9-R	Miller	MS	SW
	Eagle County RE-50	Battle Mountain High School	HS	NW
	Eagle County RE-50	Berry Creek MS	MS	NW
*	Eagle County RE-50	Eagle Valley	HS	NW
	Eagle County RE-50	Eagle County Alternative	HS	NW
	Eagle County RE-50	Eagle County Charter Academy	3-10	NW
	Eagle County RE-50	Eagle Valley	MS	NW
	Eagle County RE-50	Gypsum Creek	MS	NW
	Eagle County RE-50	Minturn	MS	NW
*	East Otero R-1	West	ES	SE
	East Yuma RJ-2	Idalia School	ES	NE
	East Yuma RJ-2	Idalia School	JH/SH	NE
*	East Yuma RJ-2	Wray	ES	NE
*	East Yuma RJ-2	Buchanan	MS	NE
*	East Yuma RJ-2	Wray	HS	NE
*	Eaton RE-2	Eaton	HS	NC
*	Eaton RE-2	Eaton	MS	NC
*	Falcon 49	Evans	ES	PPEAK
*	Falcon 49	Falcon	ES	PPEAK
*	Falcon 49	Woodmen Hills	ES	PPEAK
*	Fort Morgan RE-3	Columbine	ES	NC
*	Fountain 8	Mountainside	ES	PPEAK
*	Florence RE-2	Fremont	ES	SE
*	Florence RE-2	Fremont	MS	SE
*	Frenchman RE-3	Fleming	ES	NE
*	Frenchman RE-3	Fleming	HS	NE
*	Gilcrest RE-1	North Valley	MS	NC
*	Gilcrest RE-1	South Valley	MS	NC
	Gilcrest RE-1	Valley	HS	NC
*	Haxtun RE-2J	Haxtun	ES/JH	NE
*	Haxtun RE-2J	Haxtun	HS	NE
*	Holyoke RE-1J	Holyoke	ES	NE
	Holyoke RE-1J	Holyoke	JH/HS	NE
*	Jefferson R-1	Jefferson	HS	METRO
*	Julesburg RE-1	Julesburg	ES	NE
*	Julesburg RE-1	Julesburg	JH/HS	NE
*	Littleton 6	Eugene Field	ES	METRO
*	Littleton 6	Powell	MS	METRO

*	<i>district</i>	<i>school</i>	<i>level</i>	<i>location</i>
*	Manzanola 3J	Manzanola	ES	SE
*	Mapleton 1	Meadow	ES	METRO
	Mesa County 51	Valley School	HS	WC
*	Mesa County 51	Columbine	ES	WC
*	Montezuma Cortez RE-1	Mesa	ES	WC
*	Otis R-3	Otis	ES	NE
*	Otis R-3	Otis	HS	NE
*	Ridgway R-2	Ridgway Elementary School	ES	WC
*	Ridgway R-2	Ridgway Middle School	MS	WC
*	Ridgway R-2	Ridgway High School	HS	WC
	Platte Valley RE-3	Platte Valley	ES	NE
*	Platte Valley RE-3	Revere	HS	NE
*	Poudre R-1	Dunn	ES	NC
*	Poudre R-1	McGraw	ES	NC
*	Pueblo 60	Beulah Heights ES	ES	SE
*	Pueblo 60	Carlile	ES	SE
*	Pueblo 60	Park View	ES	SE
*	Pueblo 60	South Park	ES	SE
*	Pueblo 60	Freed	MS	SE
*	Pueblo 60	Pitts	MS	SE
*	Pueblo 60	Roncalli	MS	SE
*	Pueblo 60	Risley	MS	SE
*	Pueblo 60	W.H. Heaton	MS	SE
*	Pueblo 70	Vineland	ES	PPEAK
*	Pueblo 70	Sierra Vista Primary	B	PPEAK
*	Sierra Grande R-30	Sierra Grande Schools	ES	SW
*	Sierra Grande R-30	Sierra Grande Schools	JH/HS	SW
*	South Routt RE-3	Liberty School	ES	NE
*	West Yuma County RJ-1	Liberty School	JH/SH	NE
*	West Yuma County RJ-1	Yuma	HS	NE
*	West Yuma County RJ-1	Yuma	MS	NE
	West Yuma County RJ-1	Morris Primary	B	NE
*	Westminster 50	Skyline Vista	ES	METRO
*	Woodland Park RE-2	Columbine	ES	PPEAK
*	Woodland Park RE-2	Woodland Park	HS	PPEAK

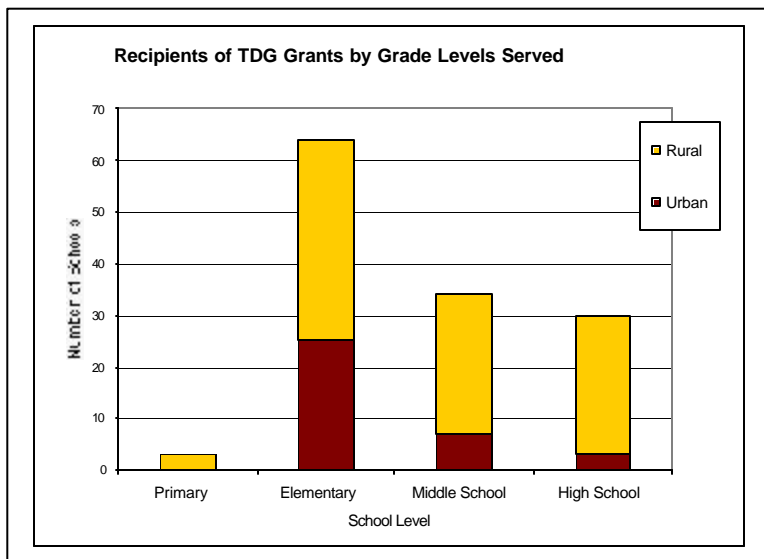
* indicates schools included in this analysis/report B=Primary Schools (*i.e.* the “babies”)
 * not included because reports arrived late Shaded schools = participating in a consortium

Where are Grant Recipients Located?

Schools across Colorado received professional development funds through the TDG Program. The majority of funds went to individual schools, but 47 schools (41%) pooled resources in various configurations forming nine consortia that ranged in size from two to eighteen schools. The majority of consortia consisted of multiple schools within a single district, generally in a rural area. The NE Colorado BOCES served the largest consortium with 18 schools from eight districts.

Table XX: Distribution of Cohort I Grantees

<i>Location</i>	<i>Total Number of Schools</i>	<i>Number of Consortia (and Number in Each)</i>
Metropolitan	25	0
Pikes Peak	9	0
North West	9	1 (8)
North Central	17	2 (4; 2)
North East	25	2 (5; 18)
South East	13	1 (2)
South Central	0	0
South West	12	2 (3; 2)
West Central	6	1 (3)



TDG grants were distributed to elementary (60%) and secondary (40%) schools in metropolitan (29%) and non-metropolitan (71%) locations. As can be seen in the chart to the left, the proportion of grants to urban vs. elementary schools varied by location. Grants to secondary schools were more likely to go to rural schools, possibly because of timing, the demands of the application process and/or the amount

of money involved (up to \$20,000 for two years) was less likely to attract a proposal from larger urban schools.

[Note: For the purposes of the above analysis, urban schools included all schools from the metropolitan area (Denver and suburbs), Colorado Springs and Pueblo 60.]

What are Grantees doing with the money?

The professional development community has been working very hard over the past decade to expand beyond the notion of *professional development as workshop* toward multiple strategies that have demonstrated greater potential for impact on classroom practice and student achievement. New, more powerful forms of professional development are emerging, as are new criteria for evaluating professional development programs. A workshop and an evaluation that asks teachers to indicate their satisfaction may still be useful, but it is no longer sufficient. The National Staff Development Council (NSDC) is encouraging schools and districts to pay more attention to classroom level implementation and student impact indicators: to evaluate professional development programs based on results.

In that light, Grantees' were asked the following questions (*language used on the report form is in italics*):

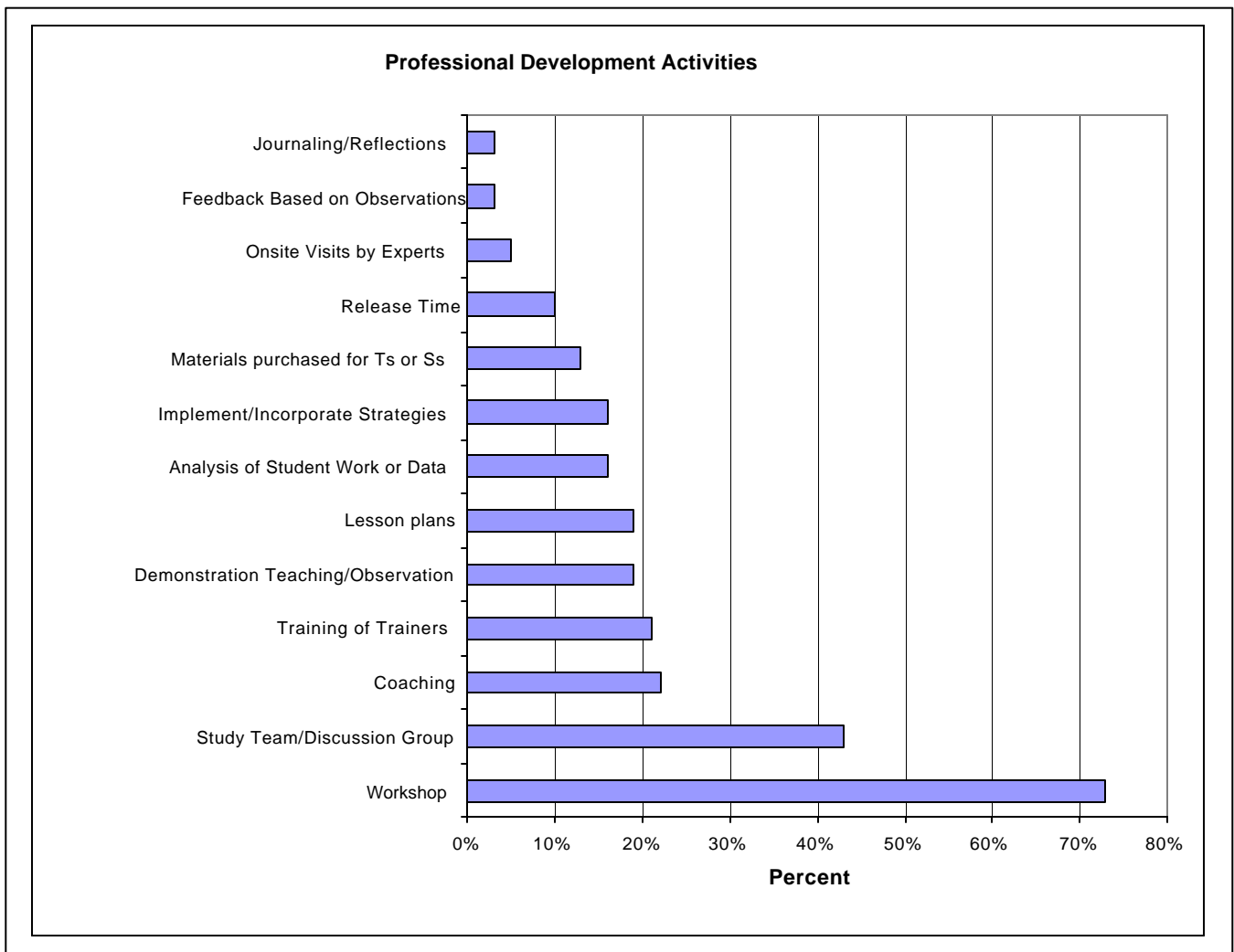
- What are you trying to do? (*proposal goal*)
- Why are you doing that? (*baseline data on student, teacher or school need*)
- What have you actually done? (*brief description of professional development activities*)
- When did you do it? (*dates*)
- How many people participated? (*number of teachers who participated/number eligible*)
- Where are you in the process? (*status report, including teacher or student measures and performance data*)

The chart on the following page summarizes the categories that emerged from analysis of Grantees' descriptions of their professional development activities. The counts are duplicated, and many schools reported a combination of activities. The most commonly reported practices, however, workshops (70%) and study teams or discussion groups (43%), are generally recognized by the professional development community as *low impact* activities. While workshops were the most common format reported, many schools reported activities that were used in conjunction with workshops. Study teams and discussion groups were generally grade level or subject specific. A number of schools reported higher impact activities such as coaching (22%), demonstration teaching or observation of other schools/classrooms (19%), and/or analysis of student work or student data (16%).

Training of trainers (generally administrators, team leaders, or coaches), a model that has had mixed results over the years, was reported by 21% of the schools. The problem with this model

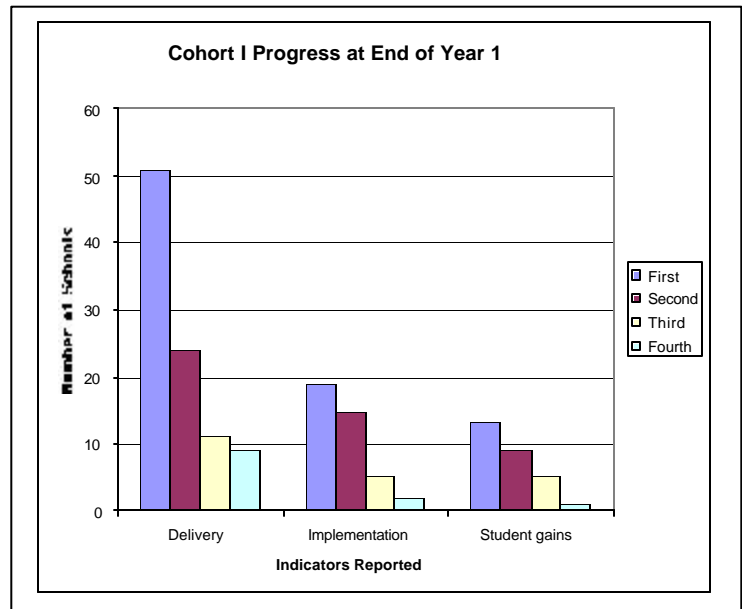
has been that training tends to lose impact as it goes from trainer to trainees to practitioners. However, with careful attention to classroom and student indicators of implementation, this can be a very effective strategy for capacity building. Sixteen percent (16%) mentioned the development of lesson plans. The data on this activity is inflated by the fact that workshops provided by the NE Colorado BOCES included time for teachers to develop lesson plans (they were to incorporate the strategies they were learning, but there was no indication of anyone observing actual use of the lesson plans).

Ten percent (10%) of the schools reported using TDG funds for release time for teachers to observe other classrooms, or participate in study groups or workshops, and 13% reported using grant funds to purchase materials for teachers or students, generally reading materials.



Are Grantees reporting progress?

Grantees varied in the number of goals they set for themselves. This data was analyzed for possible relationship between progress and the number of goals (as a possible indicator of focus). A third of the Grantees (32%) identified one goal, 24% had two goals, and the remainder had three or more. Half (50%) reported progress on their first goal, while only 19% reported progress on their second goal. Each goal statement and status



report were analyzed for three factors: 1) statements that indicated *delivery of professional development activities*, 2) statements that indicated *classroom implementation* of new instructional strategies, and, 3) statements that indicated *student gains* using academic measures. The results are summarized in the chart above.

Half of the grantees reported delivery (i.e., implementation of the professional development activities as opposed to implementation of new instructional methods in the classroom); approximately 20% reported implementation and fewer than 10% reported student gains. [Note: Grantees received funds in February and did not have a full academic year in which to implement their proposed plans. It is early in the grant cycle to expect gains in CSAP, but a few schools reported other measures that were being used to assess student progress. Several schools noted that they did not have data that would allow them to report progress at this time.]

Is the TDG program having an impact?

Evidence of Impact of TDG Activities: In addition to reporting on the status of the goals and activities described in their proposals, Grantees were asked to comment on impact: “Provide a brief narrative description of changes in teachers’ classroom practice and/or student achievement.” Mentioning something (or failing to mention it) does not verify or preclude the presence of a specific behavior, but analysis of responses to such an open-ended question can

provide insight into how respondents' are thinking about results. The analysis of their responses is summarized in the table on the following page. Comments tended to fall into one of three categories: 1) indicators of change in school level practices and procedures; 2) indicators of change in teachers' knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors; and, 3) indicators of change in students' attitudes, behaviors or academic performance. The impact question will be separated and clarified in the report form for a deeper analysis of Grantees' final reports.

School Impact: Approximately a third of the responding schools (34%) identified an impact related to changes in the operations or procedures in their school (*e.g.*, increased alignment with standards, principals monitoring implementation, use of tutors or coaches, or enhancing the use of the library for literacy instruction). Most (90%) schools that reported such organizational or procedural impacts also mentioned evidence of changes in teachers' attitudes or behaviors.

Teacher Impact: As might be expected, 84% of the respondents made statements that suggested changes in teachers' practices, attitudes or behaviors. The most commonly reported behavior in this category was implementation of new strategies, followed by increased use of assessment as an instructional tool and changes in attitude or attendance at the professional development activities.

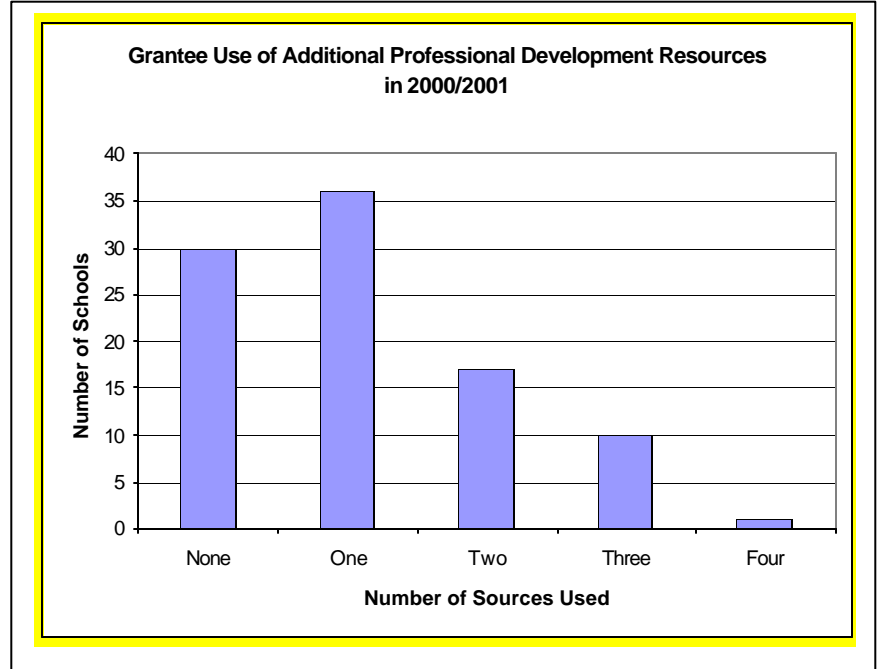
Student Impact: Fewer than a third (29%) of the responding schools reported any observable or measurable impact on students. About a third of those who did report on student measures used indicators related to academic measures (*e.g.*, *CSAP*, *other tests*, *number of students on ILPs*), the rest commented on behavior or attitude changes (*e.g.*, *teacher reports of behavior changes*, *discipline referrals*, *etc.*). Curiously, most of the schools that mentioned an increased "*focus on student achievement*" as a school level impact were not in the group that reported on student indicators. It may be an evolutionary process, with *increased focus* preceding the actual use of student indicators to assess change. In other words, schools that have accepted the centrality of student measures are not *increasing* a focus on student measures because that focus is already standard operating procedure, whereas schools reporting increased focus recognize this as new behavior on their part. Schools that reported on student measures tended to report teacher and school level changes, suggesting a more systemic approach to school change.

Table XX: Indicators of Impact

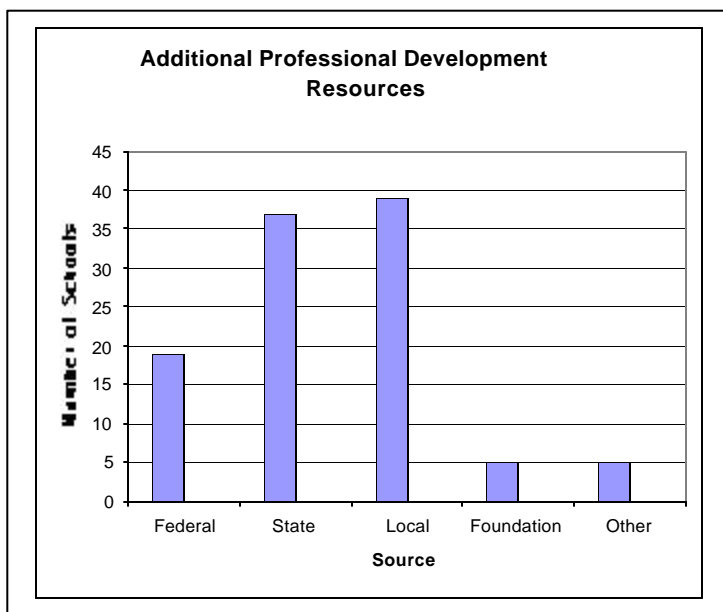
Teacher Impact	
i = implementation of new strategies	//// // // // // // // // // //
t= Ts use of testing/assessment data to make decisions	//// // // // // //
a= attitude/attention to pedagogy	//// // // // // //
d= discussions among or with teachers	//// // // // //
e= written evaluations of p.d. activities (NE Consortium)	//// // // // /
o= observation of changes in practice	//// // // //
c= comments from teachers	//// //
f= increased focus on student achievement	//// //
g= changes in grouping of Ss	//// /
x= expectations for Ss have changed (e.g., higher)	//// /
v= vocabulary changes/shared	////
r= requests to participate in p.d. activities	///
Student Impact	
b= changes in Ss behavior/attitude	//// //
a= assessment results (LMB, Terra Nova, classroom)	//// //
c= CSAP scores improved	//// /
w= Ss work higher quality, more rigor	///
d= discipline referrals reduced (suspensions, detentions, etc.)	//
o= differences mentioned by teachers	//
p= fewer Ss on ILPs	/
School impact	
a= alignment across grade levels or disciplines or with standards	//// // // // // //
c= coaching/literacy coaches	//// //
e= use of external expert or consultant	//// //
s= stuff added (such as library materials or leveled book room)	//// //
o= operations/time allocation/schedule changes	//// //
p= principal monitoring/evaluating Ts implementation/performance	////
d= demonstration teaching/observing other classrooms	////
f= feedback provided to teachers	///
m= mentoring/teacher leaders/implementation facilitators	///
t= tutoring	///
v= vision clarified/common vision	//

What Role does TDG Play in Grantees' access to professional development?

TDG funds were the sole source of professional development resources for 32% of Grantees. Schools that used no other professional development resources during the previous year were elementary, middle and high schools, large and small schools, urban and rural schools, schools that were in consortia as well as those that were not. Two thirds (68%) of Grantees indicated they had used one or more *additional* professional development



resources the previous school year. One fourth of them (25%) had two to four additional resources dedicated to professional development. It will be interesting to see if the percentage of schools relying on TDG as their sole source of professional development funds changes over time.



Local resources were cited most frequently (41%), but 39% indicated they used other State resources, 20% used Federal resources, and 5% reported Foundation or Other sources. Schools accessing multiple professional development resources are clearly using professional development as a key strategy for school improvement. Even so, at least one group of rural schools noted that *“Finding the time for teachers to be involved beyond contract time is very, very difficult.”*

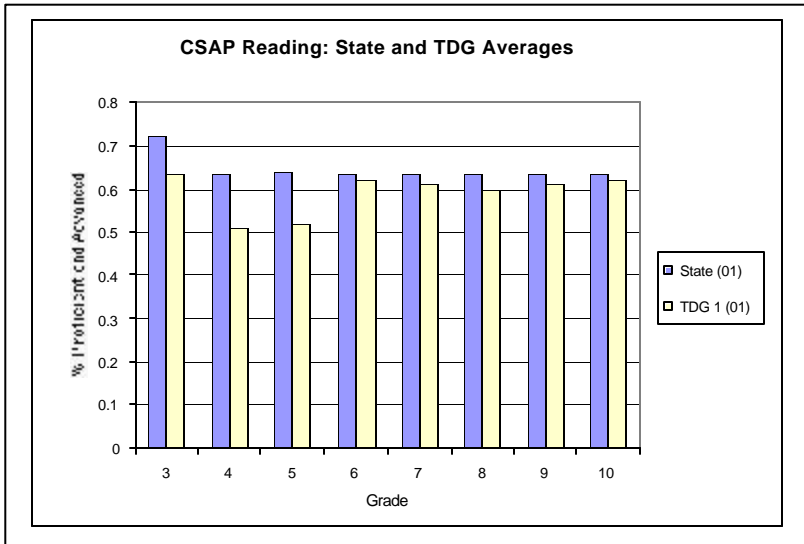
Does Professional Development Benefit Students?

Another way to look for school, teacher and student impact is to examine CSAP data - comparing the average percent of students who were identified as proficient and advanced in the TDG Schools with State averages, by content area at the different grade levels. There is some logic in doing such a comparison. If we assume that TDG schools are paying particular attention to improving the quality of teaching (as evidenced by the number of schools that reported additional professional development resources), and that they are focusing their efforts in specific content areas (e.g., reading and writing), then a comparison of their results with the results of all Colorado schools might provide some insight into the impact of such a strategy. Even if the percentage of advanced and proficient students in the TDG schools is lower than the State average the general trends over time offer an opportunity to look for a “professional development effect” in schools that are systematically using professional development to improve practice (or at least consistency of practice). Given the fact that a larger percentage of TDG Grantees are focused on reading and writing, one might expect the data to reveal some difference between reading/writing vs. math and/or science performance in TDG schools.

The following discussion is based on analysis of 2001 CSAP data, comparing the data for TDG schools with State averages. These are viewed as baseline data since most TDG Grantees began their professional development efforts during the summer or fall of 2001. The data are the average percentages of students scoring proficient or advanced in Reading, Writing and Math at three school levels. While it is too early to expect a relationship between TDG professional development activities and student performance, the fact that almost 70% of these schools indicated they were using other professional development resources during the 2000/2001 school year supports the validity of looking for a “professional development effect.” The analyses on the following page, designed to look for a possible correlation between teacher learning and student learning, can not prove a cause and effect relationship between TDG and CSAP scores. It is intended to begin the process of looking for a relationship.

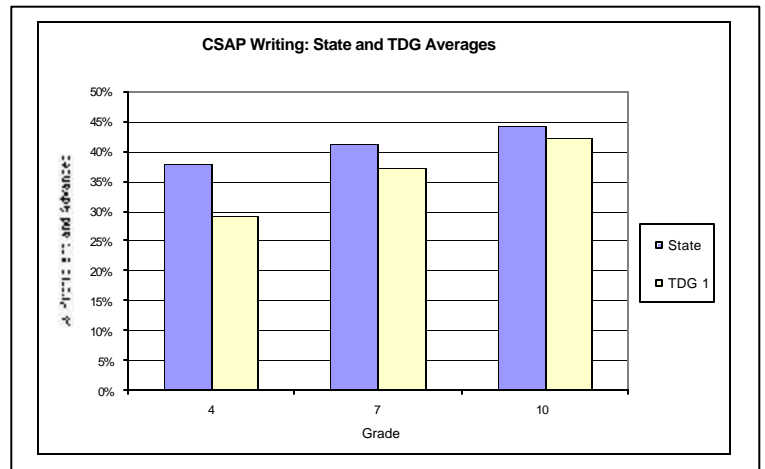
[Note: TDG elementary, middle and senior high schools are not necessarily in the same district, so any indication of trends should be interpreted with caution.]

Teacher Development Grants were to focus on reading, writing, math or science. These charts compare TDG schools with State averages for percent of students scoring proficient or advanced.

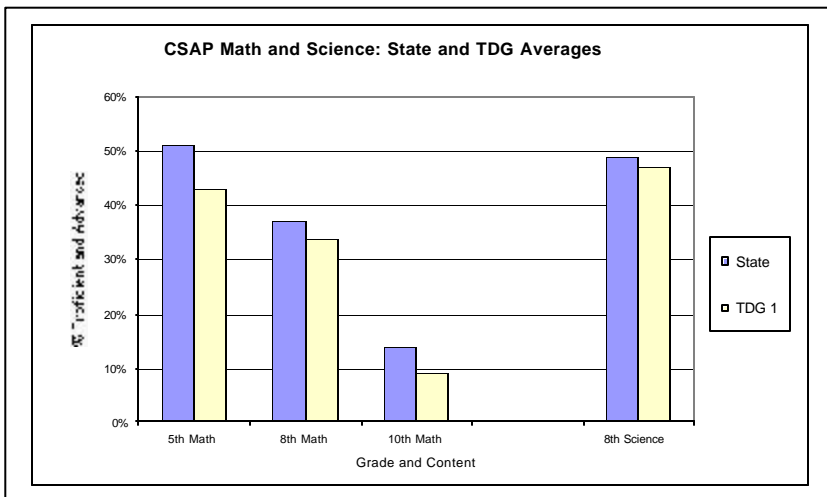


Reading: Student performance was comparable to State averages at the middle and high school levels. The data suggest 63% of the population, on average, read at proficient or advanced levels by the time they reach sixth grade, but that apparent stability may be an artifact of the cutoff scores. A gap between TDG schools and State averages is apparent at the elementary level.

Writing: TDG schools had fewer students at the State average in writing at all levels, but the difference was smaller at higher grades..



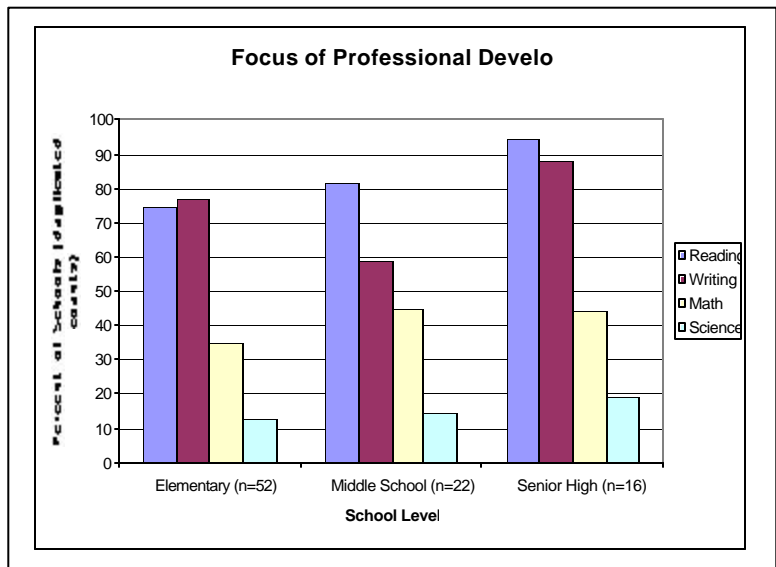
[Note: While many of the TDG elementary, middle and senior high schools are in the same district, many are not. Therefore, any "trend" from one level to the next should be interpreted with caution.]



Math and Science: There were fewer students identified as proficient or advanced in math at all levels in TDG schools, with somewhat larger disparities at the elementary and high school levels. Eighth grade Science performance was comparable.

Alignment with student, teacher, and/or school needs:

The focus of TDG professional development, by school level,* does not appear to be particularly well aligned with the needs of this group of schools, as suggested by the group CSAP data - but 2001 data was not available when Cohort I Grantees were developing their proposals. The 2001 baseline CSAP data does verify a need for



instructional changes at some levels and some content areas in TDG schools; although the specific areas of need at an individual school do not show up in such aggregated data.. The strong State emphasis on literacy (especially reading) appears to be reflected in the consistently high percentage of students reading at high levels. There is some evidence here that many of these schools might benefit from greater attention to math instruction (and registration).

[*Schools that serve both elementary and middle school students were counted in the elementary category, schools serving middle and high school students were counted in the middle school category.]

How can the administration of the grants be improved?

The following recommendations are based on my observations and analyses of grant results and the comments provided by Grantees. Feedback about the administration of the grant was overwhelmingly positive. Comments ranged from *‘the people at the State Department have been fabulous’* to *‘the entire grant writing process is time consuming and difficult.’*

Administration: *Continue efforts to improve the timing of the funding cycle:* There were problems in the timing of the RFP and funding process, resulting in spring awards. Grantees were very positive about the administration of the grant. Some used the feedback section of the report to express appreciation for CDE support and the availability of these professional development funds. Comments included: *“fantastic opportunity for us,”* *“Administration is*

smooth, it is easy to access funds,” “CDE administration of the grant is great,” and “so grateful to have received your assistance through this grant.”

Provide Early Notice of Evaluation Requirements: Grantees received late notice of reporting requirements. They want earlier notice of the kind of evaluation data they need to collect and the information they will be expected to report (“*Communication must improve,*” and “*It would have been helpful to know earlier what specific information was to be required for this report*”). It is extremely difficult or impossible to gather data after the fact. This issue is expected to be resolved quickly as the format for the report will be revised and both new and current grantees will know well in advance what will be required and when evaluation reports will be due. Much of the frustration with this first cycle was due to unanticipated “glitches” in the notification process and Grantees’ lack of experience with the electronic submission process.

Provide Written Notification: Grantees want written notification of the report format and instructions, including reporting timelines and requirements. Also, central office should not be left “out of the loop,” they should be notified of timelines and reporting requirements at the same time as applicants are notified. It means more paperwork but may increase response rate, avoid problems tracking changes in the administration of the grants, and contribute to more positive relationships with district personnel.

Streamline the evaluation form: Several questions proved to be too complex or confusing to people (e.g., number of teachers who participated and the number eligible by grade level). Asking for information about the subject focus for each goal was redundant (most did not align goals with subject matter). The question about impact needs to be subdivided into two or three questions – perhaps one question about changes in teachers’ classroom practice, another about measurable changes in student academic achievement, and a third about school level changes. The meaning of “other professional development resources” needs to be clarified right on the form (for those who don’t read instructions).

Electronic Submission: Continue to use the electronic submission process. The use of electronic reporting was convenient for most Grantees, eliminated data entry costs and time delays, and facilitated analysis. Many respondents indicated they appreciated the ease of the electronic reporting process (e.g., “*Being able to provide reports electronically is extremely*

helpful!” and “*I really like the use of this form for the reporting mechanism.*”). Some experienced problems with the *process* (e.g. “*I had trouble with the network connection the first time I tried to submit the report*” and “*I have submitted my report twice and lost it both times. This is very frustrating!*”). Revision of the report format and design is expected to resolve these problems before the next reporting cycle.

Specific recommendations for improving the electronic submission process include:

- ***Facilitate access to the report form.*** In addition to notification of the URL through written communication, the pathway to the report form should be transparent for grantees who log on to the CDE web-site and the TDG page. Obviously unauthorized or duplicate submissions can easily be deleted, but grantees would like to be able to review their submissions and make changes even after they hit the “Submit” button.
- ***Use a unique school identifier as the password.*** One possibility would be to create a pull down menu that lists all grantees in each cohort as the entry into the report form. Or schools could log-in using their unique school and district identification numbers (they can find them easily if they are provided with a hot link or directed to the appropriate URL for the list, which is available on the web). This will avoid confusion related to multiple schools with the same name and facilitate the process of reviewing student data for participating schools.
- ***Provide an opportunity to “Save” and “Edit” prior to and after completion of the report.*** Some completed the report and lost it prior to or during submission, resulting in frustration and wasted effort. Grantees would probably feel much better about electronic submission if they could print out their responses after they have completed the form, then get back into their own report (and their own report only) to make changes at a later date if needed. The files could be locked once the final deadline arrives.
- ***Provide space for additional comments.*** The form only provided space for five goals (one school had more than five goals and they entered the information in the recommendations section). Alternatively, it may be better to recommend grantees limit their goals and provide information or training related to writing more useful goal statements.
- ***Continue to offer a hard copy alternative.*** Some schools do not have the computer facilities or the expertise/comfort level needed to comply with a request for electronic submission. One contact commented “*Submitting the report card on e-mail is laborious. First, a hard [copy] must be created and then retyped for the e-mail report card. I fully realize that electronic transfer provides the grantee more time to meet deadline, but I would rather send the report through the mail .*” Although Grantees were given that option this cycle, the information apparently got lost in the notification process. While it is time consuming to hand enter paper submissions, it is far less time consuming than data entry if all reports were submitted in hard copy.

How might CDE and the TDAC enhance benefits for students?

Although it is virtually impossible to separate the impact of grant activities from all of the other things that go on in schools, and the many other factors that influence student performance, it is important to provide clear direction about the purpose of the grant and clear expectations that it will benefit students academically. It is also important to let grantees know that CDE is looking for measurable student results, including but not limited to CSAP data. This analysis provided insight into several issues that might enhance the impact of the grant.

Help applicants write clear goals. Many of these initial Grantees seemed to find it difficult to provide a status report because they weren't clear about what they were trying to accomplish as a result of their professional development activities. Their goal statements were often statements of what they planned to do rather than what they planned to accomplish by doing it. Many "goal" statements did not go beyond delivery of professional development to teachers (shades of the notion "I taught it, they just didn't learn it" at the classroom level). As a result, grantees are not looking for evidence of actual use or implementation in classrooms, nor are they looking for student effects. It will be interesting to see if, at the end of the two years, Grantees who had school, student *and* teacher goals were more effective than those with more limited goals. It may be helpful to encourage a limited number of clear goals.

Ask grantees to comment on classroom implementation. It is reasonable to ask schools to write goals and evaluation plans that address classroom implementation. If academic gains for students depend on teachers' actual use of new strategies in their classrooms, classroom implementation should be noted and reported. It is not a formidable task, as evidenced by the fact that several Grantees did include statements that suggested new strategies were being implemented, and someone knew the new practices were being implemented as a result of reports back to a study group, observation by coaches, or observation by principals. Teacher self report on a written survey is probably the least reliable method of assessing the extent of implementation. Attending a workshop is not synonymous with improving practice.

Clarify the expectation for student academic gains. The use of student data to find out whether or not implementation of new instructional strategies has made a difference is a logical extension of checking for implementation. The value of using student data to drive decision-making and

school improvement has been well documented. The TDG grant program can help reinforce the importance of paying attention to student results by asking grantees to write student academic gains into their goal statements. However, student measures should **not** be limited to end of year CSAP scores, and schools should be encouraged to experiment with developing their own student measures to determine whether their new strategies are helping them be more effective with more students more of the time.

The comparison of TDG Grantees with State averages is less than ideal for assessing impact. Part of the problem lies in the fact that this was just the first (incomplete) year of a two year grant, but another problem is that this method imposes an artificial grouping on schools that are not actually acting as a group. At this point, the comparative analyses are experimental. If such analyses seem to be of value they will be explored further and revised as necessary.

Encourage principal oversight and involvement. In many of the TDG schools attendance or participation in professional development activities was just beginning. Commenting on classroom implementation seemed to be happening quite automatically in schools that were using a coaching and/or demonstration teaching/observation model. In others it was noted as follow through and reinforcement by the principal. The RFP could be revised to ask for specific information about the responsibilities of the principal in the implementation of new instructional strategies (this could range from direct observation to conversations with coaches or listening in on a study group). The TDG proposal process can encourage and support principals in the process, as the following comments imply:

"The administrator is key to making the process work. Teachers need to be actively engaged in the types of professional development in which they will participate. Teachers need to understand and practice the transfer strategies. Feedback from peers and administrators is critical to this process. Few goals need to drive the professional development. Clear expectations need to be stated so that teachers understand their role in the process and the outcomes that are anticipated."

"My role as an administrator is to be an advocate for the importance of each staff member becoming a teacher of reading and writing. This becomes challenging with our veteran staff who may, over time, have become "specialized" and less flexible. That's why I especially encouraged a core of our veterans to get involved. Our reading group now includes a true cross-section of staff. As a supervisor [sic], I also must inform staff that I will be looking for ways that they are each assuming the responsibility for assisting students in becoming more proficient readers and writers. My goals for our students and expectations for our teachers must be clear and well-articulated to all."