

Florida Department of Education

Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol

Third Cycle/Second Year Technical Report School Year 2011-2012

Executive Summary

by

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Executive Summary

In the year 2000, the Florida Legislature required the Florida Department of Education (Department) to develop and implement a system for evaluating the quality of district professional learning systems. Pursuant to those requirements stipulated in **section 1012.98 – School Community Professional Development Act, F.S.** and legislative proviso language, the Department generated the Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol. The First Cycle of reviews for all 67 districts began in the 2002-03 school year and concluded by June 2006. The Second Cycle was implemented in three years from the 2006-07 school year through the 2008-09 school year, plus reviews of the four developmental research schools. Given the myriad of changes in professional learning that occurred during the decade, the Department took the 2009-10 school year to revise and update the system, generating the Third Cycle of the Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol. Reviews began again in 2010-11 in a four-year cycle with 19 districts reviewed in Year 1 of the Third Cycle. This report documents the Second Year (2011-12) of implementing the Third Cycle in 17 school districts.

The purposes of the Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol are to:

1. Ensure the highest quality district, school, and faculty Professional Development Systems in Florida to support instructional programs throughout the state and increase student achievement.
2. Provide the Commissioner of Education, State Board of Education, and Legislature with information each year on the quality of the district Professional Development Systems.
3. Provide Florida school districts with the methods and protocols needed to conduct ongoing assessments of the quality of professional development in their schools.

The Third Cycle of the Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol is based on a set of 65 standards that describe the characteristics and components of a quality professional development system that meets the requirements of Florida's laws. These standards were generated from the statements in Florida's laws as well as professional development standards generated by Learning Forward (formerly *National Staff Development Council*) entitled *Standards for Staff Development (Revised, 2001)*. The standards reflect three levels of the Professional Development System and four strands incorporated into each level as follows:



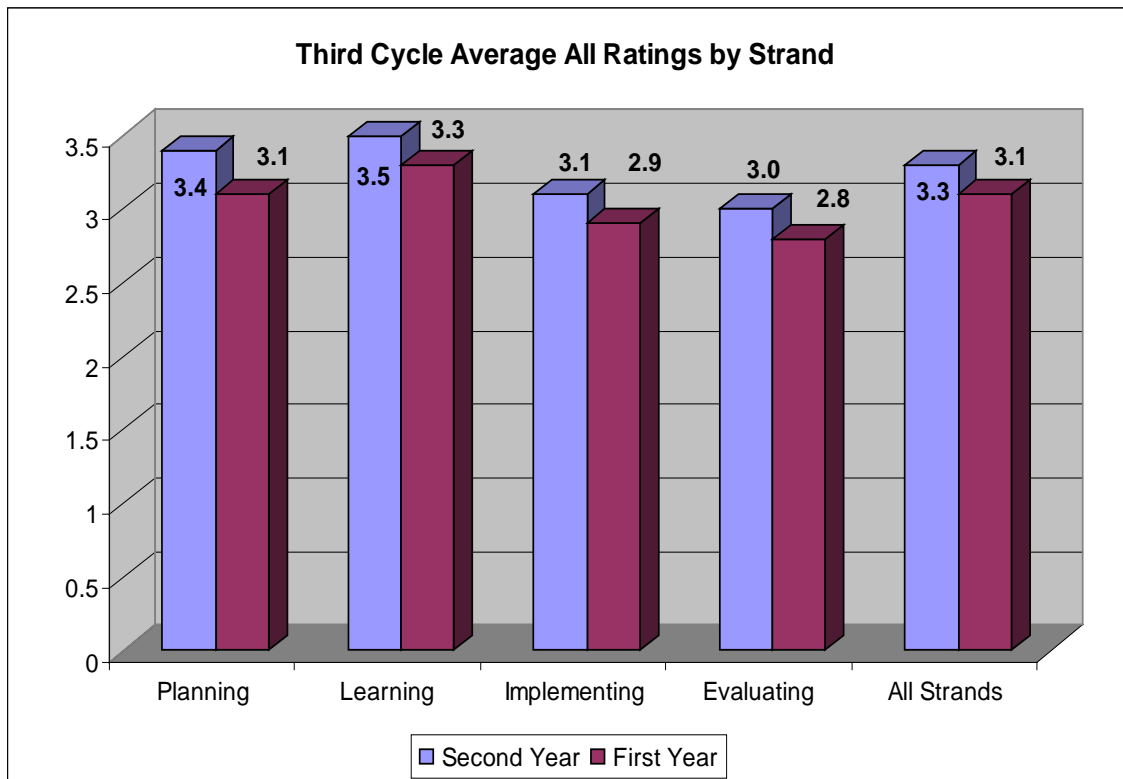
Levels	Strands
1.0 Educator Level	◆ Planning
2.0 School Level	◆ Learning
3.0 District Level	◆ Implementing
	◆ Evaluating

The system uses a 4-point rating scale ranging from unacceptable (1) to excellent (4). The midpoint on this scale is 2.5.

The first year of the Third Cycle (2010-11) included reviews of 19 of the 67 Florida school districts (28%). An additional 17 districts (25%) were reviewed during the second year of the cycle (2011-12). A total of 36 school districts (54%) were reviewed in the first two years of the Third Cycle with 31 districts (46%) remaining to complete the cycle.

Figure 1 presents the results in mean ratings by each strand and level for Years 1 and 2 of the Third Cycle.

Figure 1
Average Ratings by Strand and Level for Years 1 and 2
(n=36)



Overall conclusions from the analyses conducted to date, including the First and Second Cycles as reported previously for the system, were:

1. **Districts that receive good or excellent ratings on the district professional development standards also demonstrate greater increases in student achievement.** A correlational analysis was conducted for the Second Cycle to examine the relationship between high ratings on the standards and the last district standard, 3.4.7 Student Gains. The analysis demonstrated a moderate positive relationship (.33) between the state’s ratings of districts on student achievement increases and ratings on the quality of professional development in the district, significant at the .01 level. *These results support the effectiveness of high quality professional development programs in contributing to increased student achievement in school districts.*
2. **The positive relationship between high district level performance on the professional development standards and high levels of student achievement is increasing over time and application of the standards by districts.** The correlational analysis improved from .31 for the First Cycle to .33 for the Second Cycle. Analyses of the Third Cycle will be completed at the end of the cycle when sufficient numbers of reviews have been conducted to allow an appropriate analysis.
3. **The Second Year-Third Cycle Protocol collaborative effort of the Department of Education and district, consortia, and university staff was successfully completed.** The process results in greater understanding of and adherence to the standards by all participants. Ninety (90) volunteers served on the teams, representing 383 days of contributed time to the overall system.
4. **Most school districts are currently implementing many standards related to Planning and Learning at the “good” or “excellent” level.** Averages for most strands and levels for the Second Year-Third Cycle were above 3.0, a rating of “good.”
5. **Many districts have incorporated the standards into their organization/structure.** Districts are using the Protocol standards and the rationales for the standards in their planning and operations. Some districts have used the standards to generate checklists for professional learning developers and to provide quality control over all planned professional learning.
6. **The system provides a common language.** Conceptually, many discussions and planning sessions center now on the four strands of Planning, Learning, Implementing, and Evaluating. Common language is more apparent now for concepts and practices such as learning strategies and learning communities.
7. **The set of standards raised expectations.** The Department’s wide dissemination and public availability of the standards has encouraged all districts to meet the standards and improve their professional development systems.
8. **Reviewers learn from other districts.** District professional development staff members who participate in reviews of other districts increase their awareness of better methods for planning and implementing professional development, as well



- as becoming more focused on the need to improve professional learning systems in their own districts.
9. **Some districts conduct self-studies.** Some districts have used the Department’s self-study methods to review their professional learning systems and encourage principals and facilitators to adhere to the standards.
 10. **Districts need continued improvement and assistance in evaluating the impact of professional learning.** The average rating for the Evaluation Strand was the lowest of the four strands.
 11. **Districts continue to need to make improvements in the area of Web-based Resources and Assistance at the Educator and School Levels.** These standards were among the lowest rated standards in the First and Second Years of the Third Cycle.
 12. **Many districts have initiated activities to implement the state-approved plans from 2008 for a School Principal Preparation and Certification Program.** Some districts have faithfully implemented their plans, although other districts have few or no participants in the planned programs.
 13. **Districts are implementing the components of the new teacher evaluation system.** Professional learning efforts in most districts concentrated on the new teacher and administrator evaluation systems and the systems of professional and content skills and knowledge to be assessed through the systems.

Overall, these results demonstrate that districts are continuing to benefit from the review system through adherence to the new 65 standards in the Third Cycle of Florida’s Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol Standards. District staff continue to improve their systems and methods of planning, learning, implementing, and evaluating professional learning. The statewide community of professional learning facilitators and directors has united around the commitment to quality professional learning systems that encourages all educators to maximize their effectiveness in teaching students.