Introduction

Organization:

➢ Public Schools – Elementary Level

  ➢ Public, rural elementary schools located in central Virginia.

  ➢ 1,360 students in prekindergarten through fifth grade, 126 elementary-level instructional staff members (Virginia Department of Education School Quality Report, 2022).

Introduction to the Problem:

  ➢ Over one-third of the teachers surveyed expressed dissatisfaction with how professional development opportunities were being implemented for elementary school teachers in a Public School system in Virginia.

  ➢ Current practices were not sufficient in meeting professional needs. (Page County Public Schools, 2022a).

Introduction

Problem Statement:

The problem was that 33% of the teachers responding to the 2023-2024 Calendar Survey noted the professional development being implemented for elementary school teachers in a Public School system in Virginia was not optimal (Page County Public Schools, 2022a).

Purpose Statement:

The purpose of this applied research report was to provide recommendations to improve the process of professional development implementation at the elementary school level in a Public School system in Virginia.

Central Research Question:

How can professional development implementation at the elementary school level in a Public School system in Virginia be improved?
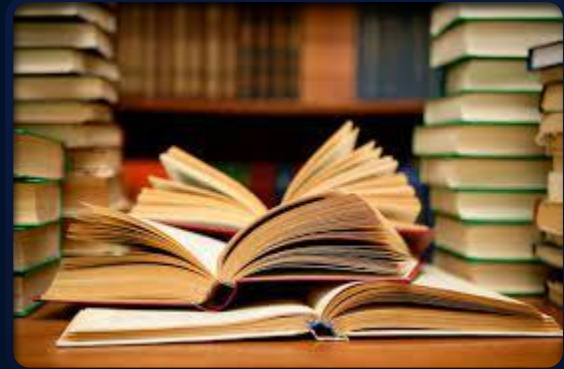
Literature Review

History of Professional Development
- ➢ Improve teacher quality and student achievement
- ➢ Learn and apply new knowledge

Effective Professional Development Strategies
- ➢ Content
- ➢ Active learning
- ➢ Collaboration
- ➢ Modeling
- ➢ Coaching
- ➢ Duration
- ➢ Feedback and reflection

(Balta & Eryilmaz, 2019; Craig et al., 2019; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Hertz et al., 2022; Johnson et al., 2017; Lo, 2021)

Literature Review

Impact of Effective Professional Development
- ➤ Teacher competency and instructional practices (Christoforidou & Kyriakides, 2021; Kyriakides et al., 2021)
- ➤ Student achievement (Barnes, 2021; Compen et al., 2019)
- ➤ Self-efficacious beliefs (Gümüs & Bellibaş, 2021; Maeng et al., 2020; Redman et al., 2021: Rich et al., 2021)
- ➤ Collective efficacy (Loughland & Nguyen, 2020; Loughland & Ryan, 2020)

Teachers' Perceptions of Professional Development
- ➤ Negative connotations (Baird & Clark, 2018)
- ➤ General lack of enthusiasm (Damianidou, 2021)

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

➤ Lev Vygotsky (1978)– Constructivist Learning Theory

➤ Albert Bandura (1971) – Social Learning Theory

➤ Malcolm Knowles (1980) – Theory of Andragogy

Theoretical Framework:
Research Process
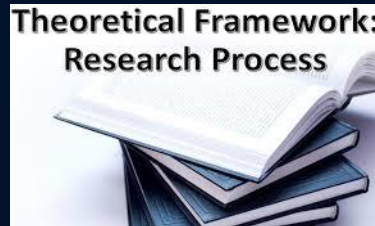
Interview Procedures

Qualitative Data Collection - Interviews
- ➤ Individual, semi-structured
- ➤ Purposeful sampling
- ➤ Recorded using the Otter application

Qualitative Data Analysis
- ➤ Transcribed, reviewed, and coded (Claxton & Michael, 2021).
- ➤ Codes and themes tables
- ➤ Frequency table

Qualitative Questionnaire Procedures

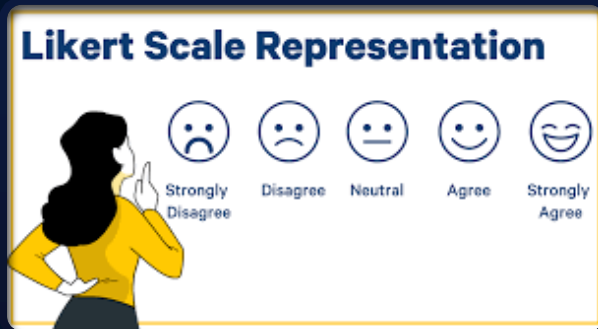**Qualitative Data Collection – Qualitative Questionnaire**

➢ Three demographic questions, 10 open-ended questions

➢ Purposeful sampling.

➢ Google Form for fast participant involvement (Claxton & Michael, 2021).

Qualitative Data Analysis

➢ Coding table (Claxton &Michael, 2021).

➢ Frequency of codes table

Quantitative Survey Procedures

Quantitative Data Collection – Quantitative Survey

- ➢ Close-ended Likert scale survey
- ➢ Three demographic questions, 10 prompts
- ➢ Random sampling
- ➢ Google Form

Quantitative Data Analysis

- ➢ Password-protected spreadsheet
- ➢ Frequency averages
- ➢ Descriptive statistics

Interview Findings

Summary:

- Interested in learning content-specific material related to professional needs.

- Favor collaborative and hands-on professional development.

- Prefer sustained professional development programs that include follow-up activities.

Themes	Code Word	Frequency
Learning Opportunities	Training	20
	Learn	28
	Knowledge	2
Delivery Methods	In-Person	16
	Virtual	9
	Hands-On	8
Collaboration	Sharing	8
	Working Together	10
	Collaborate	4
Content-Specific	Specific Topics	14
	Instruction	9
	Subject	6
	Strategies	10
	Teacher Needs	9
Duration	Time	48
	Hour	6
	Summer	8
Follow-Up	Check-Ins	6
	Implementation	13
	Feedback	5
	Reflection	2

Qualitative Questionnaire Findings

Themes	Code Word	Frequency
Choice	Variety	13
	Choice/Choose	10
	Options	13
Content-Specific	Specific	19
	Content	7
	Needs	25
	Relevant	2
Delivery Methods	Hands-On	3
	Summer	10
	In-Person/Face-to-Face	6
	Virtual	8
Follow-Up	Follow-Up	10
	Implement	13
	Check-In	2
	Feedback	3
	Reflect	2

Summary:
- Interested in choosing content-specific professional development sessions.
- Prefer follow-up activities such as check-ins, focus group meetings, or peer observations.

Quantitative Survey Findings

Summary:

- Question four received a 2.6
  - Indication - teachers do not feel content is being implemented after professional development sessions.

- Question seven received a 2.2
  - Indication - lack of follow-up activities after attending professional development sessions.

Question	Frequency					Avg.
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. Teachers regularly attend meaningful professional development sessions.	1	5	4	7	1	3.1
2. The professional development offered at my school has aligned with teachers' professional needs.	0	5	5	7	1	3.2
3. Professional development sessions provided teachers with instructional strategies that could be used to assist students in meeting academic standards.	1	3	7	7	0	3.3
4. Information learned through professional development sessions has been consistently implemented into daily practices.	0	10	6	2	0	2.6
5. The professional development sessions have helped teachers learn how to reflect on their teaching practices.	1	5	3	6	3	3.5
6. Teachers are able to collaborate during professional development sessions.	0	4	2	12	0	3.4
7. Follow-up activities have consistently occurred after attending professional development sessions.	2	11	4	1	0	2.2
8. Time is provided throughout the school year for teachers to attend professional development sessions.	0	0	2	11	5	4.2
9. Professional development sessions are offered as one-day workshops or sessions.	0	0	2	11	5	4.2
10. Additional professional development sessions may help to enhance teachers' instructional abilities.	0	0	7	8	3	3.8

Recommendations

Central Research Question: How can professional development implementation at the elementary school level in a Public School system in Virginia be improved?

Recommendation 1: Create content-specific professional development training opportunities for the elementary teachers within a Public School system in Virginia.

Recommendation 2: Develop professional learning programs that are of a sustained duration.

Recommendation 3: Establish follow-up activities teachers can participate in after attending professional development sessions.

Resources and Funds

Content-Specific Training	Sustained Duration	Follow-Up Activities
• Experienced teachers • Professional development menu • Time • Recertification points • Stipends • Varying costs for outside conferences	• Time • Stipends • Recertification points	• Time • Teacher coverage

Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

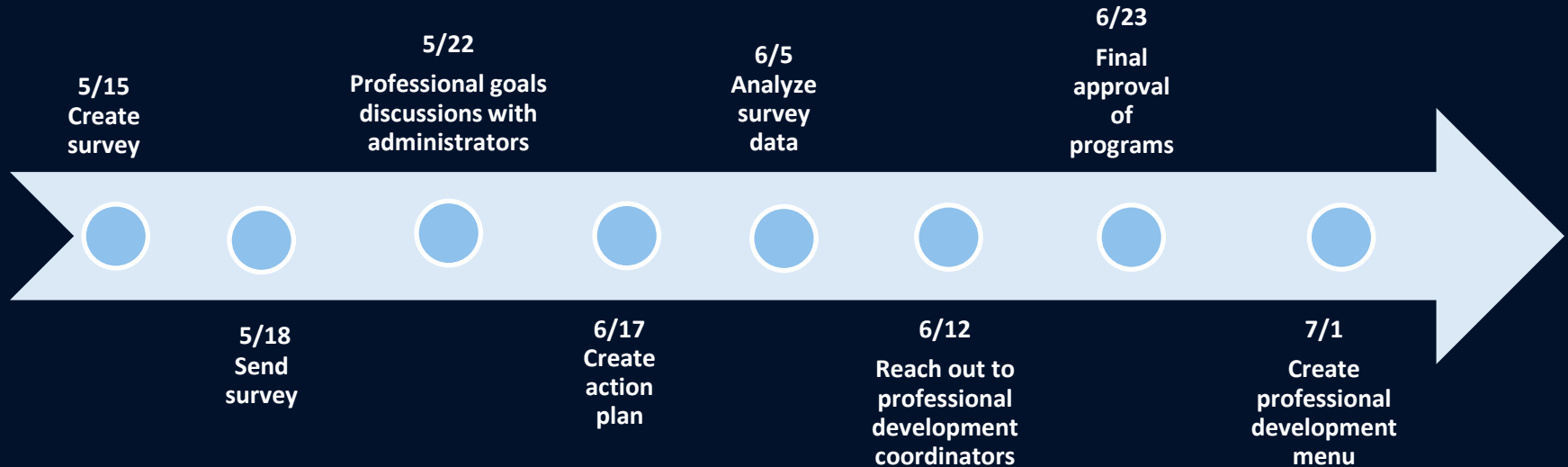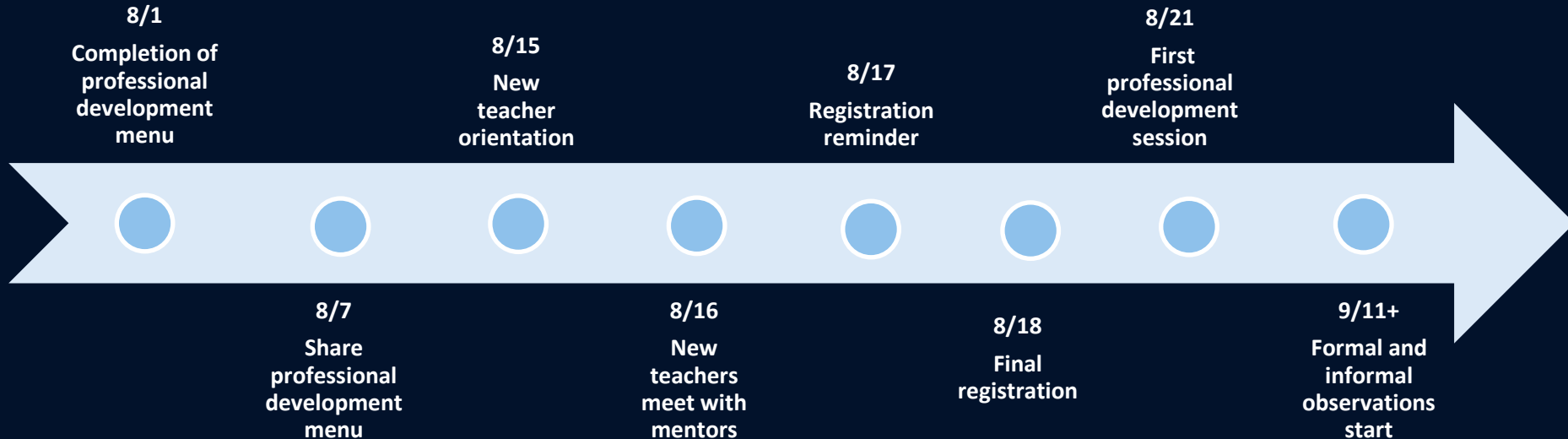| Content-Specific Training |
|---|
| **Central Office**
 • Oversee and facilitate
 • Professional development menu
 • Provide re-certification points or stipend
 • Approve outside conferences |
| **Building Administrators**
 • Academic and professional goals
 • Formal and informal observations |
| **Instructional Staff**
 • Complete needs assessment
 • Professional development participation
 • Discussions with administration |

Timeline of Content-Specific Training

5/15
Create survey

5/18
Send survey

5/22
Professional goals discussions with administrators

6/17
Create action plan

6/5
Analyze survey data

6/12
Reach out to professional development coordinators

6/23
Final approval of programs

7/1
Create professional development menu

Timeline of Content-Specific Training

8/1
Completion of professional development menu

8/7
Share professional development menu

8/15
New teacher orientation

8/16
New teachers meet with mentors

8/17
Registration reminder

8/18
Final registration

8/21
First professional development session

9/11+
Formal and informal observations start

Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

Sustained Duration

Central Office
- Approval of professional development sessions
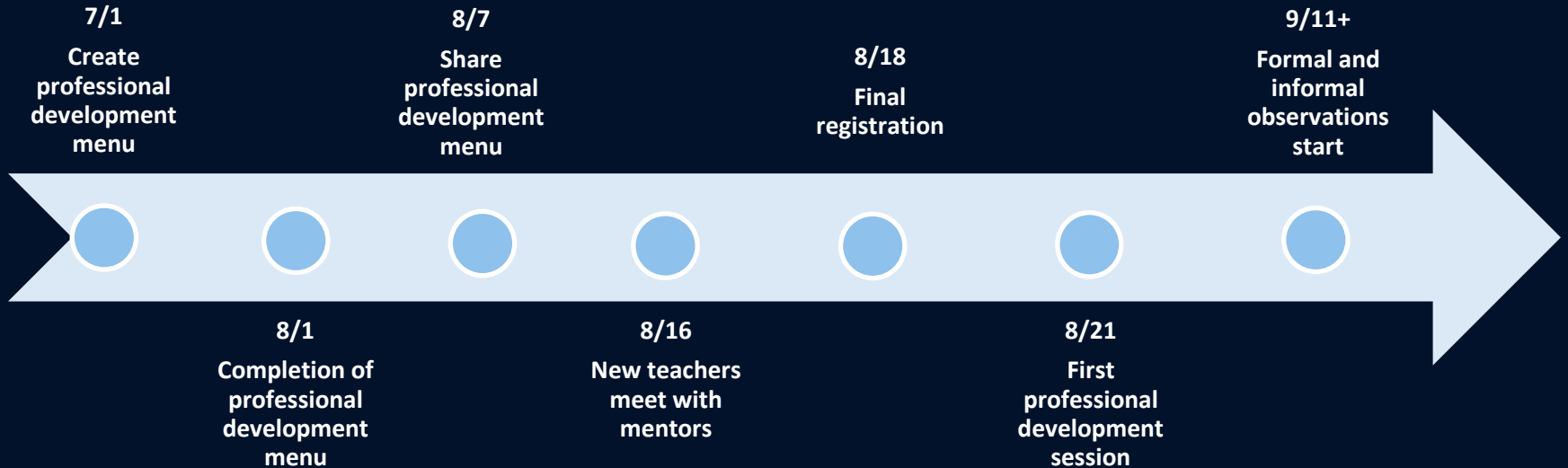- Sharing of professional development menu

Building Administrators
- Dedication to professional development days
- Organization of peer observations
- Check-ins with teachers

Instructional Staff:
- Choose professional development according to needs
- Commitment to attending all program sessions

Timeline of Sustained Duration

7/1

Create professional development menu

8/7

Share professional development menu

8/18

Final registration

9/11+

Formal and informal observations start

8/1

Completion of professional development menu

8/16

New teachers meet with mentors

8/21

First professional development session

Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

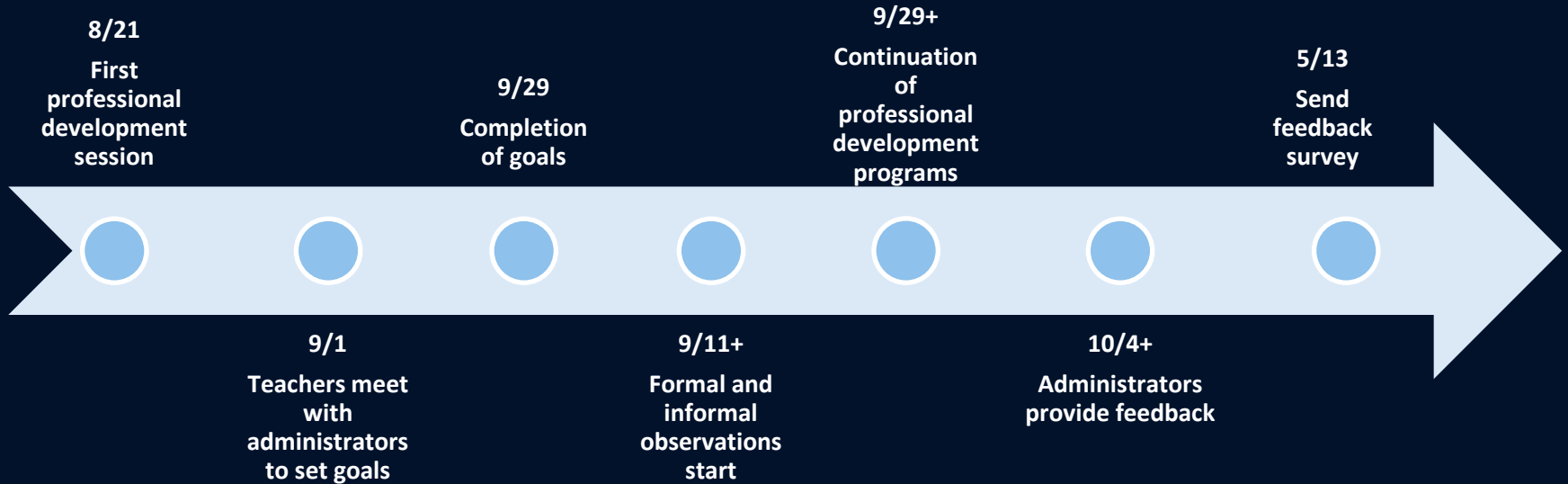| Follow-Up Activities |
|---|
| **Central Office**
• Gather feedback of effectiveness of programs
• Adjust professional development menu as needed |
| **Building Administrators**
• Check-ins with teachers
• Formal and informal observation
• Support teachers engaging in follow-up activities |
| **Instructional Staff**
• Participation in follow-up activities
• Reflect on instructional practices
• Seek feedback |

Timeline of Follow-Up Activities

8/21
First professional development session

9/1
Teachers meet with administrators to set goals

9/29
Completion of goals

9/11+
Formal and informal observations start

9/29+
Continuation of professional development programs

10/4+
Administrators provide feedback

5/13
Send feedback survey

Implications of the Solution

Professional Development
• Contributes to teachers' educational understanding, instructional practices, and self-efficacious beliefs (Maeng et al., 2020)
• Develops formative assessment skills to promote student achievement (Christoforidou & Kyriakides, 2021)
• Increased teacher confidence, motivation, job satisfaction, and teacher retention (Coldwell, 2017)
• Enhanced risk-taking, engagement, independence, and communication skills in students (Baird & Clark, 2018)

Implications of the Solution

Content-Specific Training	Sustained Duration	Follow-Up Activities
• Well-acquainted with academic standards (Barrett-Tatum & Smith, 2017)	• Provide time to learn, practice, implement, and reflect (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017)	• Follow-up support and reflection can strengthen instructional practices and teacher quality (Herro et al., 2019)
• Develop content knowledge (Parrish et al., 2020)	• Engage participants over multiple opportunities (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017)	• Reflection allows time to think about and make changes to instructional practices (Lo, 2021)
• Provide instructional application strategies (Parrish et al., 2020)	• Multiple opportunities to engage and reflect can strengthen instructional practices (Herro et al., 2019)	• Evaluation of beliefs, asking questions, offering feedback, and making instructional change (McDonough & Brandenburg, 2019)

Evaluation Plan

- Formal and informal observations

- Instructor feedback

- Participant surveys

Summary

- **Purpose of the study** - The purpose of this applied research report was to provide recommendations to improve the process of professional development implementation at the elementary school level in a Public School system in Virginia.

- Effective professional development strategies

- Recommendations

- Evaluation plan

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Liberty University
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Questions?

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