LOCAL LITERACY PLAN ANALYSIS

Prepared for Minnesota Department of Education

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In the following report, Hanover Research examines trends in local literacy plan content across a sample of 50 plans. Key areas investigated include student supports, staff development, and parent engagement.

HR HANOVER RESEARCH

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

Reading at grade level by Grade 3 is a crucial developmental milestone in children's lives. To this end, Minnesota Statute 120B.12 requires all districts and charter schools to post literacy plans detailing the programs and supports in place to guide all students to literacy by Grade 3 on official district or school websites.[1]

However, the availability, breadth, and depth of district and charter school literacy plans may vary. Accordingly, Hanover Research presents an analysis of the local literacy plans of districts and charter schools in order to help the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) gauge compliance with the law as well as inform professional development offerings and technical assistance to schools and regional centers. This report represents the second and final phase of the literacy plan analysis. The analysis proceeds in two sections:

- **Section I** discusses the methodology employed to select and analyze local literacy plans.

- **Section II** presents findings from a review of 50 local literacy plans. The analysis addresses the breadth and depth of plan content.

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KEY FINDINGS

- **Overall, a minority of local literacy plans address the bulk of the content requirements specified by MDE.** Specifically, 24 percent of the literacy plans present content that meet 70 percent of MDE's specifications. The bulk of literacy plans reviewed in this analysis meet 50 to 69 percent of MDE's specifications (58%). The analysis also suggests that a slightly proportion of districts in rural and suburban areas or those with 500 or more students meet requirements (Figure ES.1).

Figure ES.1: District Plans Meeting MDE Specifications

% MEETING REQUIREMENT	COUNT	PERCENT
Below 30%	1	2%
30% to 49%	8	16%
50% to 69%	29	58%
70% or Above	12	24%

[1] "2014 Minnesota Statutes: 120B.12, Reading Proficiently No Later than the End of Grade 3" The Office of the Revisor of Statutes in the State of Minnesota. https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=120b.12

Segmented Results

Locale	Count	Avg. % Meeting Requirement	Student Population	Count	Avg. % Meeting Requirement
Rural	34	60%	Under 500	19	53%
Suburb	10	56%	500-1,499	18	61%
Urban	6	48%	1,500+	13	59%

Note: We calculated the extent to which a given literacy plan met MDE's specifications by assigning each component of the specifications a numerical score, assigning an individual score to each literacy plan based on the number of components it covered, and dividing the score for each literacy plan by the total possible score (20); please see the data supplement for the detailed calculation and rubrics.

- **The majority of plans (86%) are publically posted on district or school websites; however, the length and date of available plans varies.** Thirty percent of the plans are five pages or less, 34 percent are six to 10 pages long, and another 36 percent are more than 11 pages in length. About one-third of the plans are not dated, and 14 percent are several years out of date (published in 2012 or 2013).

- **Nearly all plans specify methods to identify students reading below grade level (96%).** Ninety-six percent of plans indicate using commercially available assessment(s) to identify grade level student literacy data. The most common assessments referenced for identifying students reading below grade level are Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA), and AimsWeb. On the other hand, only about one-half (54%) of plans specify grade level performance criteria to evaluate student proficiency.

- **Most plans include methods for notifying parents of student progress, though fewer provide directives for more detailed parent communication.** Ninety percent of literacy plans provide methods for notifying parents of student progress at least annually. Popular methods include parent-teacher conferences (89%) and report cards (49%). However, fewer plans provide parents with suggestions or resources for helping to support their child's literacy development at home or for promoting parent engagement in student literacy (64% and 54%, respectively).

- **The majority of sampled plans describe specific intervention methods (80%) and programs (70%) for supporting struggling learners.** Popular intervention methods include small group instruction (58%) and tutoring (50%). Further, literacy plans enumerate a total of 129 intervention programs, the most frequently-cited of which include Read Naturally (30%), Leveled Literacy Intervention (18%), and Minnesota Reading Corps (18%).

- **Although all sampled plans describe literacy-related professional development offerings, this content is generally vague.** The majority of literacy plans describe professional development content (94%) and methods (74%). Commonly-cited topics for professional development include data analysis (18%) and instructional strategies (16%) and popular professional development methods include professional learning communities (60%) and group meetings (38%). However, nearly one-half of plans do not specify the frequency of literacy-related professional

development (42%) and far fewer address the alignment of professional development with local data (0%) or with scientifically-based instruction and intervention (10%).

- **Only a minority of sampled plans contain content that specifically addresses literacy development in English language learners (ELLs).** Only one-quarter of plans describe methods for monitoring the reading progress of ELLs (28%) or professional development specific to working with ELLs (26%). Similarly, only 16 percent of sampled plans describe the provision of professional development in culturally responsive pedagogy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT LITERACY

- **Support districts in linking student data to professional development content.** None of the literacy plans reviewed for in this analysis link professional development areas to local data. Further, a sizable percentage of plans do not note specific professional development topics (48%). MDE may consider providing training to districts in using student data to identify areas for professional development and designing professional development initiatives to meet student need.

- **Assist districts in integrating scientifically-based literacy development strategies into professional development and parent communication.** Relatively few plans provide parents with suggestions for supporting their child's literacy development at home (64%) and even fewer specify how professional development aligns with scientifically-based literacy instruction (10%). MDE can work with districts to build their knowledge of evidence-based literacy development strategies and ways in which these can be incorporated into professional development and parent communication.

- **For districts with large ELL populations, provide guidance on effective strategies for developing literacy and monitoring progress among this population.** Only a small proportion of sampled plans provide details regarding specific progress monitoring methods and professional development initiatives pertaining to ELL students (28% and 26%, respectively). This may be an area for MDE to target in its support for districts in the state.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- **Examine differences in ELL-specific plan content across districts.** Current analysis reveals that literacy plans generally contain limited information pertaining to progress monitoring methods and professional development for ELLs. However, a substantial minority of the sampled plans do discuss specialized supports for ELLs (about 25%). This variety in ELL-specific content may be related to the percentage of ELL or minority students in a given district. Examining literacy plans of districts with high ELL populations could shed light on whether these districts demonstrate the ability to fulfill the needs of these students.

- **Investigate the relationship between literacy plan content, implementation of literacy plans, and student literacy outcomes.** This review of plan content is not able to determine the extent to which districts implement literacy plans or the impact of literacy plan implementation on student outcomes. To elucidate this relationship, future research initiatives could investigate the following questions, among others:
    - To what extent do districts implement the actions outlined in their literacy plans? What factors hinder districts in implementation of their literacy plans?
    - To what extent does literacy plan content correlate with student literacy outcomes? What are key features of literacy plans in districts with excellent student literacy outcomes?

SECTION I: METHODOLOGY

SAMPLING METHODOLOGY

In order to efficiently review literacy plans, Hanover took a stratified random sample of 50 districts and charter schools throughout the state. The sample is representative based on locale type (urban/suburban/rural), K-12 enrollment size, and district type (district/charter). Here are the steps Hanover followed to obtain a sample:

1. We downloaded 2015 "Special Populations" enrollment data from MDE's Data Center.[2] The initial file has data for all districts and schools, so we filtered for just the district data.[3] This resulted in data on 521 districts.
2. We filtered results to obtain only district types of interest, further reducing the number of relevant districts to 493.[4]
3. The final district population size is 438, after removing districts that do not serve grades K, 1, or 2 (only districts that serve those grades must have a plan).
4. In order to group schools into urban, suburban, or rural categories, we downloaded additional location data from MDE's Data Center.[5] We placed districts into the "urban" category if they are located in the cities of Rochester, Duluth, St. Cloud, Minneapolis, or St. Paul. We placed districts into the "suburban" group if they are located in one of the following counties but outside of the cities listed above: Ramsey, Hennepin, Scott, Carver, Dakota, Washington, and Anoka. We classified all other districts as "rural."
5. We divided K-12 enrollment into three categories: under 500 students; 500-1,499 students; and 1,500+ students.
6. We identified charter schools based on their code for district type in MDE's data—namely, code "7."
7. We then classified each district into one of 18 cells based on their combination of locale type, enrollment size, and district type (e.g., "rural/under 500/charter" is one cell). Once done, we calculated the number of districts that fit into each of the 18 cells.
8. Finally, we multiplied each cell count by 11.4% (i.e., sample size/population size) to obtain the number of samples we needed to collect for each cell. After this step, we took a random sample within each of the 18 cells until we hit our desired sample size for each cell. Figure 1 compares population and sample distributions. Due to rounding, the sample distributions vary slightly from the population distributions.
9. MDE would like a wide variety of plan lengths in the sample. Although Hanover Research was unable to incorporate that factor into the sample strategy, we will continue to monitor plan lengths in the sample to ensure at least five plans fall into each of the three length categories (i.e., 0 – 5 pages, 6 – 10 pages, 11+ pages).

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[2] 2014 Minnesota Statutes: 120B.12, Reading Proficiently No Later than the End of Grade 3" The Office of the Revisor of Statutes in the State of Minnesota. https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=120b.12

[3] Data Reports and Analytics." Minnesota Department of Education.
https://public.education.mn.gov/MDEAnalytics/Data.jsp

[4] District types of interest include 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 62.

[5] "MDE Organization Reference Glossary." Minnesota Department of Education.
https://education.mn.gov/mde/about/SchOrg/

Figure 1.1: Population vs. Sample Characteristics

	DISTRICT POPULATION	DISTRICT SAMPLE
Locale		
Rural	70.09%	68.00%
Suburban	17.81%	20.00%
Urban	12.10%	12.00%
Student Population		
Under 500	38.58%	38.00%
500-1,499	35.62%	36.00%
1,500+	25.80%	26.00%
District Type		
Charter District	23.74%	24.00%
Non-Charter District	76.26%	76.00%

Population n = 438; Sample n = 50

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

To analyze trends in content across districts' and charter schools' local literacy plans, Hanover Research's review focuses on the extent to which selected districts meet the criteria outlined in the legislation. To do so, Hanover Research evaluated each plan using the local literacy plan analysis instrument designed in collaboration with MDE. This tool, aligning with the state legislation, identifies the following key areas of plan content:

- Plan availability and length,
- Identification,
- Parent notification and involvement,
- Intervention,
- Staff development, and
- Plan components that go beyond the legislation.

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

In addition to detailing the extent to which education agencies meet the legislative goals for their local literacy plans, the analysis also provides insight into frequently implemented strategies/programs across plans. Specific questions addressed in this open-ended portion of the analysis are presented in Figure 1.2.

To conduct an analysis of open-ended content, Hanover Research identified the relevant content in each plan and followed a three-step coding process. First, we took detailed notes of the relevant plan content and developed preliminary themes. During the second stage, we coded the notes based on the emergent themes. The third and final step entailed reviewing the frequency and prevalence of the codes.

**Figure 1.2: Areas for Open-Ended Qualitative Analysis**

AREA	KEY QUESTIONS
Identification	▪ What are common assessments used to identify students reading below grade level?
Parent Notification and Involvement	▪ What are common strategies for communicating student progress to parents? ▪ What are common strategies for promoting parent engagement in student literacy? ▪ What resources and suggestions do districts provide to parents to promote supportive literacy activities at home?
Intervention	▪ What are common intervention methods used with struggling readers? ▪ What are common intervention programs used with struggling readers?
Staff Development	▪ What are common methods for providing professional development to support the plan? ▪ What are common professional development topics? ▪ What specific strategies are in place to support instructors of English language learners (ELLs)? ▪ What specific strategies are in place to support culturally responsive pedagogy?
Beyond the Legislation	▪ What additional literacy programs or initiatives do charter schools/districts employ beyond those required by law?

SECTION II: LOCAL LITERACY PLAN ANALYSIS

PLAN AVAILABILITY AND LENGTH

Literacy plans are typically published online on district or charter school websites (86 percent). At the time of this analysis, Hanover Research located literacy plans on the official websites of 43 of the 50 districts and charter schools in our sample (Figure 2.1). However, about one-third of the plans are not dated (34 percent), and 14 percent of the plans are several years out of date (published in 2012 or 2013) (Figure 2.2). The literacy plans vary in length: 30 percent of the plans are five pages or less, 34 percent are between six and 10 pages, and 36 percent are over 11 pages long (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.1: Local Literacy Plan Availability on the District/School Website
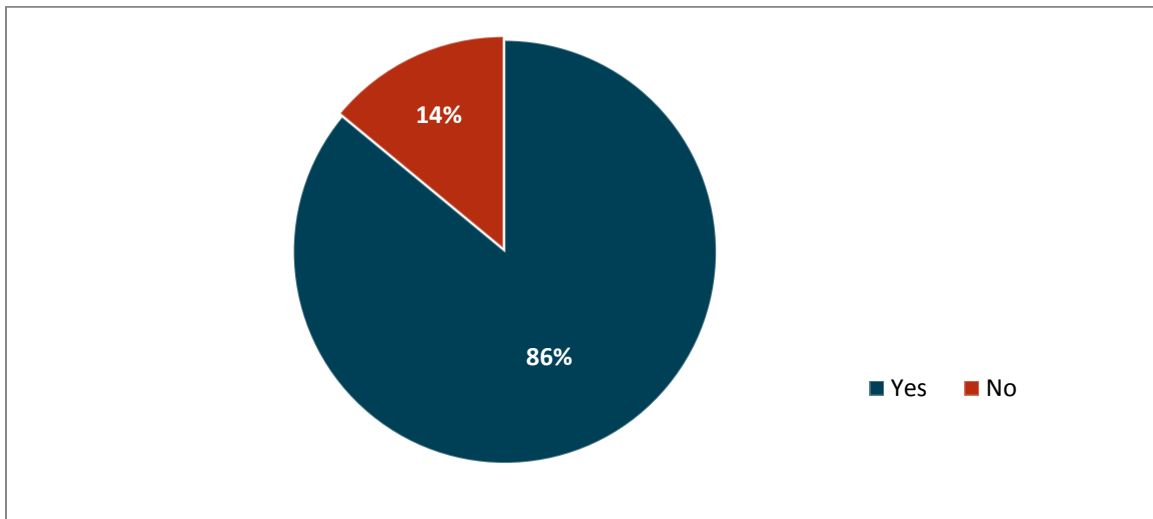
n=50

Figure 2.2: Local Literacy Plan Publication/Revision Date
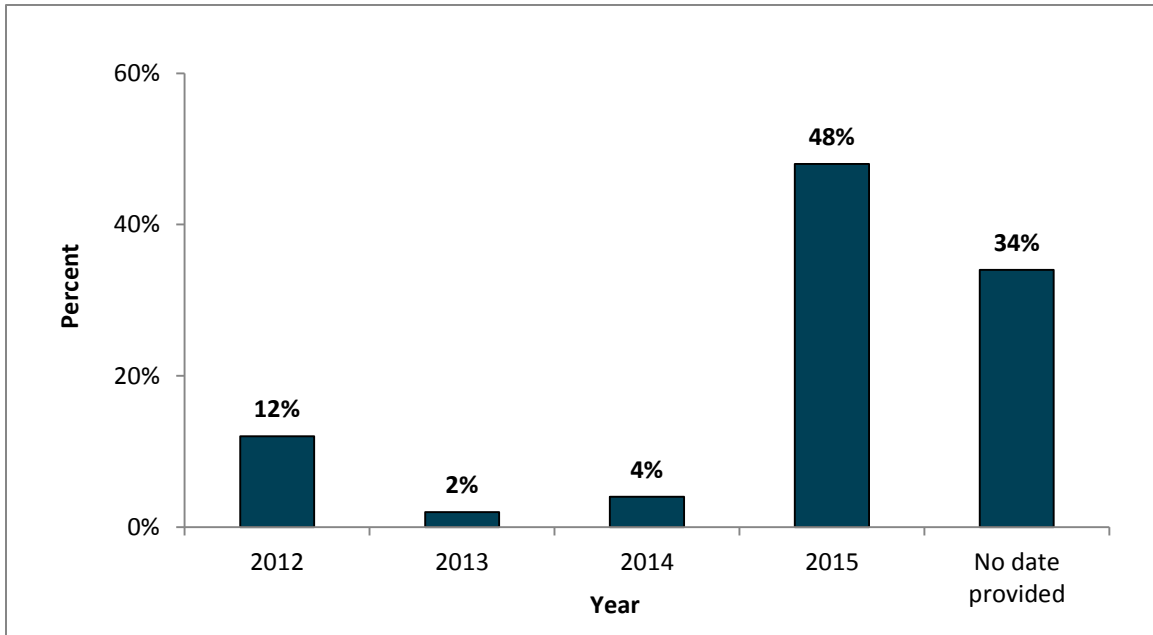
n=50

Figure 2.3: Local Literacy Plan Length
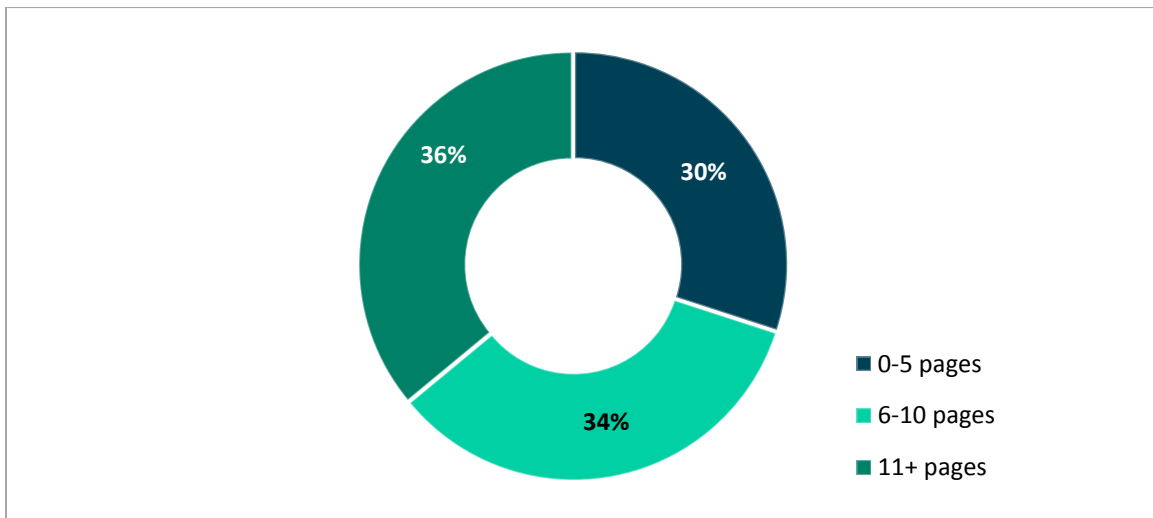
n=50

IDENTIFICATION

While nearly all plans specifically describe a method for locating students who are not reading at grade level before the end of Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2 (96 percent) (Figure 2.4), most plans *do not* describe a method for monitoring the reading progress of ELLs (72 percent) (Figure 2.5). However, across district locations, more suburban districts than rural districts identify a method of monitoring reading progress for ELLs (70 versus 15 percent).

In their plans, almost all districts report using commercially available assessments to identify grade level literacy data (96 percent). Forty percent use MCA and around one-quarter use locally developed assessments (26 percent), as indicated in Figure 2.6. Specific screening assessments identified in plans include MAP, AimsWeb, STAR, and Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment (Figure 2.7). Although all districts identify the assessments they use to evaluate student performance, only about one-half of all districts identify specific grade level performance criteria used to evaluate student proficiency (54 percent) (Figure 2.8).

Figure 2.4: Does the plan specifically describe an assessment for locating students who are not reading at grade level before the end of Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2?
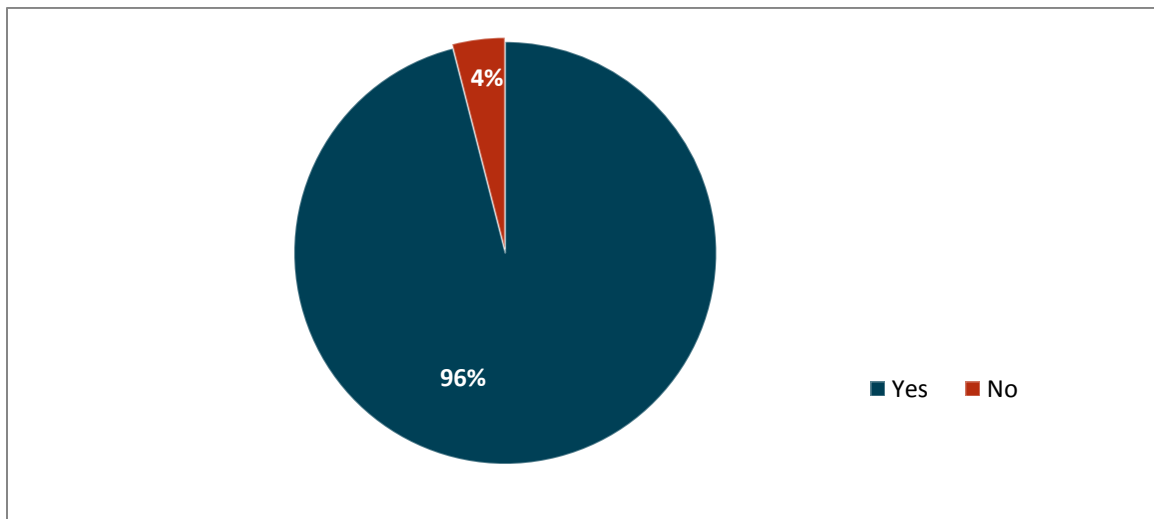
n=50

Figure 2.5: Does the plan specifically describe a method of monitoring the reading progress of English language learners (possibly including reference to assessments in a language(s) other than English)?
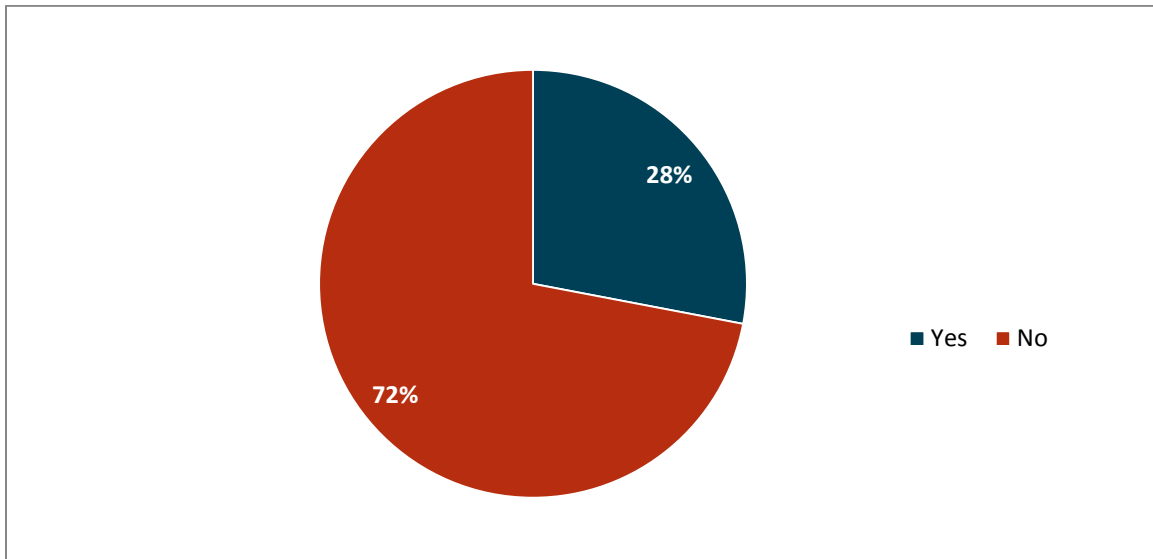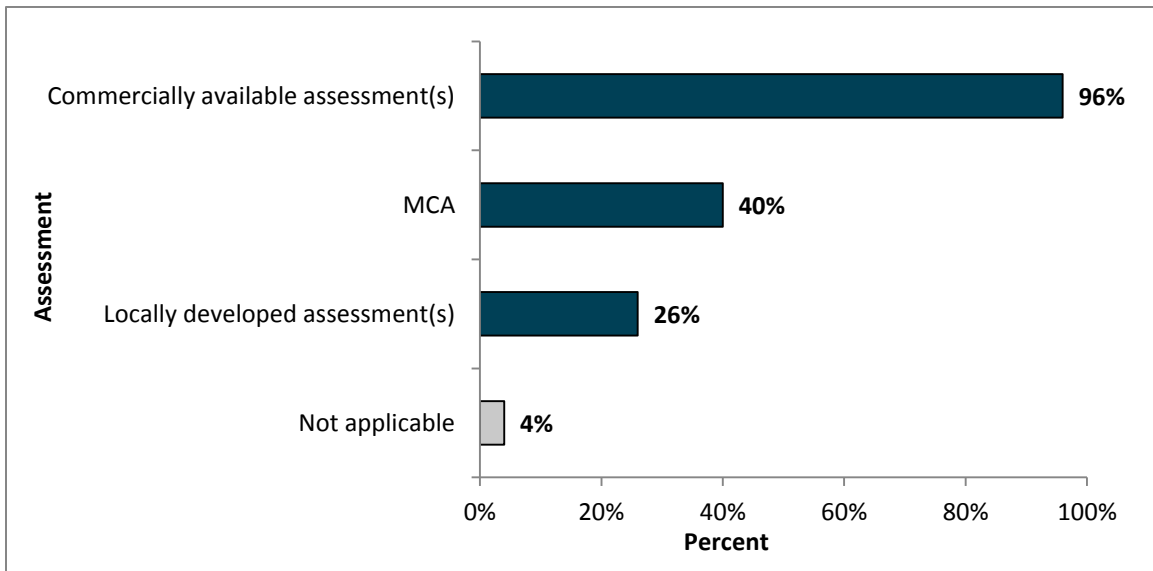

n=50
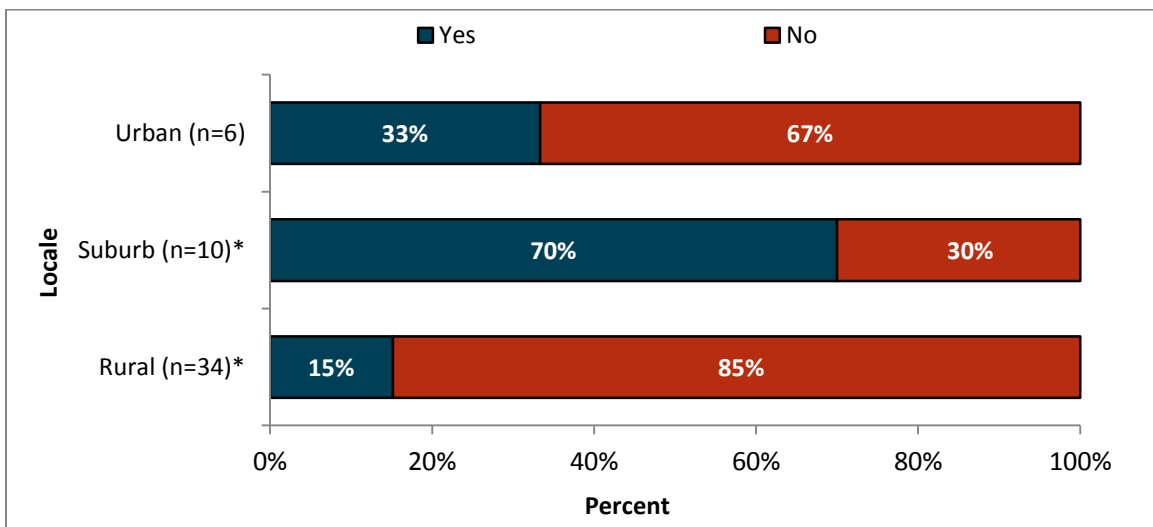
n=50
*Indicates statistically significant differences between segments at the 95 percent confidence level.

Figure 2.6: Assessments for Identifying Grade Level Literacy Data

n=50
Note: District plans may list more than one type of assessment.

Figure 2.7: Screening Assessments Used to Identify Students Reading Below Grade Level

Top 10 Most Frequently-Mentioned Assessments
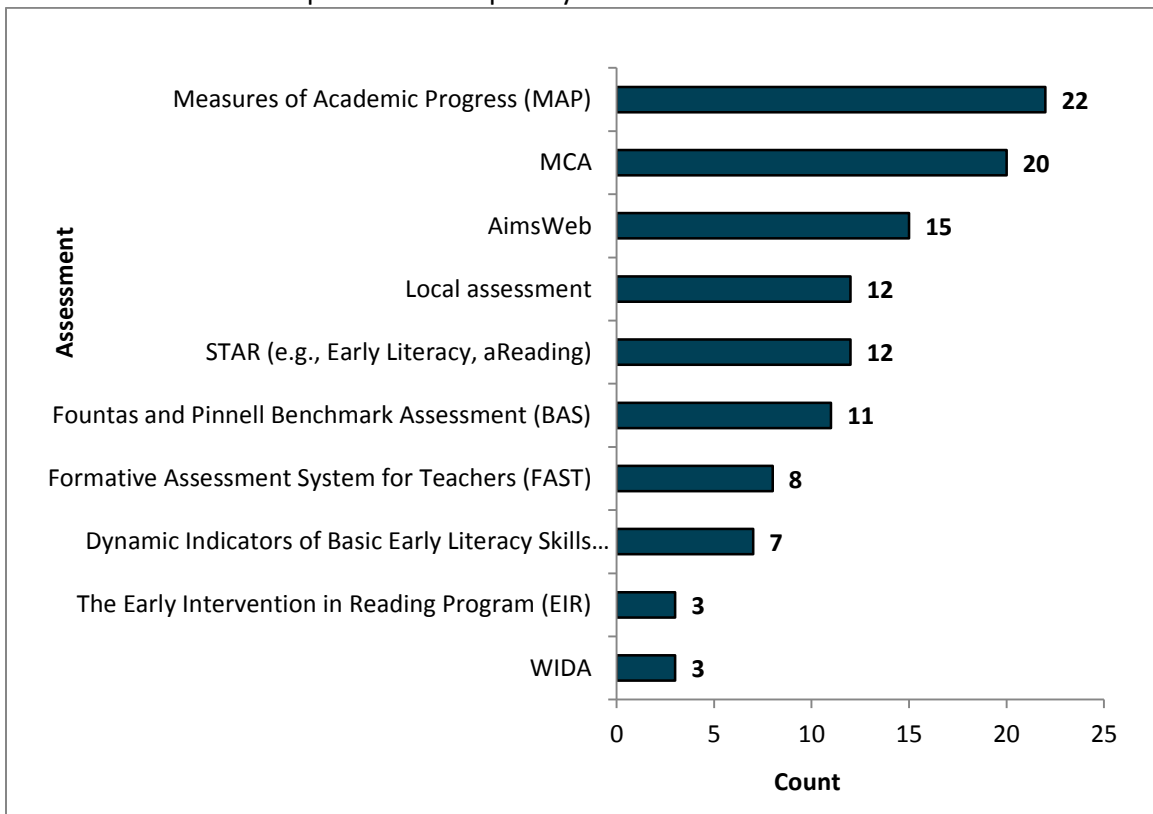
n=48
Note: District plans may list more than one type of assessment.

Less Frequently-Mentioned Assessments

ASSESSMENTS	COUNT	ASSESSMENTS	COUNT
Accelerated Reader	2	CES	1
Dolch Sight Word Assessment	2	CPT	1
Observation Survey	2	Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)	1
Words Their Way	2	Elementary Spelling Inventory	1
GOMs	1	IDGI	1
Guided Reading	1	Letter Identification	1
Rigby Benchmarks	1	PALS Kindergarten Spelling Inventory	1
Scott Foresman	1	Pearson Reading test	1
Test of Preschool Early Literacy (TOPELS)	1	Primary Spelling Inventory	1
Whole to Part Reading Assessment	1	The Work Sampling System	1

Total Mentioned Assessments n =30

Figure 2.8: Does the district identify specific grade level performance criteria to evaluate student proficiency (at any grade levels)?
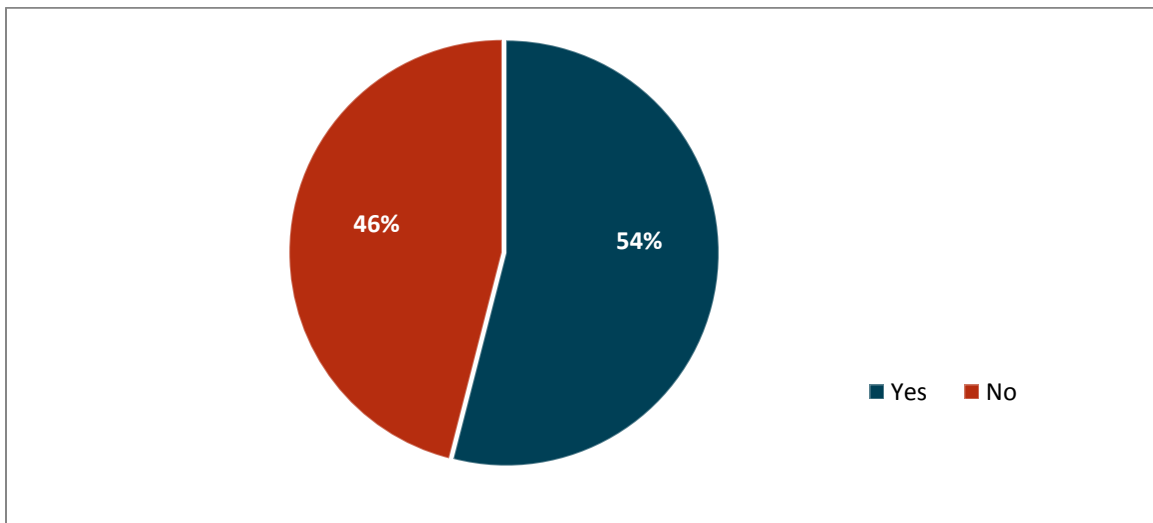
n=50

PARENT NOTIFICATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Ninety percent of sampled literacy plans provide methods for notifying parents of their child's progress at least annually (Figure 2.9). The most common method of communicating student progress with parents is the parent-teacher conference (89 percent). Report cards and progress reports are also popular (49 and 38 percent, respectively). Fewer use conventional notification methods, such as mailing and phone calls (24 and 13 percent, respectively) (Figure 2.10).

Approximately 60 percent of districts notify parents about suggestions and/or resources to help their child at home in becoming a grade-level proficient reader (64 percent) (Figure 2.9). Among the 32 plans that provide suggestions, the most frequently listed resources include books or reading materials sent home with children (14 mentions), websites related to literacy and reading (13 mentions), and written instructions/suggestions sent via newsletters or handouts (13 mentions). Some plans describe the resources provided to parents broken down by grade level (e.g., Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2) or by literacy topics (e.g., phonics, fluency), while other plans provide less detail (Figure 2.11).
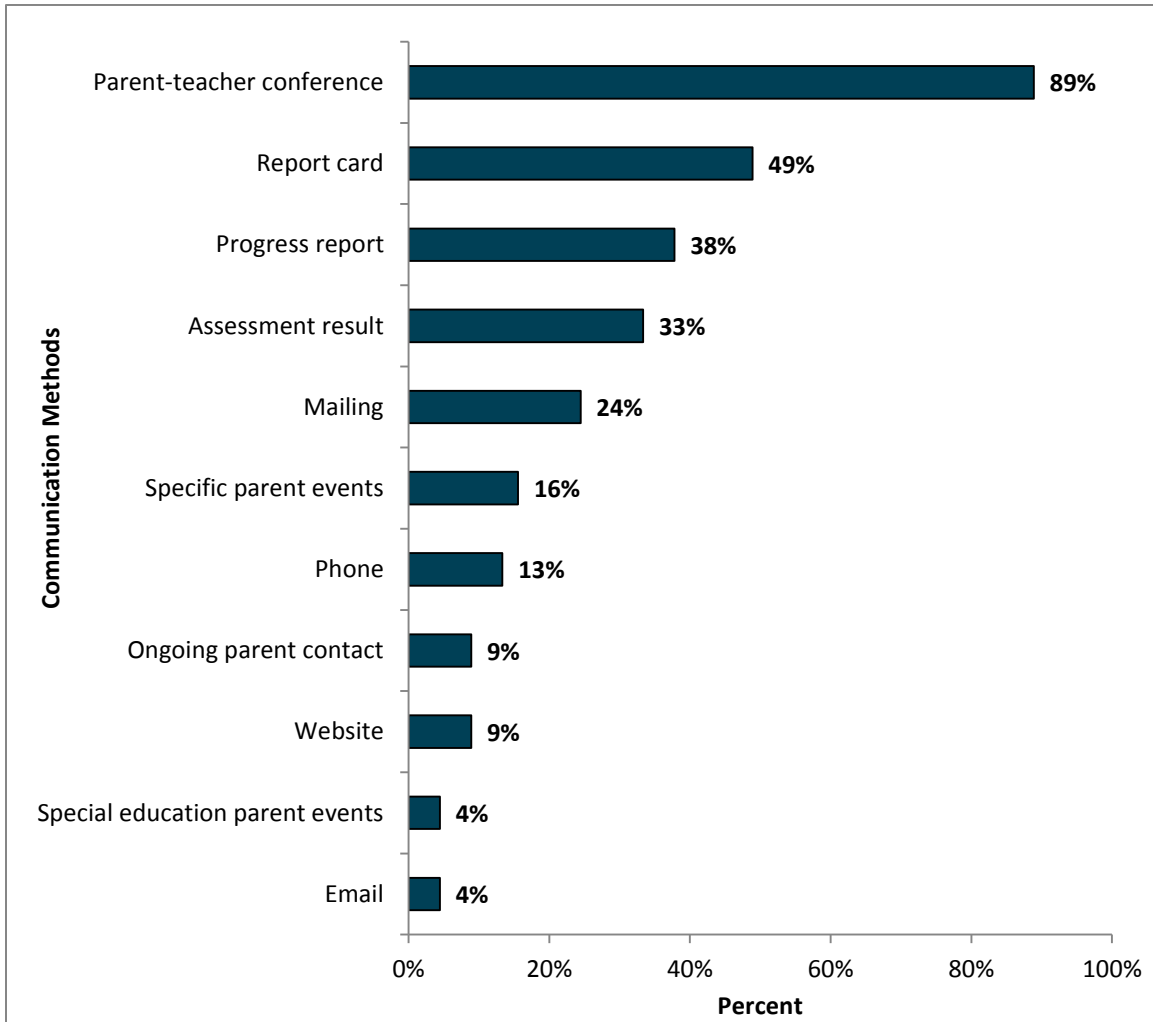
Furthermore, one-half of plans describe systems for providing notification to parents regarding reading-related services provided to their child (56 percent) and strategies for promoting parent engagement in student literacy (54 percent) (Figure 2.9). Specific strategies for engaging parents include reading-themed programs or events (17 mentions), family involvement programs (12 mentions), book fairs or book clubs (8 mentions), as well as generic parent events such as parent-teacher organization (PTO) meetings (8 mentions) (Figure 2.12).
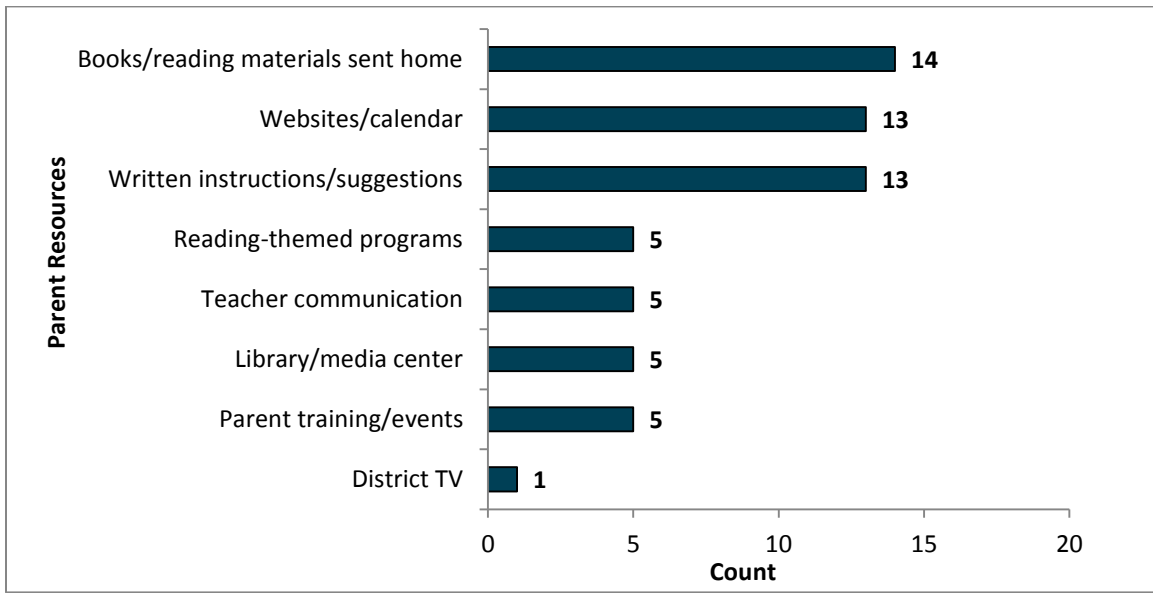
Figure 2.9: Parent Involvement: "Does the plan provide…"
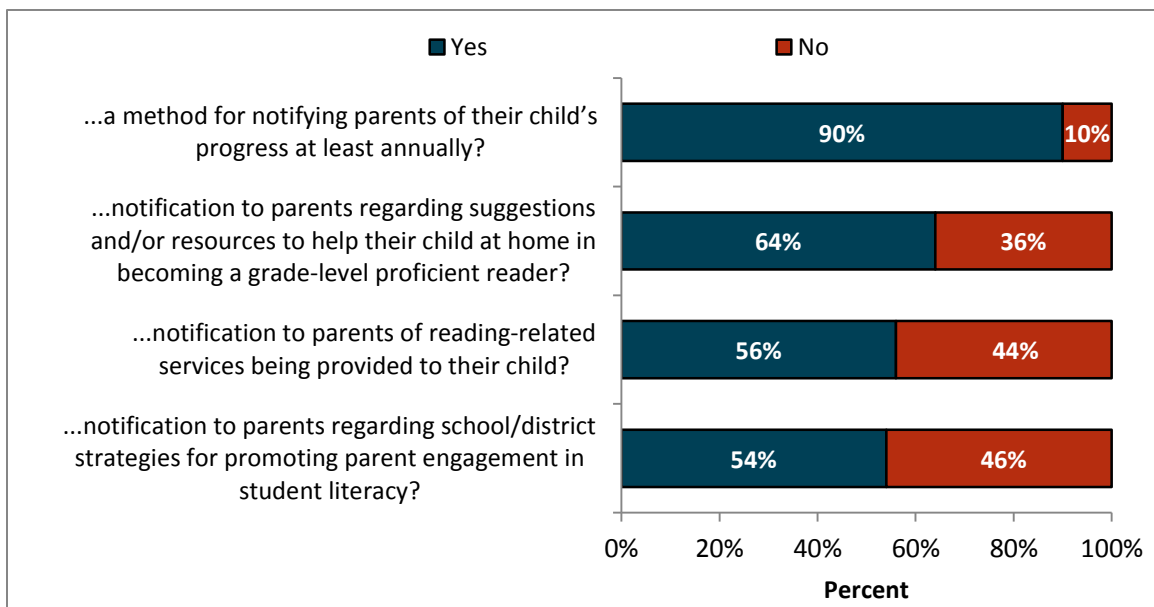
n=50

Figure 2.10: Strategies Used to Communicate Student Progress

Communication Method	Percent
Parent-teacher conference	89%
Report card	49%
Progress report	38%
Assessment result	33%
Mailing	24%
Specific parent events	16%
Phone	13%
Ongoing parent contact	9%
Website	9%
Special education parent events	4%
Email	4%

n=45

Note: This figure presents information related to districts that notify parents of their child's progress at least annually; district plans may list more than one type of communication method.

Figure 2.11: Suggestions/Resources Districts Provide to Parents to Support Literacy Activities at Home

TYPES OF SUGGESTIONS/RESOURCES	SAMPLE PLAN CONTENT
Books/reading materials sent home	▪ "Kindergarten: …Book bags (Book Buddies) with leveled readers for at home practice; Word sorts with informational letter; Letter-sound mini set; ABC chart (as needed); Leveled Literacy take-home books and parent letter (as needed)…"
Websites/Calendar	▪ "…list of online, parent-friendly literacy resources posted online (e.g., pbskids.org, kidsread.com)." ▪ "Phonics: …Star Fall website, ABCya! website, PBS Kids websites, Star Fall Listening & Writing Book 1…"
Written instructions/suggestions (through newsletter, handout)	▪ "To support literacy practices at home throughout the year, monthly newsletters are emailed home to all parents with children in the elementary. In those newsletters are 'Notes to Parents' that provides researched-based information to parent on how they can help their child become a better reader."
Reading-themed programs	▪ "Take Home Reading Program" ▪ "Parent literacy training" ▪ "Public library summer reading program"
Teacher communication	▪ "The elementary teachers also contact parents directly when they notice students having difficulty learning to read to offer ideas on how the school and families can work together to improve student progress."
Library/media center	▪ "…library card applications and information given to all students." ▪ "School media center resources"

n=32

Note: This figure presents responses from districts that provide notification to parents regarding suggestions and/or resources to help their child at home in becoming a grade-level proficient reader; district plans may list more than one type of support.

Figure 2.12: Strategies Used to Promote Parent Engagement in Student Literacy
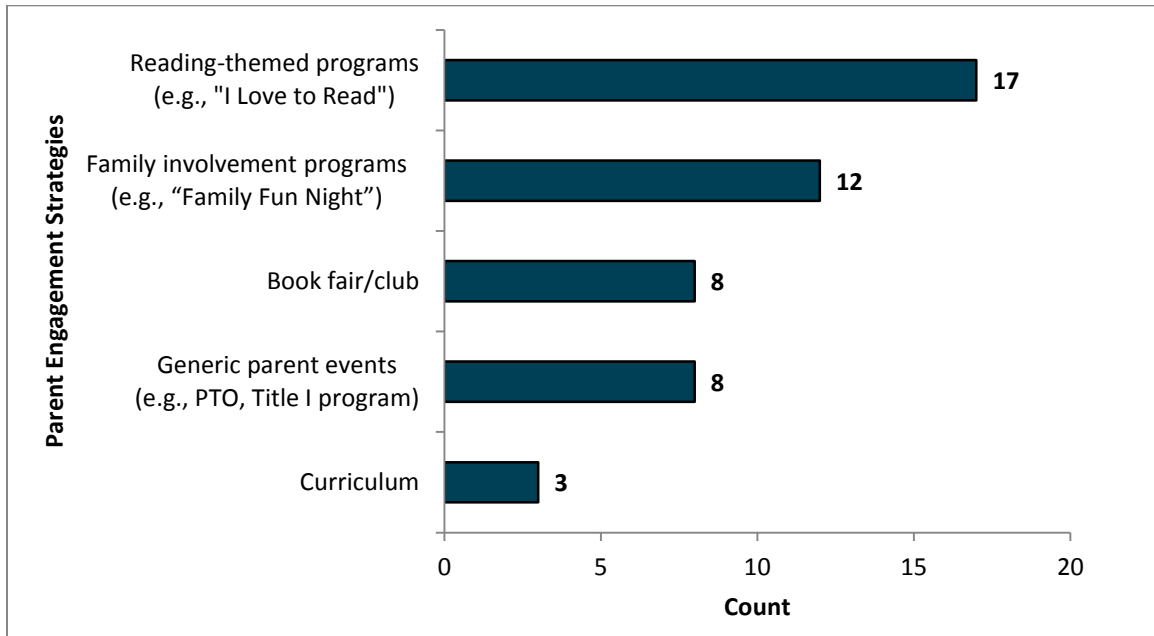
TYPES OF STRATEGIES	SAMPLE PLAN CONTENT
Reading-themed programs	▪ "Family Literacy Night promotes ways for parents to be involved in their child's academic and reading progress." ▪ "Fathers Reading Every Day (FRED)" ▪ "I Love to Read Month"
Family involvement programs	▪ "Parent training sessions - Our Title I teachers will work with parents on the parent component of our supplemental EIR program. Parents will come for a training session to learn how to coach their child on reading strategies while reading with them at night…" ▪ "Muffins for Moms, Donuts for Dads"
Generic parent events	▪ "Family Fun nights, PTO meetings" ▪ "Back to School Night"
Book fair/club	▪ "Scholastic Book Fair" ▪ "Book in a Bag system, Book Clubs…" ▪ "Recycle Book Exchange"
Curriculum information	▪ "An overview of balanced literacy is presented at curriculum night(s). Tips are given to care givers for supporting or extending reading skills in the home environment."

n=27

Note: This figure presents information related to districts that notify parents regarding school/district strategies for promoting parent engagement in student literacy; district plans may list more than one program or strategy.

INTERVENTION

Eighty percent of literacy plans identify specific intervention methods for supporting students reading below grade level (Figure 2.13). Districts that identify specific intervention methods most frequently mention small group instruction (58 percent) or tutoring (50 percent). A smaller proportion mentions out of school hours programs, push-in intervention services, and pull-out intervention services (10 to 14 percent) (Figure 2.14).

Most district plans address specific intervention programs used to help struggling students, **while nearly one-third** *do not* **describe any intervention programs (30 percent).** In total, the sampled plans mention 129 intervention programs or methods. Some of the most common programs include Read Naturally, Leveled Literacy Intervention, Minnesota Reading Corps, out of school hours programs, Guided Reading, and PALS (10 to 30 percent) (Figure 2.15).

Figure 2.13: Districts Identifying Specific Intervention Methods
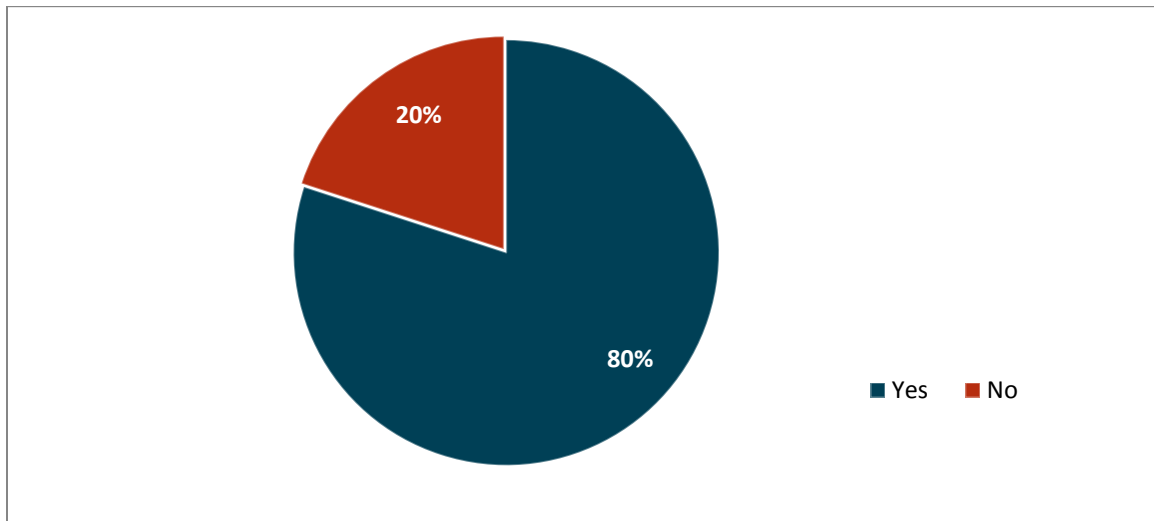
n=50

Figure 2.14: Intervention Methods Identified in the Plan
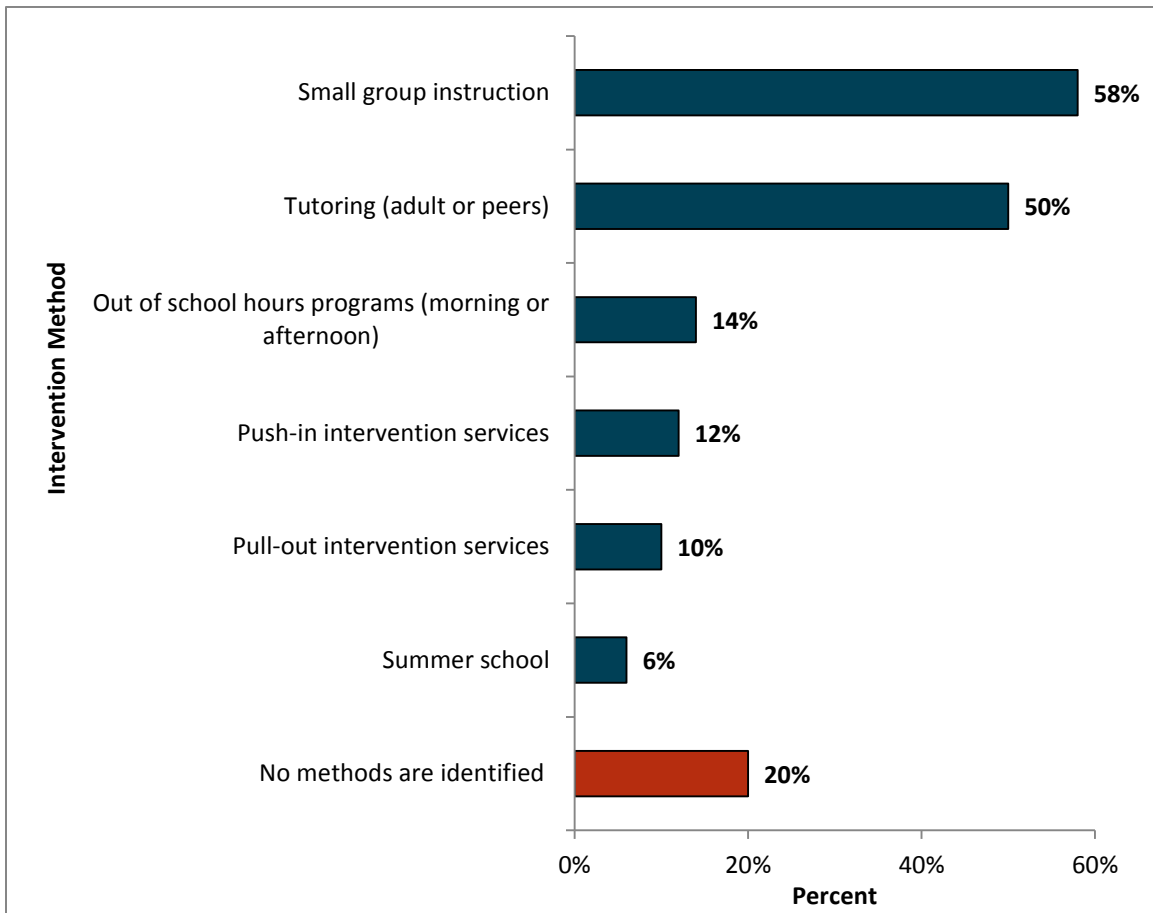
n=50
Note: District plans may list more than one intervention method.

Figure 2.15: Intervention Programs Identified in the Plan
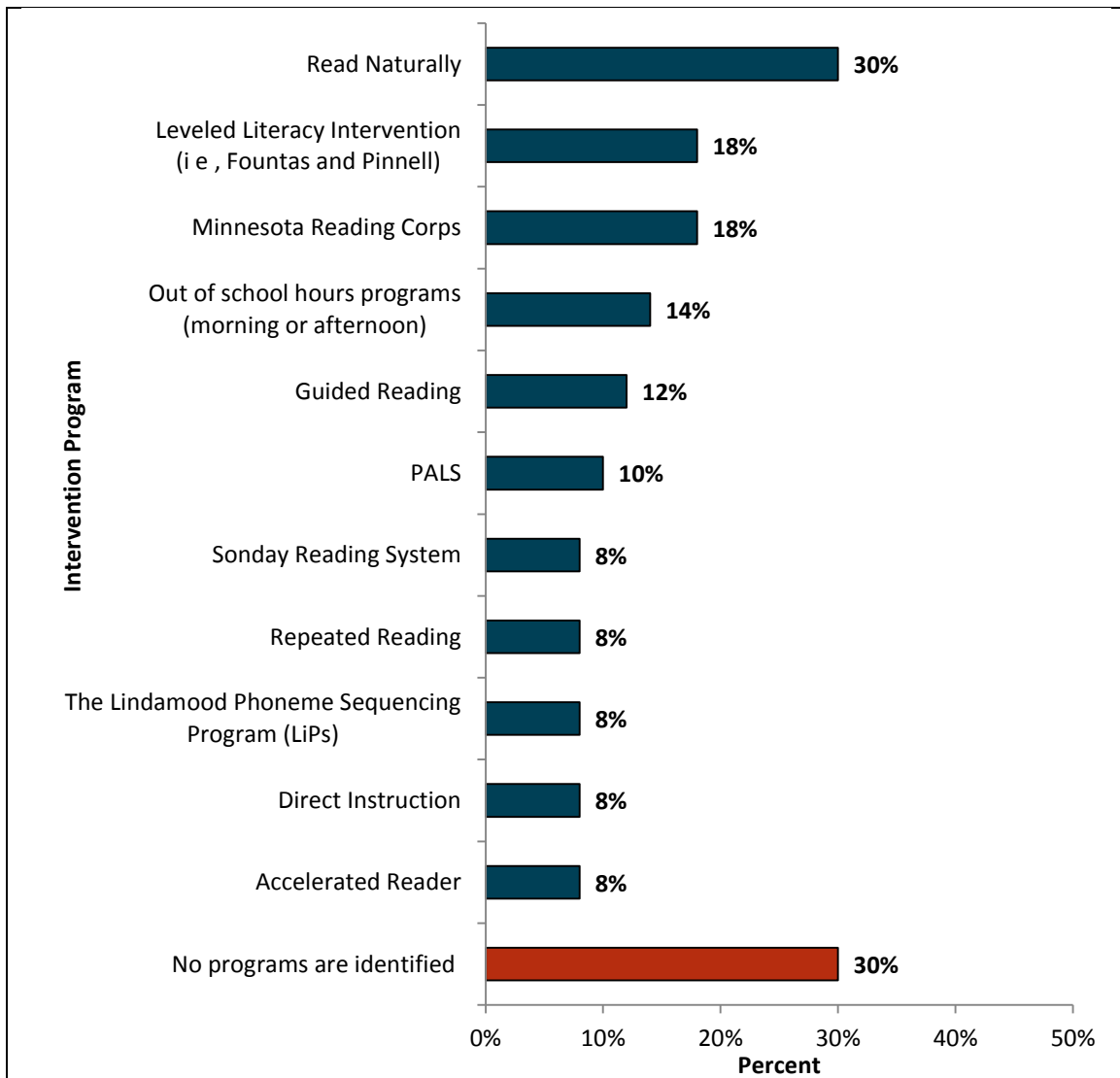
Less Frequently-Mentioned Programs	Count
Read 180	3
Daily 5	3
Edmark Reading	3
Florida Center for Reading Research	3
Great Leaps	3
Making Words	3
Reading Recovery	3
Words Their Way	3

n=50; Intervention Program n =129
Note: District plans may list more than one intervention program; please see the data supplement for complete plan content regarding intervention programs.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Nearly all examined plans identify professional development content related to literacy development (94 percent). However, the content in most of these plans is vague (76 percent) (Figure 2.16). Very few literacy plans specify how professional development is aligned with scientifically-based reading and oral language instruction and intervention strategies (10 percent) (Figure 2.17). For instance, one plan states that, "Professional development focuses on research-based core literacy instruction with a special focus on meeting the needs of under-served students."

Furthermore, *none* of the examined plans specifically link planned professional development areas to local data (Figure 2.17). Although districts frequently mention that professional development offerings are developed based on data, no districts describe this process in detail in their literacy plans. To illustrate this point, sample plan content that mentions the use of data state:

- "Professional development that is data-driven and literacy focused is an integral part of successfully implementing our literacy plan. Professional development opportunities will come in many forms and be offered throughout the year."

- "Based on student performance data, the district has determined small group instruction will be the Reading/Literacy Professional Development focus for the 2015-2016 school year."

Notably, many districts vaguely describe the frequency of professional development events as occurring "across the school year" or "multiple times," but do not provide any specific numbers, such as "once per semester" or "once per month" (42 percent). About one-half of the plans specifically describe the frequency of professional development events at three times or more per year (56 percent) (Figure 2.18).
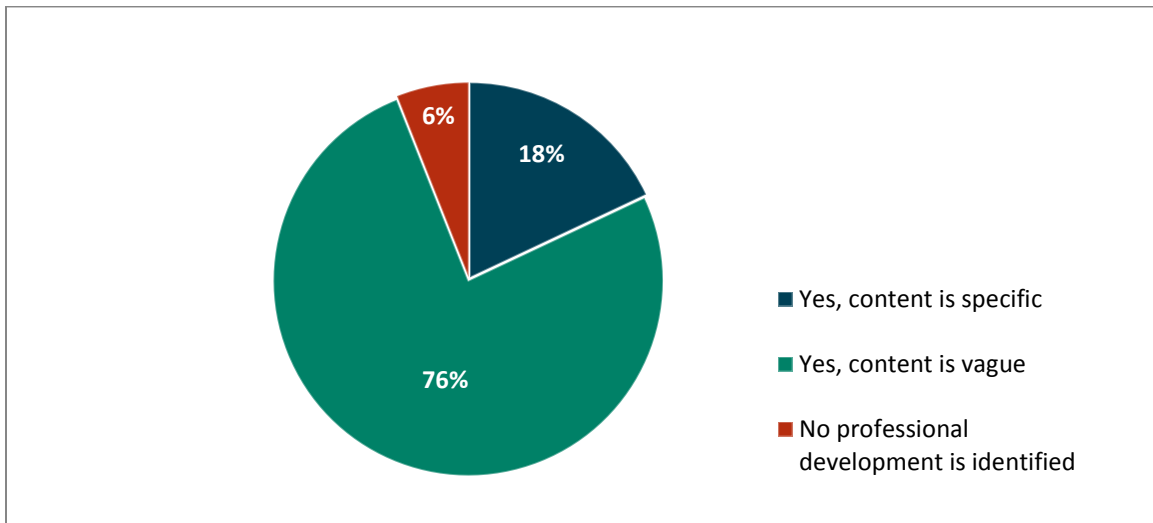
Plans more commonly identify methods for providing necessary professional development to support literacy instruction (74 percent) (Figure 2.19). Specific types of professional development listed include professional learning communities (PLC), group meeting, and instructional coaching and mentorships. In addition, several plans mention workshops, in-service days, and observations (Figure 2.20). Plans specify professional development topics that include data analysis (9 mentions), instructional strategies (8 mentions), phonics (6 mentions), comprehension (6 mentions), and assessment (6 mentions) (Figure 2.21).

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY

Approximately three-quarters of districts (74 percent) *do not* identify professional development content for supporting ELLs (Figure 2.22), and the remaining districts (26 percent) describe content in vague terms (Figure 2.23). The plans that do list strategies for supporting instructors of ELLs describe ongoing training, classroom support from ELL staff, and group planning (Figure 2.23).

Only a minority of districts (16 percent) provide professional development in culturally responsive pedagogy (Figure 2.24). Those districts employ the following formats for professional development: teacher training (e.g., "all district teachers receive training once every three years to recognize students' diverse needs in cross-cultural settings"); specialized programs (e.g., Culturally-Based Arts Integration program); instructional support; and informal learning (e.g., monthly book study). Figure 2.25 displays sample content cited from these plans.

Figure 2.16: Districts Identifying Professional Development Content

| SAMPLE PLAN CONTENT DESCRIBING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT |
|---|
| ▪ "The School District recognizes the value of professional development and provides a mentorship program for new teachers under the guidance of a veteran district professional, provides for professional growth through its staff development funds and via building leadership and faculty meetings." |
| ▪ "All certified staff collaborate for 50 minutes every other week and in-service days are provided to promote literacy practices." |
| ▪ "Teachers will participate and benefit from the following professional development on scientifically based reading instruction by: A. Trainings during PLCs (Professional Learning Community) B. Professional Development (Staff Workshop Days) C. Teacher In-Service Days" |
| ▪ "Weekly 2-hour professional development meetings are scheduled within the school calendar. The school supports a professional development coordinator to develop a topical schedule attending to the academic and non-academic goals of the current school year…" |

n=50

Figure 2.17: Professional Development Related to
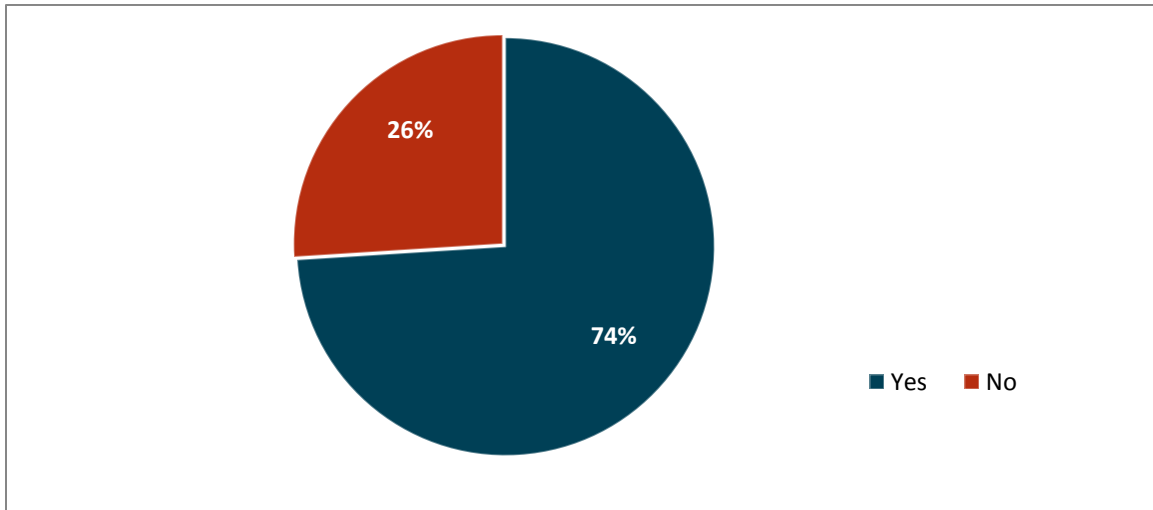
Instructional Strategies and Local Data
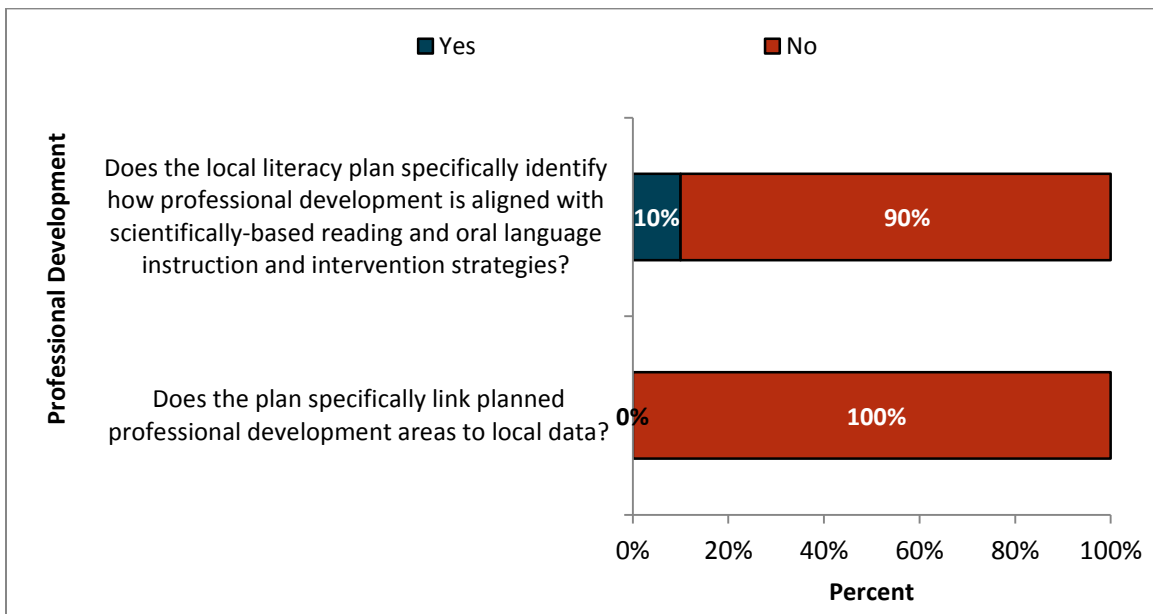
n=50

Figure 2.18: Frequency of Literacy-Related Professional Development
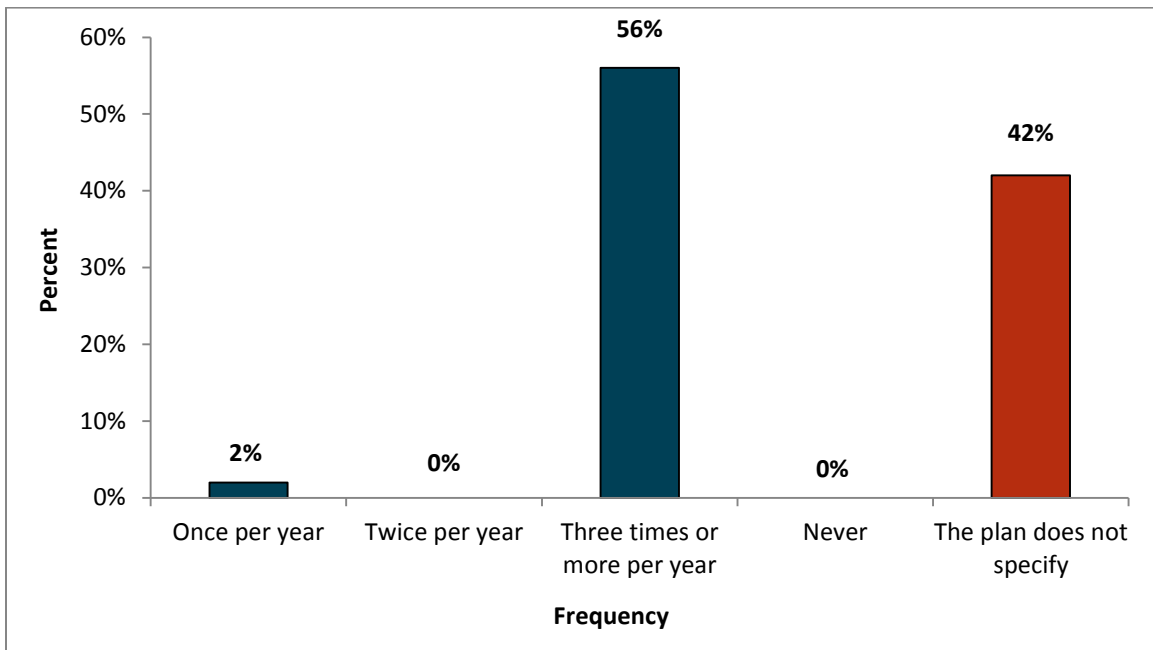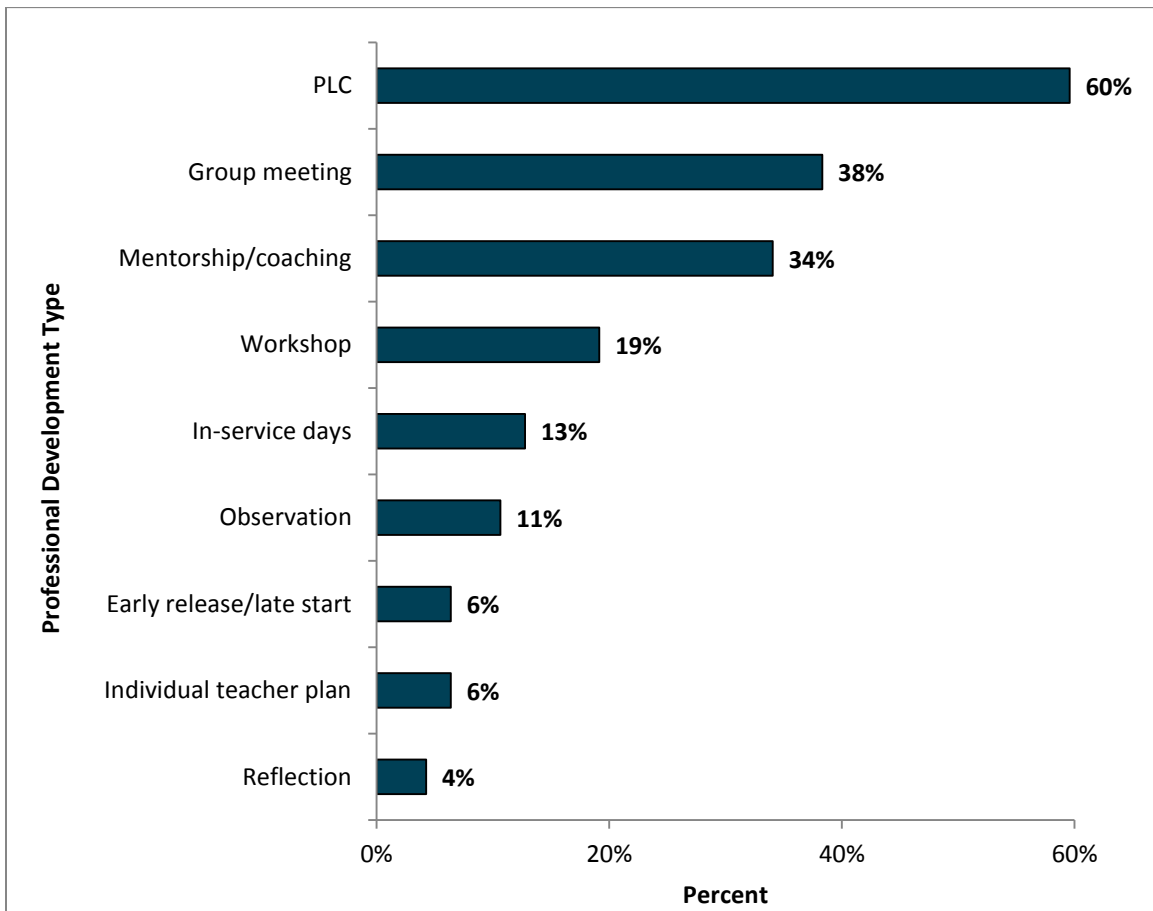

n=50

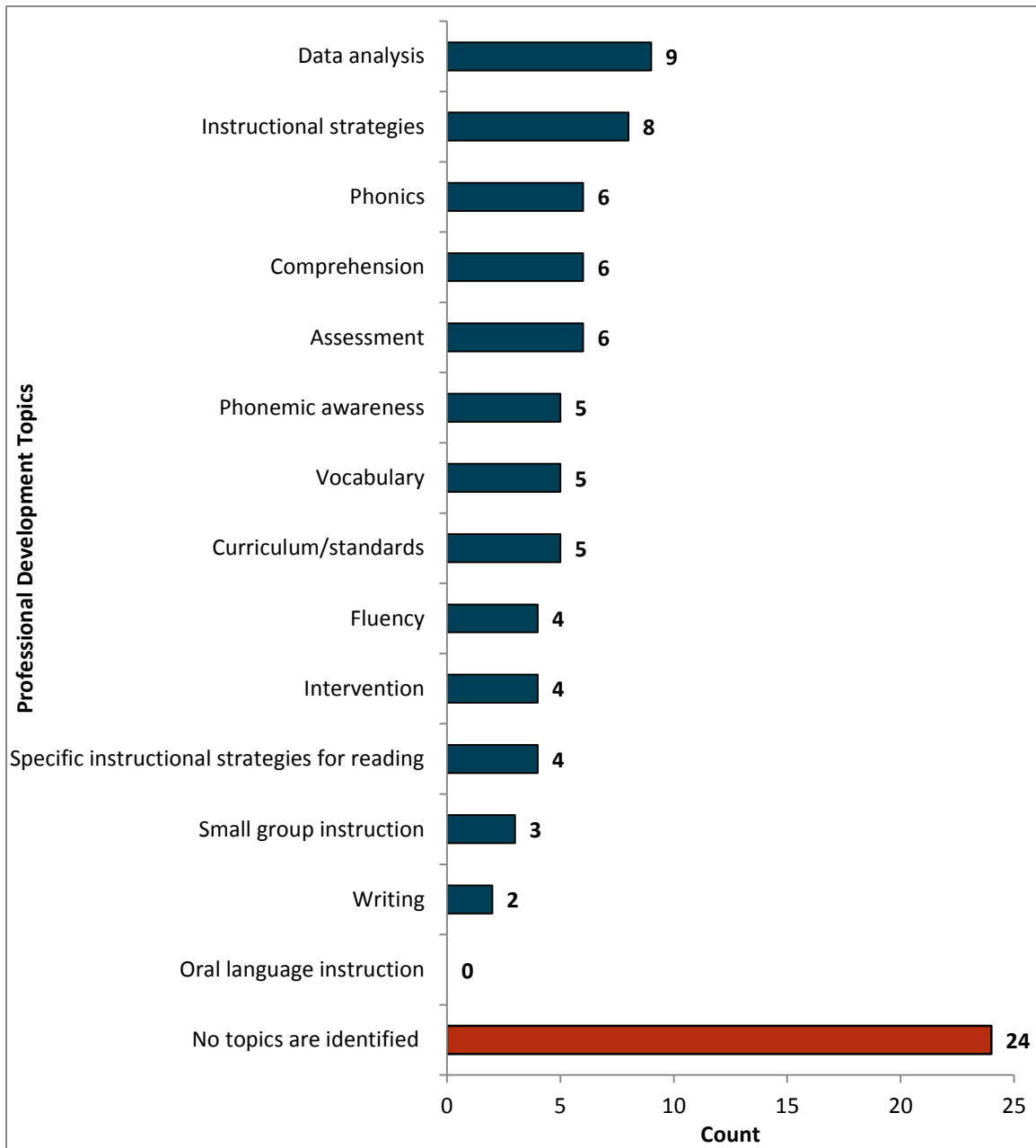**Figure 2.19: Identifying Methods for Providing Professional Development**

n=50

Figure 2.20: Types of Professional Development

n=47

Note: District plans may list more than one type of professional development.
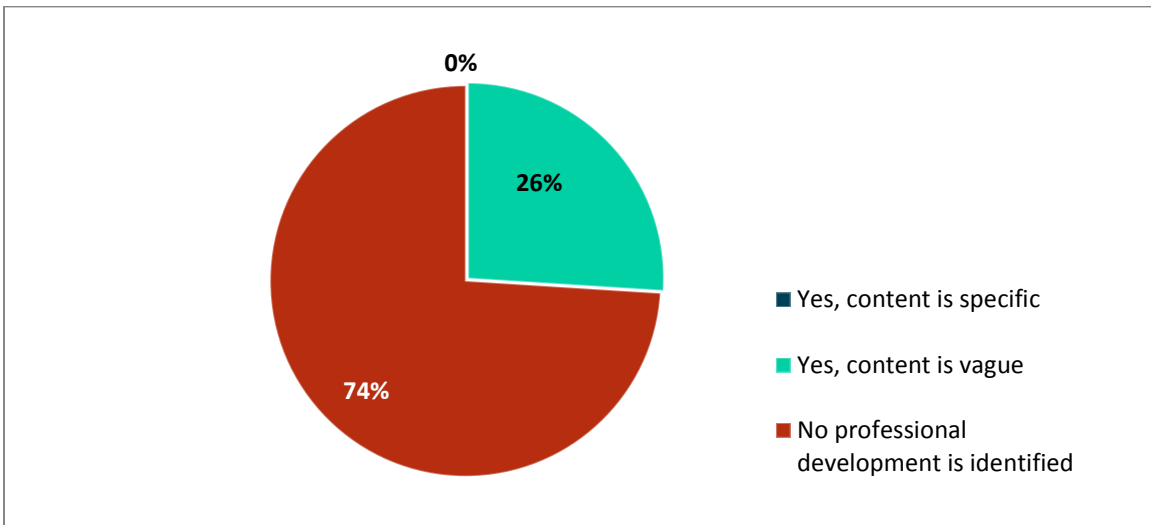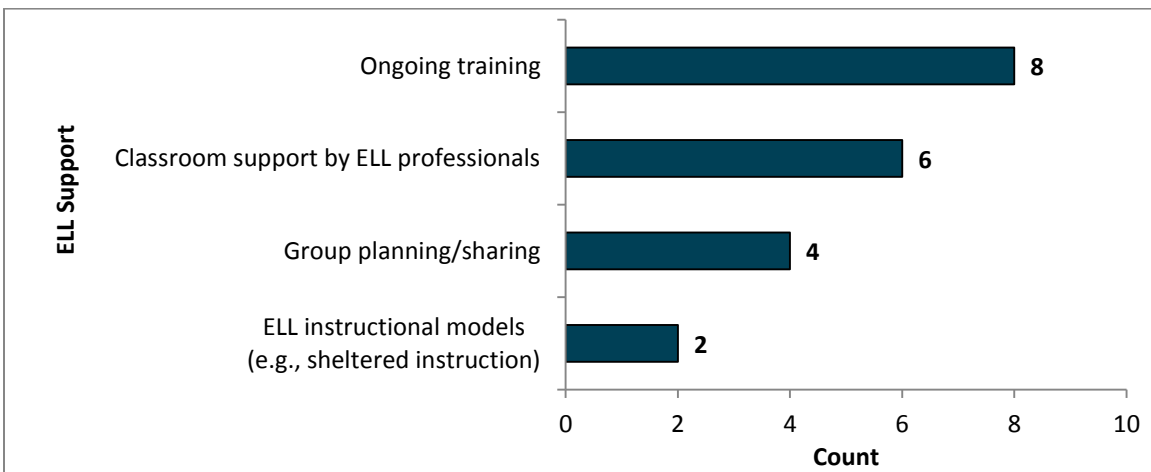
Figure 2.21: Professional Development Topics

Professional Development Topics	Count
Data analysis	9
Instructional strategies	8
Phonics	6
Comprehension	6
Assessment	6
Phonemic awareness	5
Vocabulary	5
Curriculum/standards	5
Fluency	4
Intervention	4
Specific instructional strategies for reading	4
Small group instruction	3
Writing	2
Oral language instruction	0
No topics are identified	24

n=50
Note: District plans may list more than one professional development topic.

Figure 2.22: Districts Identifying Professional Development Content Regarding English Language Learners

- Yes, content is specific
- Yes, content is vague
- No professional development is identified

n=50

Figure 2.23: Strategies to Support Instructors of English Language Learners

SAMPLE ELL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONTENT
▪ "All district teachers will be trained once every three years to… serve the oral language and linguistic needs of EL students."
▪ The district "creates professional development experiences for staff to address the diverse needs of English Learners through three formats: Sheltered Instruction, Leadership Training and the use of evidenced based practices in their teaching."
▪ "In the 2012-13 school year, the school plans to attend to cross-cultural instruction and effective instruction of students with English as a second language. The school plans to identify professional development needs by conducting an initial needs assessment across these two areas of instruction and then develop staff development priorities."

n=13

Note: This figure presents information related to districts with plans that identify professional development content for supporting ELLs; district plans may list more than one type of professional development.

Figure 2.24: Districts Identifying Professional Development Content Regarding Culturally Responsive Pedagogy
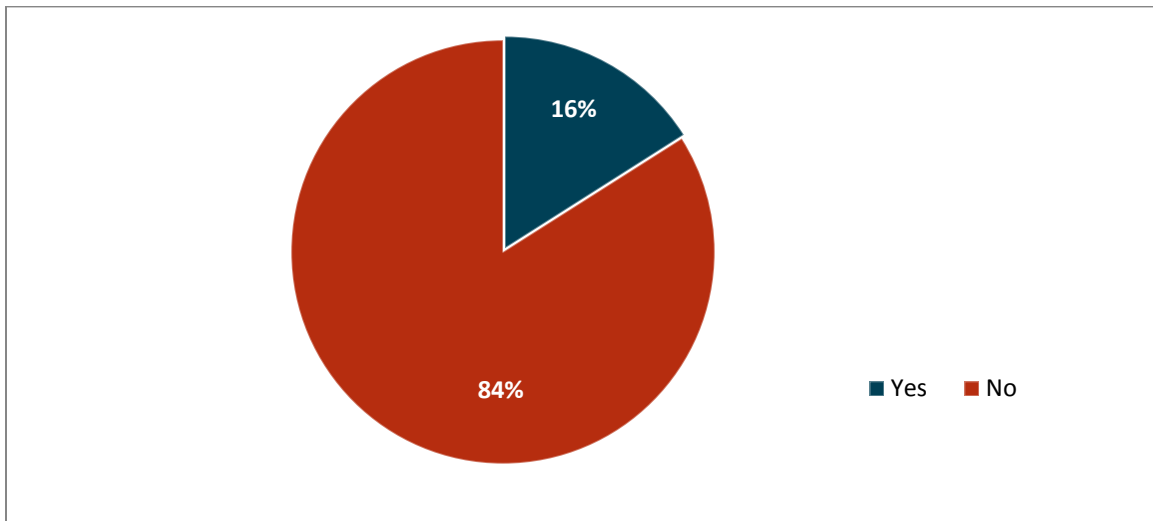
n=50

Figure 2.25: Strategies to Support Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

SAMPLE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONTENT
▪ **Teacher training:** "Staff development on the diverse needs of ELL and minority students is provided through an Integration Grant from the Minnesota Department of Education. Staff has the opportunity to participate in a monthly book study on various cultures."
▪ **Specialized program**: "One of our Student Support Services programs is the Indian Education program which provides academic and cultural services to our students and teachers. We have recently implemented a Culturally-Based Arts Integration program in our schools with American Indian students. This program is integrated into our elementary classrooms and benefits all students, not just American Indian students…"
▪ **Informal learning**: "…our teachers benefit from learning about how other districts serve students of different cultures…Many of the techniques that help English Language Learners help students who come from homes without a rich literacy background and also help students with learning needs."

n=8

Note: District plans may list more than one type of strategy for culturally responsive pedagogy.
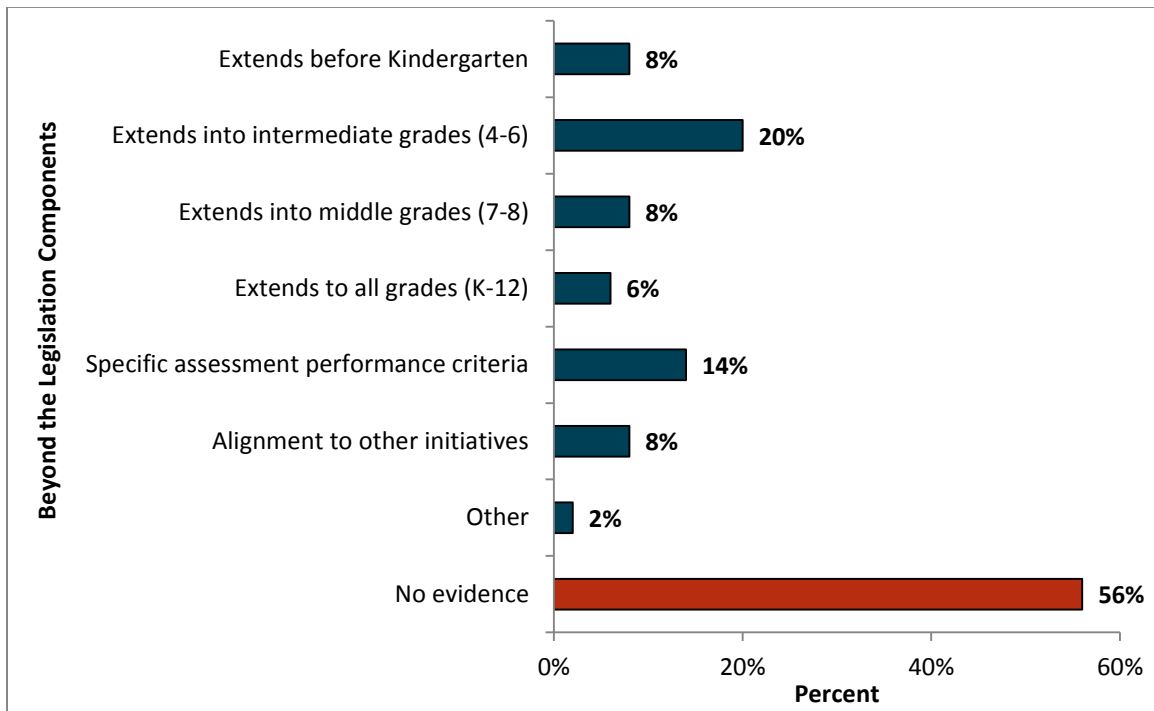
BEYOND THE LEGISLATION

Nearly half of the sampled literacy plans contain content that goes beyond the legislation (44 percent). Twenty percent of these districts describe literacy plans for Grade 4 to Grade 6, and a smaller percentage describes plans for grades before Kindergarten (8 percent), for Grade 7 and Grade 8 (8 percent), or for all K-12 grades (6 percent) (Figure 2.26). With regards to specific components of literacy plans that extend beyond the legislative requirement, 17 plans describe assessments used at different grade levels and several plans provide information on assessment performance criteria (6 districts), plan alignment to curriculum or standards (6 districts), and intervention programs or literacy programs (4 districts) (Figure 2.27).

NEXT STEPS

Over one-half of sampled plans contain content that touches on future requirements for literacy plans (56 percent). Forty-two percent of the literacy plans describe strategies for determining the proper reading intervention for students. Less than one-third of plans describe the process for adapting reading strategy to enhance reading progress (30 percent). Nearly one-half of the plans describe progress monitoring to measure the efficacy of an intervention (48 percent) (Figure 2.28).
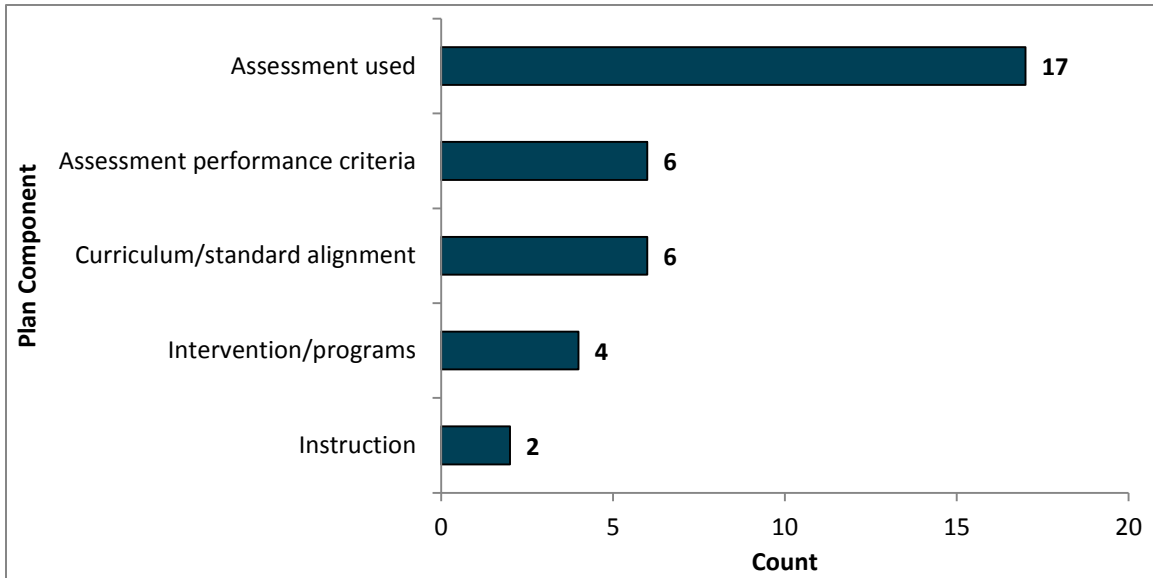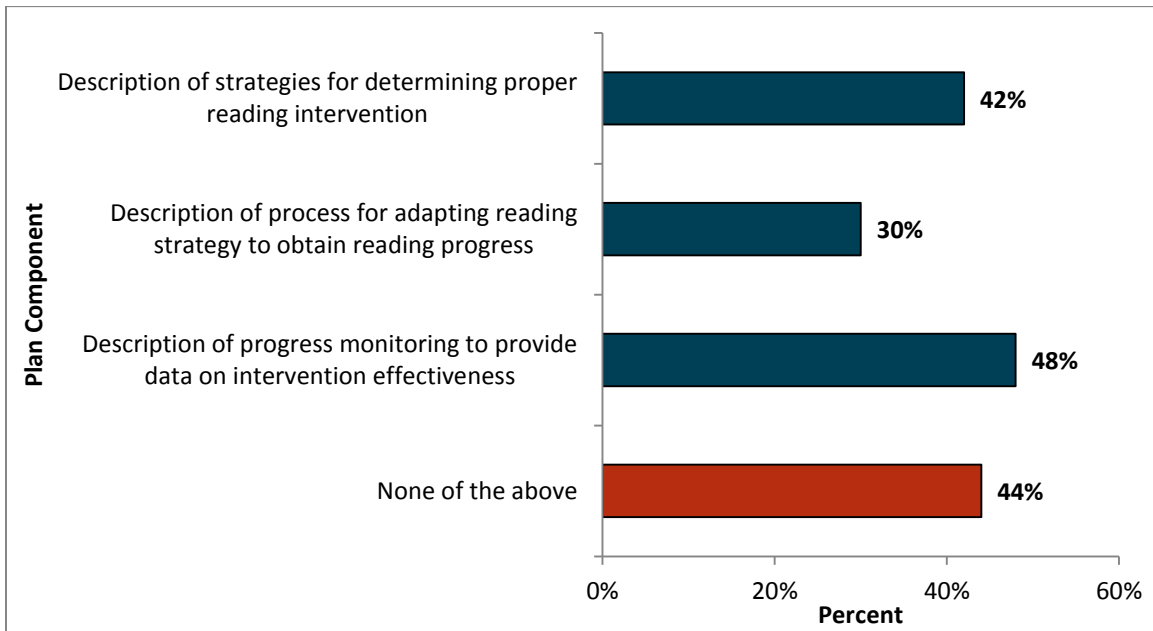
Figure 2.26: Beyond the Legislation Plan Content

n=50
Note: District plans may fall into more than one "beyond the legislation" category.

Figure 2.27: Specific Components of Beyond the Legislation Plan Content

n=24

Figure 2.28: Content that Meets Legislative "Next Steps"

n=50

Note: District plans may fall in more than one category where they meet legislative "next steps."

PROJECT EVALUATION FORM

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CAVEAT