

Virginia Community College System Professional Development Program Assessment: Final Report

Executive Summary

June 21, 2007

Prepared for:

Virginia Community College System (VCCS)
Office of Professional Development



Prepared by:
Caliber, an ICF International Company
10530 Rosehaven Street, Suite 400
Fairfax, VA 22030

VCCS Professional Development Program Assessment – Final Report

Executive Summary

Introduction

In June 2006 the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) initiated an assessment of the system-level Professional Development (PD) program to determine its effectiveness and future directions. This assessment, conducted by Caliber, an ICF International company, builds on a previous formal program evaluation, which occurred in 1998, and is designed to provide VCCS leaders with the information they need to make decisions about the future of the PD program. Goals of the current assessment were to describe the processes and activities currently in place to accomplish the program mission, assess employees' participation in system-level PD activities as well as other PD activities, assess current professional development needs of VCCS employees, begin to assess the impact of PD (including impact on participant satisfaction, student learning, and retention), define the desired program outcomes, begin to develop strategies for measuring these outcomes, and begin to benchmark the VCCS professional development program with those of other systems.

Since the early 1990s, the VCCS has been committed to building a system-level comprehensive PD program to enhance its educational services and programs. The initial focus was on faculty professional development, but the VCCS system-level PD program has grown to include activities that provide support for all areas of PD—discipline, instructional, career, and organizational development—for all VCCS employees, including Full-Time Teaching Faculty, Adjunct Teaching Faculty, Administrative/Professional Faculty, and Classified Staff. These program activities currently include Peer Group Conferences, Professional Development and Research Grants, the New Horizons Conference, and a variety of other activities, conferences, and awards.

The VCCS system-level PD program is administered by the VCCS Office of Professional Development, and supported by the VCCS Professional Development Committee, which includes one representative from each of the 23 community colleges in the VCCS and the chairpersons of the five Regional Centers for Teaching Excellence.

Approach

This assessment employed a mixed-methods approach, collecting both qualitative and quantitative data, and each step of the assessment was designed to build on the previous steps. This approach provided rich and systematic data about PD processes and outcomes. First, in order to develop an initial understanding of the full context of the VCCS PD program, identify current PD needs, and begin to define desired outcomes, the assessment began with a series of individual interviews with “key informants,” which included 14 system office personnel and Professional Development Committee members. These interviews provided a great deal of factual information about the VCCS PD program and the history of PD throughout the VCCS, as well as interviewee opinions about the program mission, goals, and effectiveness.

Second, based on information collected through these interviews and archival records, Caliber researchers developed a “logic model” that lays out the context for VCCS PD, the mission and goals, activities, processes (inputs and outputs), and desired outcomes (short-term, intermediate, long-term). This logic model also clarified the underlying assumptions and external factors likely to impact the desired outcomes. Caliber researchers worked with the PD committee to confirm and refine this initial model and used this logic model as a tool to begin to articulate a shared vision and priorities for VCCS system-level

PD program activities. This logic model guided researchers through the remaining steps of the program assessment.

The third step was to conduct focus groups with larger samples of VCCS personnel. Caliber researchers developed a focus group protocol and a plan for conducting focus groups throughout Virginia. Topics included the VCCS context, current PD needs, and desired PD outcomes. These focus groups provided a broader perspective and allowed researchers to sample from a wide variety of regions and position types. Caliber researchers conducted a total of nine focus groups with a total of 64 faculty, administrators, and classified staff from almost all of the Virginia community colleges.

All of these project steps provided the foundation for the fourth step, which was to develop and administer a survey to collect information about VCCS employees' current participation in VCCS-sponsored program activities and other PD activities, the PD needs of VCCS employees, and the impact of the various VCCS-sponsored PD activities on desired outcomes.

This web-based survey employed a branching format in order to collect detailed information about VCCS PD participation and perceptions while keeping the burden on respondents to a minimum. All VCCS personnel were invited to complete the survey, and a total of 3,105 VCCS employees completed the survey. Survey data analyses included response rates, characteristics of respondents, survey sample representation of all VCCS employees, participation in and satisfaction with/outcomes of VCCS-sponsored PD activities, participation in other PD activities, overall PD outcomes, institutional support for PD, current PD needs, and feedback on employees' desired modes of PD (e.g., conferences, workshops).

Forty-seven percent of the Full-Time (FT) Teaching Faculty, Administrative/Professional Faculty, and Classified Staff surveyed completed the assessment, and their demographic characteristics were very similar to VCCS as a whole. The response rate was lower for Adjunct Teaching Faculty, but available information did not allow us to accurately assess this response rate or to compare this sample with the VCCS population demographics for this group, so survey results concerning Adjunct Teaching Faculty should be interpreted with caution.

To supplement the quantitative survey data, Caliber researchers examined some of the specific components of the VCCS PD program using case study analysis techniques. Based on input from the VCCS, these case studies focused on Peer Groups (the overall process and one example Peer Group) and Professional Development Grants (again, the overall process and one example grant). Researchers reviewed available materials and conducted interviews in order to provide more detailed qualitative data for these selected PD components and to begin to better understand emerging promising practices. Caliber researchers also conducted an initial benchmarking study of professional development programs at three other community college systems -- the Maricopa Community College District, the North Carolina Community College System, and the North Texas Community College Consortium -- to begin to understand the context of the VCCS PD program in a national scope. This included website searches and conversations with the PD directors focused on the background, organization and management, program planning processes, resource availability and allocation, and implementation of these PD programs.

Taken together, results of these project steps provide an in-depth understanding of VCCS PD practices, needs, and outcomes. The final step was to integrate these results and develop conclusions and recommendations for the system-wide PD program itself, as well as for future program assessment activities.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, results of this assessment were extremely positive. The VCCS PD program has been highly effective in meeting a wide variety of professional development needs for its diverse groups of employees over the past five years with level funding. VCCS employees in all job categories indicated that they are involved in an extensive amount of PD from many different sources, including but not limited to the VCCS system-level PD program activities. The VCCS system-level PD program also has the potential with some targeted efforts and new resources to become an even more exemplary program. Results of this assessment provide a wealth of information that can be used to identify specific areas for program improvements.

VCCS System-Level PD Program Components

Overall, assessment results related to each of the VCCS system-level PD program components were very positive. Survey results indicate that employees are satisfied with the activities and perceive their participation as having a positive impact their job performance.

Peer Group Conferences

Peer Group Conferences are the most widely attended VCCS-sponsored professional development activity, attended by 47 percent of survey respondents (during the previous five years). Participation rates are highest for Full-Time Teaching Faculty and Administrative Faculty, with almost 70 percent of these groups reporting having attended at least one Peer Group Conference in the past five years. It is interesting to note that even though Classified Staff are less likely to attend Peer Group conferences than these other two groups, they are more likely to attend these events than any other VCCS-sponsored event – 27 percent of Classified Staff survey respondents had attended at least once in the previous five years.

Participants are generally very satisfied with Peer Groups. Over 80 percent of survey respondents who had attended Peer Group Conferences agreed that Peer Groups are an effective vehicle for keeping up to date in one's field and an important source of professional renewal and revitalization. In addition, most respondents reported that they had gained new knowledge and skills that they had applied to their jobs. Networking is a particularly important benefit of Peer Groups, with 94 percent of respondents reporting that these conferences are an effective outlet for communication between peers who have similar interests and challenges.

There is also some room for improvement. Some focus group participants suggested that the quality of Peer Groups varies across disciplines. The conferences are planned by members of each discipline, and the quality depends on the skills and commitment of those willing to step up and do the planning. The VCCS Office of Professional Development is working to improve the Peer Group planning process, to help ensure that planning begins well in advance and to provide support and guidance to the program planners, but the quality of the conferences will continue to depend on volunteers from each discipline. While only 31 percent of those attending Peer Group Conferences had helped plan a conference in the past, 64 percent reported that they would either maybe or definitely be willing to help in the future. Some would also like to see the usefulness of Peer Groups broadened even further, for example, by more often taking advantage of these meetings to accomplish needed tasks, such as curriculum development. Also, most survey respondents (65 percent) would like to see Peer Groups meet more often, perhaps once a year. They also saw the usefulness of maintaining contact with other Peer Group members between conferences, and approaches they endorsed for doing this included discipline-specific regional events and an online discussion forum.

Peer Groups are clearly a cornerstone of the PD program. They require a substantial investment of time and financial resources from the VCCS Office of Professional Development. Based on this assessment, this is money well spent. The VCCS should continue to work to improve the Peer Group program and

even consider expanding this program. The national benchmarking that was part of this assessment did not uncover any programs quite like Peer Groups in other states. Interviews and focus groups revealed that the Peer Group program is clearly valued by employees, and that these conferences offer professional renewal, build professional knowledge and skills, and provide important networking opportunities.

Professional Development Grants

The Professional Development (PD) Grants are another key component of the VCCS system-wide PD program. The number of employees who can receive these grants is necessarily limited, with 18 percent of Full-Time Teaching Faculty and 9 percent of all survey respondents reporting having received one or more grants. PD Grants have a substantial impact on participants, and the impact generally extends beyond the actual grantees. Ninety-three percent of grant recipients surveyed believed that these grants are an effective vehicle for professional development. Fifty-five percent of those who reported receiving grants had received more than one, with a few respondents having received as many as four grants. The PD Grant case study revealed that these grants can result directly in improved course offerings, which has an immediate impact on students. In addition, the programs started by these grants are sometimes continued with funding from the colleges themselves, which can also sustain and expand their impact.

One potential limitation of the PD Grants that was brought up in the interviews and the case study is the fact that these grants are not evenly distributed across colleges. The percentage of survey respondents from individual colleges who applied for PD Grants ranged from 8 to 44 percent. In addition, there have been occasions where not all of the allocated funds were given out, because too few applications were recommended for funding. Expanding the awareness of these opportunities and interest in application would be extremely beneficial, especially at those colleges that have historically been underrepresented. Based on the survey, it appears that most Full-Time Teaching Faculty (82 percent) are at least aware of these grants, but 33 percent had only heard of them and were not familiar with the program.

New Horizons Conference

Survey results for the New Horizons Conference were nearly as positive as they were for Peer Group Conferences. A somewhat smaller percentage of survey respondents report having attended at least one of these conferences in the past five years than had attended Peer Groups (32 percent) and again Full-Time Teaching and Administrative Faculty were most likely to report attending (51 and 48 percent of respondents, respectively). Because of the scope of this conference, it has potential to appeal to a larger audience, perhaps even extending beyond the faculty and staff from Virginia community colleges.

Regional Centers for Teaching Excellence (RCTEs)

Regional Centers for Teaching Excellence (RCTEs) touch a large number of VCCS employees as well, with about 17 percent of the survey respondents having attended at least one RCTE-sponsored event. Again Full-Time Teaching Faculty and Administrative Faculty (31 and 21 percent, respectively) were most likely to attend. Because these centers focus on teaching, it is not too surprising that very few Classified Staff (4 percent) report having attended these events. A substantial percentage of survey respondents (26 percent) had not heard of the centers. Adjunct Teaching Faculty were least likely to report that they were aware of the RCTEs (only 59 percent had heard of them). Many respondents reported meeting new colleagues as a result of attending RCTE events (72 percent), but ratings for this item were lower for the RCTE events than they were for other events (e.g., Peer Groups), so networking is a relatively less important benefit. These events generally focus on teaching and other broadly relevant topics rather than on the participants' particular disciplines, and they are often one-time events where a speaker presents to the group – a format that does not encourage networking – so this difference is not surprising. In fact, it is interesting that so many participants actually do report meeting new colleagues through RCTE events.

Of those who reported attending one RCTE event, 68 percent had attended two or more, which could be viewed as a reflection of their overall satisfaction with these events. In fact, 80 percent said that they would recommend RCTE events to others, and 82 percent agreed that these events are effective vehicles for keeping people up to date on important information related to teaching. Based on these results, it seems reasonable to speculate that if more people were aware of the RCTEs and the quality of the events they sponsor, attendance would likely increase. Improved or expanded marketing of RCTE events is likely to pay off.

Other VCCS System-Level PD Components

Thirty-two percent of Full-Time Teaching Faculty and 29 percent of Adjunct Teaching Faculty had attended the New Faculty Seminar. It is interesting to note that Adjunct Teaching Faculty are much more likely to report having attended this seminar than any other VCCS-sponsored professional development event. Recall that the survey asked respondents about events attended during the past five years, so it is likely that many other faculty had attend this seminar as well in the more distant past. Perceptions of this program were again very positive, and networking opportunities were rated very highly.

Fewer employees have had an opportunity to attend the Leadership Academies. Ten percent of Classified Staff report having attended the Classified Staff Leadership Academy during the previous five years, and 21 percent of Administrative/Professional Faculty and 7 percent of Full-Time Teaching Faculty report having attended the Leadership Development Conference. The vast majority of participants indicated that they had gained new or improved skills and that the conference had a positive effect on the way they did their jobs. Ratings were particularly positive for the Classified Staff Leadership Academy.

Professional Development Workshop Mini-Grants were most often received by Administrative/Professional Faculty (9 percent of the sample) and Full-Time Teaching Faculty (7 percent of the sample). Perceptions of these grants were very positive – 96 percent of those receiving them reported that they had been able to provide a high quality learning experience as a result. *Inquiry: The Journal of the Virginia Community Colleges* is widely read, with most respondents reporting having read at least one or two articles during the past five years, and a few (19 percent) reporting reading many or most articles. Fewer had submitted an article (only 4 percent), and it is likely that the quality and usefulness of this journal could be enhanced by encouraging more people to submit articles.

The remaining VCCS-sponsored programs necessarily have fewer participants. Less than 1 percent of survey respondents reported having received a fellowship or professorship during the previous five years and only about 3 percent had participated in the International Exchange. Perceptions of the effectiveness of all of these programs were extremely high, higher than for virtually all other VCCS PD programs. While these programs touch fewer employees, they have an enormous impact on those who are involved.

Recommendation #1: Continue to support the variety of current PD program activities (awards, grants, peer-reviewed journal, international exchange, leadership academies, peer group meetings, Regional Centers for Teaching Excellence, conferences, and scholarships) through appropriate staffing and resource allocations.

VCCS System-Level PD Program Participants

Another important issue to consider is who should be included in the system-level PD program, who currently is included, and how well the needs of the various subgroups are being served. Peer Groups were originally designed for faculty, but there is a growing desire to provide similar opportunities for Classified Staff as well. During the past five years, only 27 percent of Classified Staff attended a Peer Group Conference. If these conferences are to serve all employees equally, more attention needs to be paid to reasons for Classified Staff's low rates of participation (e.g., there may not yet be Peer Groups for some functional areas; colleges may not be as likely to support their travel costs) and additional funds need to be allocated to the system-level PD program. PD for Classified Staff has become an increasingly

important objective, but these employees are not currently benefiting from the VCCS PD program to the same extent as the Full-Time Teaching Faculty and other employee groups.

Adjunct Teaching Faculty are also not currently as well served by the PD program as other faculty. One likely reason for their low rates of participation is that they have other jobs and do not have the time to participate or an interest in traveling. The national benchmarking demonstrates that other systems are struggling with how to best serve their adjunct faculty as well, and this is likely to be an ongoing challenge. Focus group participants thought the system could do more to reach out to all employees and encourage them to take advantage of the opportunities that are available.

Some systems tie formal rewards and even payment to participation (e.g. Maricopa offers one-time stipends and higher salaries for degree completion), and this is one possible approach to getting more people involved. In fact, quite a few VCCS employees, especially Full-Time Teaching Faculty (50 percent) already report that professional development is tied to their performance evaluations. The original plan for the VCCS PD initiative encouraged colleges to develop and maintain an Individual Development Plans (IDP) for each employee. This tool is currently underutilized, with over half the survey sample never having completed an IDP and only 24 percent reporting an up to date IDP (updated within the past year). The IDPs, if used more widely, would provide an excellent mechanism for linking professional development to career goals and formal rewards. In fact, many focus group participants thought that PD should be tied to performance evaluations and salary increases

Results of the current assessment related to Adjunct Teaching Faculty are only suggestive, and a more targeted study of this group along with an assessment of the obstacles to their participation would be useful if providing them with PD is determined to be an ongoing priority. They are a very large and important part of the VCCS workforce, and this is reflective of what is happening in other community colleges nationally.

Recommendation #2: Determine how to better attend to the professional development needs of specific populations, including Adjunct Teaching Faculty and Classified Staff. The VCCS should conduct additional research about VCCS Adjunct Teaching Faculty professional development needs to identify approaches to provide PD to them effectively and efficiently.

VCCS System-Level PD Program Content

Focus group participants and survey respondents are involved in a wide variety of other professional development activities beyond those provided by the VCCS system-level program. The VCCS program is designed to compliment these other activities, and focus group participants agreed that this is an appropriate role. Between 24 and 32 percent of survey respondents had completed courses (credit or non-credit) at their own community college or another higher education institution during the past five years. Thirty percent had been working toward a postsecondary degree. Respondents from all four broad categories of jobs were about equally likely to be involved in these types of coursework.

Most had attended a workshop or seminar (75 percent) or a professional conference (66 percent) during the past five years. Many had attended a national conference (39 percent) and respondents were involved in a wide variety of other activities as well, including presenting at or planning conferences and workshops, serving on VCCS and other professional committees, and participating in formal symposia.

PD and training activities are provided in a variety of contexts both within and outside of the VCCS, including efforts at the individual colleges and from other sources within the system office. With such a wide variety of ongoing activities and opportunities, more intentional coordination of the available offerings would be extremely useful, to help fill the gaps, remove redundancies, and improve the overall quality of VCCS professional development. Since the role of the VCCS system-level PD program is to compliment other ongoing programs, the VCCS Office of Professional Development is in an excellent position to gather information about available activities and spearhead this coordination. There are also

other ongoing training activities that go beyond professional development (e.g., those conducted by the Office of Human Resource Services) and overlap between these activities and those conducted under the auspices of professional development need to be monitored as well to ensure efficiency. This may involve deciding which topics are included under professional development and which are considered to be in the HR domain (e.g., customer service skills, supervisory skills, using technology).

Regarding training content areas, the current PD needs identified in this assessment also provide directions for future program improvements. Further exploration of the specific training needs in some of the broad content areas that have been identified could guide program improvements. For example, half of the Full-Time Teaching Faculty survey respondents indicated that the need for teaching and learning strategies skills on their jobs is high and that they have a high need for improvement in these skill areas. Further exploration of the specific teaching and learning skills most in need of training could help to focus PD program activities. The VCCS should explore further the specific training needs of the various groups of employees within and across the various content areas. Staff of the Office of Professional Development should work with the PD Committee to delve into the needs identified in this assessment and decide whether or not to address these needs through planning new program components, enhancing existing program components, or embarking on new outreach efforts. Note that more coordination with other system offices and colleges can help ensure that the VCCS meets as many of these needs as possible and does so efficiently.

Recommendation #3: Clarify the program mission, priorities, and audience(s) paying particular attention to new and emerging professional development needs and innovative methods to meet those needs (e.g., distance learning). New or expanded activities will require additional resources. This assessment provides an opportunity for VCCS to reexamine PD priorities in light of the assessment data and develop a strategic plan for the future. The VCCS should reexamine the PD program mission and priorities and develop a five-year strategic plan for the future of the VCCS Office of Professional Development, using the logic model as a starting point.

Recommendation #4: Define boundaries for the Office of Professional Development, delineating activities on which its staff should focus, activities most appropriately subsumed by other VCCS departments/offices (particularly the VCCS Human Resource Services Department), and activities most appropriately conducted by individual colleges. This activity will result in a more intentional coordination of all PD and training efforts within the system office and among the individual colleges.

Outcomes of VCCS Professional Development

Outcomes of PD can be described in terms of numbers of people served, their perceptions of and satisfaction with the activities and opportunities, changes in the participants (such as improved skills, knowledge gained, attitude changes), and changes in important outcomes, such as increased job satisfaction, improved teaching, and improved student learning and retention. The logic model lays out the expected outcomes for the VCCS system-level PD program, and specifies these outcomes as short-term, intermediate, and long-term.

Results of the current assessment shed light on some of these outcomes. Regarding perceptions and satisfaction, the vast majority of participants thought the individual activities and opportunities were effective and would generally recommend them to others. Most also agreed that they had obtained new knowledge and skills through VCCS PD activities and applied these to their jobs.

While it was beyond the scope of the current assessment to measure actual changes in student learning, participants generally believed they were better able to do their jobs, that their teaching had improved, and that they have a more positive impact on students as a result of VCCS PD (with means of 4.04, 3.94, and 4.04 respectively on a 5-point scale – see Appendix J, page J-2). While this is based on self-report data, it is extremely positive. In addition, those who attended more VCCS-sponsored PD were more likely to report developing a new course, revising an existing course, or participating in an innovative teaching

experiment. Improvement in student learning and retention is expected to be the long-term outcome of a pattern of continued participation in PD. Future research might benefit from focusing on some of the short-term and intermediate outcomes to test the more proximal components of the logic model.

PD Format, Location, and Communication

While current approaches to communicating available PD opportunities to employees are effective, there is sometimes a breakdown at the college level, and improved communication and marketing could serve to enhance awareness and participation. There are still many employees who are not aware of available opportunities, especially Adjunct Teaching Faculty and Classified Staff, and there are some opportunities that are not as widely known as others. It may help to have a person on each campus assigned to communicate and market the available PD opportunities.

The time and expense of travel is often an issue in taking advantage of PD opportunities. One way to get around this is to offer more online or distance learning PD activities. However, these were among the lowest rated formats for professional development in the survey. Also, networking appears to be an important component of many PD activities. Survey respondents rated discipline-specific regional meetings and an online discussion forum as potentially effective ways to enhance communication between Peer Group members between conferences.

Develop creative approaches to supplement the in-person learning opportunities (e.g., Peer Groups, New Horizons) with less travel intensive approaches to providing new knowledge and skill and networking opportunities.

Recommendation #5: Work with the Professional Development Committee, the Academic and Student Affairs Council, and the Chancellor's Advisory Council of Presidents to **establish better channels of communication** to improve awareness and participation by VCCS employees.

Administrative Considerations

The individual program activities have benefited from an enormous amount of policy development by staff of the VCCS Office of Professional Development, who work hard to coordinate all components of the PD program, communicate with and market program activities to targeted employee groups, plan conferences and meetings, secure hotel contracts, communicate and coordinate with committee volunteers, document activities, administer funds, and evaluate individual activities.

The VCCS Office of Professional Development should continue to establish more rigorous guidelines, policies, and procedures for each component of the VCCS PD program. In particular:

1. Peer Group Conferences – continue to place more responsibility on Peer Group planning committees to develop content and coordinate planning for Peer Group Conferences and guide these committees through the policies and procedures.
2. Professional Development Grants – implement targeted marketing efforts to promote the grant to faculty at underrepresented colleges in the VCCS (i.e., those where fewer faculty are applying) to increase applications from faculty from these colleges.

The PD Committee members collaborate with the staff of the Office of Professional Development to steer the program in the right direction; promote programs at their individual colleges; and serve on subcommittees to review grant proposals, establish communication tools, evaluate program activities, and identify emerging needs for new programs. Interviewees reported that the committee's role has evolved over time from being just an advisory group to having more authority, and committee members seem enthusiastic and committed, at least in part because they see their decisions as making a difference.

While many interviewees thought the committee structure and succession planning could be improved, opinions varied widely concerning the nature of the changes needed.

Recommendation #6: Review the structure and role of the Professional Development Committee for functionality, efficiency, role clarity of members, and succession planning.

Future Research

Additional research is advisable in some areas. First, results of the current assessment related to Adjunct Teaching Faculty are only suggestive, and a more targeted study of this group along with an assessment of the obstacles to their participation would be useful if providing them with PD is determined to be an ongoing priority. They are a very large and important part of the VCCS workforce.

Finally, this assessment has provided information about participant perceptions of the activities, opportunities, and outcomes at a single point in time. VCCS will need to continue to monitor and evaluate the PD program using similar methods in the future. The current assessment relied on primarily self-report information, and more objective assessment of effects on important outcomes, especially student outcomes, would be extremely desirable. Objective measurement of improvement in important outcomes including student learning and retention will require longitudinal research, and the current assessment, particularly the logic model, can help identify the measures that could be used to conduct this research. Note that the short-term and intermediate outcomes in the logic model are good candidates for future research.

Recommendation #7: Continue to monitor national benchmarking standards in PD and improve the VCCS's relative position, including development of approaches for gaining more national recognition, and learning from best practices of other community college systems. Continue to **monitor VCCS PD needs** (e.g., every two years) and **conduct additional qualitative and quantitative program assessments** in the future to monitor progress, and build on the results of the current assessment to measure additional outcomes of PD participation.

Summary

The current assessment provides a variety of planning tools for the staff of the VCCS Office of Professional Development, the VCCS PD Committee and other VCCS leaders. For example, the assessment provides information about the demographics of program participants and their levels of participation, participant perceptions of the individual VCCS PD activities and opportunities, and VCCS employees' current professional development needs. Several promising directions have emerged for the VCCS to consider. In order to accomplish the larger goal of a more efficient and effective PD program that places the VCCS in the national spotlight, a renewed commitment and focus on targeted efforts will be required. The VCCS system-level PD program has accomplished a great deal with about the same level of funding, and in fact many aspects of this program have expanded (e.g., Peer Groups). Many of the recommendations in this report require additional resources, both financial and personnel, and the VCCS should seriously consider expanding the system-level PD staff and funding, both to accommodate the already expanded scope of activities and to allow the VCCS to build an even more exemplary program.