



Research Report

Online Professional Development Program

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Oversight Subcommittee
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Committees on Education

BUREAU OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH

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About This Report

In 2005, the Arkansas General Assembly set aside \$4 million to establish a statewide professional development program for educators. The idea was to pool resources and create one online system that individual school districts and co-ops could not afford to create by themselves. The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) was given the responsibility of managing the funding and overseeing the program. The agency set up the online system by awarding grants to organizations, such as Arkansas Educational Television Network (AETN) and the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators (AAEA), for handling certain aspects of the program.

The Bureau of Legislative Research (BLR) was asked to examine how that funding has been spent over the last five years. ADE, AETN, and the AAEA provided the BLR with program documentation going back to 2005-06. The BLR reviewed the documentation against the AASIS expenditure records for that fund and sought additional information from current ADE and AETN staff responsible for managing the program.

Still, determining exactly how the funding was used proved challenging for several reasons:

- ADE's documentation granting money to AETN and other organizations included only short descriptions of how the money should be used. It described no specific expectations for the grantees and defined few specific parameters within which the money should be spent. Grant award letters typically did not include the timeframes for which the money was intended. In some cases there was no grant letter or other programmatic documentation to indicate that funding had been awarded.
- ADE's documentation included few budgets or financial reports from grantees. ADE had little documentation indicating how the grantees justified the amount of funding they needed or how they planned to use it. With one exception, there were no end-of-year financial reports. Additionally, inconsistencies in the documentation that grantees provided make it difficult to make year-over-year comparisons of grantees' financial plans and expenditures. Notably, a June 30, 2009 audit of AETN by the Division of Legislative Audit identified instances of duplicate funding from ADE and recommended AETN "develop procedures to properly track grant revenues and expenses to ensure that financial reports and claims for reimbursements agree with supporting financial records."
- In addition, AETN has not used a consistent financial coding scheme to properly account for both the receipt and the disbursement of the professional development funding since the program was implemented in FY2005-06. On November 19, 2009, AETN provided expenditure reports for the Professional Development funding for the period FY2005-06 through Year-to-Date FY2009-10, but indicated it was a very time intensive, manual process to determine the expenditures. It has not been possible to independently verify the expenditure amounts reported. Last, the FY2008-09 expenditure amounts reported by AETN on November 19, 2009 did not agree with a FY2008-09 expenditure report AETN submitted to ADE on August 27, 2009. (AETN provided a revised expenditure report after business hours on November 20, 2009, but due to time constraints, the BLR did not recalculate any amounts for this report. The November 20th expenditures are \$120,765.23 more than the expenditures reported November 19.)

A clear coding methodology is needed to properly account for both the receipt and disbursement of the ADE grant funds. AETN indicates they made some coding structure changes during FY2008-09 that they hope will result in more accurate accounting for program expenditures. Since FY2005-06 AETN reports total expenditures (including indirect

cost charges, such as human resources support and other administrative expenses) of \$9,828,846.76, and AETN has received a total of \$16,415,619 in funding from the Department of Education for the Professional Development Program. Based on AETN's reported expenditure amounts, AETN has a current unexpended balance of funds in the amount of \$6,586,772.24 for the Professional Development Program. To avoid the accrual of large balances of unused funding in AETN's cash fund account, the Arkansas Department of Education may want to consider providing Professional Development Funding to AETN on a reimbursement rather than lump sum basis.

Despite these issues, this report examines what is known and documented about how the program's funding was spent. It does not address the quality of any professional development offered through this program.

Program History, Overview and Funding

Program History

Professional Development Categorical Funding

In 2004-05, the state began providing school districts with \$50 per average daily membership (ADM) for staff professional development training, or about \$22 million statewide. State statute requires this categorical funding to be used "for professional development activities and materials that improve the knowledge of teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals concerning effective instructional strategies, methods, and skills for improving teaching practices and student academic achievement and training for school bus drivers as outlined in rules promulgated by the State Board of Education." (See Appendix A for Ark. Code Ann. 6-20-2305.)

Online Professional Development Initiative

Then in 2005, the Legislature passed Act 2318 of 2005, creating the Arkansas Online Professional Development Initiative. The statute requires the ADE Commissioner to 1.) identify and prioritize statewide teacher professional development needs and 2.) work with school districts and the director of the Educational Television Division to develop a statewide online professional development program. The legislation makes AETN responsible for supporting the delivery of the online professional development courses. (See Appendix B for Ark. Code Ann. 6-17-707.)

The program was also allocated up to \$4 million annually. Section 29 of Act 2131 of 2005 authorized the Director of the Department of Education to use up to \$4 million of the total appropriation for professional development to "develop and implement statewide professional development support systems for teacher[s] that will benefit student achievement." This special language provision has been included in each public school fund appropriation bill through the current fiscal year, FY2009-10. (See Appendix C for the 2009 special language section.)

It is important to note that Act 2318 created a "statewide online professional development program," but the special language allocating \$4 million funded "statewide professional development support systems." The special language did not specify that the PD be online.

The allocation of \$4 million for statewide professional development resulted in the reduction of the \$50 per ADM rate paid to school districts to about \$41 per ADM. Though the districts were losing about \$9 per student, legislators hoped the statewide program would offer an efficient online course delivery system that would be free to district educators.

Program Overview

The central element of the Online PD program is known as Arkansas IDEAS, the statewide program of online courses and teaching resources for educators. The program, maintained and managed by AETN, is offered through a website, called an online portal, where teachers can access vendor-created online courses, locally created courses that have been adapted for online use, and other reading materials and resources. The program was designed to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills and help educators satisfy the 60 hours of professional development they must obtain each year. (See Appendix D for the Rules Governing Professional Development.) Some courses on the portal provide PD credit while others do not.

ADE also has used the Online PD funding to pay for a variety of other types of professional development and services beyond the online courses. The funding has paid for traditionally delivered PD (e.g., the SMART Leadership Symposium at the Peabody Hotel), and it is used to provide administrators with CDs of national speakers. It funds streaming video segments designed to be used for classroom instruction and paid for a DeWitt School District teacher's trip to the Smithsonian Exhibit Learning Project in Washington D.C.

While state law limits how professional development categorical funding in general can be spent and state rules establish the requirements for courses offered through the portal, ADE has no written policies describing what types of professional development or services qualify for the Online PD funding and what types do not. In other words, should it be used for both live PD and online PD? Should it fund PD activities for individual teachers as well as those aimed at educators statewide? Should it cover classroom instructional materials that may have a secondary function of increasing teachers' knowledge?

Program Funding

The Department of Education has used the majority of the program's \$4 million each year to provide grant funding to AETN for managing the online professional development program. Beginning in FY2005-06 and continuing through the current fiscal year, FY2009-10, AETN has received annual grant payments from ADE ranging from about \$2.9 million to \$3.8 million. The department also provided smaller amounts of funding to other organizations supporting the system, including the AAEA, the Educational Services Co-ops and the Arkansas Leadership Academy.

The following charts show the per-student funding for professional development and the amounts distributed to school districts, AETN, and other organizations. The rest of this report examines the funding highlighted in the chart "Breakdown of Funding for Online Professional Development."

Per-Student Funding For Professional Development

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Per-student funding sent to districts for PD	\$50.00	\$41.11	\$41.23	\$41.32	\$41.33
Per-student funding for online PD	N/A	\$8.89	\$8.77	\$8.68	\$8.67
TOTAL	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$50.00

Total Funding for Professional Development

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Funding sent to districts for PD	\$22,375,575	\$18,553,409	\$18,884,530	\$19,017,132	\$19,135,499
Funding for online PD	N/A	\$4,000,000	\$3,965,470	\$3,940,087	\$3,995,414
TOTAL	\$22,375,575	\$22,553,409	\$22,850,000	\$22,957,219	\$23,130,913

Breakdown of Funding for Online Professional Development

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Funding provided to AETN by ADE	N/A	\$2,903,250	\$2,916,237	\$3,434,711	\$3,846,921
Online PD expenditures to individuals and other organizations	N/A	\$1,096,750	\$1,049,233	\$505,376	\$148,493
Total funding for online PD	N/A	\$4,000,000	\$3,965,470	\$3,940,087	\$3,995,414

Source: ADE

The following sections of this report describe how ADE distributed the funding from this program and how some grantees spent it.

AETN and Arkansas IDEAS

Most of the \$4 million available from the Online PD funding goes to AETN for the Arkansas IDEAS program. The network has received annual amounts ranging from \$2.89 million to \$3.85 million. For FY2009, funding for the Arkansas IDEAS program represented about 29.9% of AETN's \$12.9 million in expenditures. According to AETN the agency has 23 regular, full-time employees, four full-time extra help employees and one part-time extra help employee paid by the Arkansas IDEAS program for FY2010. According to AETN's FY2009-10 budget summary, the network has a total of 113 funded employee positions throughout the agency.

With its Online PD funding, AETN maintains the Arkansas IDEAS portal and contracts with vendors of online professional development courses. The four main courseware vendors that AETN uses are:

- PBS Teacherline
- PD360
- Teachscape
- InfoSource, Inc.

AETN's funding also pays for:

- The **Scholar Channel**, a digital broadcast channel that provides educational programming used in the classroom and as professional development. The professional development programming is broadcast in three-hour blocks between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m. and between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Assessments to ensure that teachers learned what they watched are available on the IDEAS portal.
- **AETN Streaming Video**, an online streaming video service provided by Discovery Education. Most of the video segments available through the portal are used for K-12 classroom instruction.
- **PDSaM**, the web-based software developed by AETN and ADE to allow training providers to submit applications for course approval electronically.
- **Help Desk**, an AETN-run email and call-in help desk to provide assistance with all IDEAS portal issues.
- **Compressed Interactive Video (CIV)**, a method of providing professional development using two-way video conferencing. AETN provides the technical services necessary to conduct workshops and training through CIV, allowing a speaker in Little Rock, for example, to provide training to teachers in the co-ops across the state.

Other items in AETN's budget include training and travel, production costs and bandwidth.

To understand AETN's current budget for the Arkansas IDEAS program, it is important to review how it started and developed. In the first year, AETN received two grants: one for "approximately" \$2.3 million, according to the grant letter, and another for \$576,050. None of the agreements with AETN specify exactly what AETN was to provide. The first award letter for \$2.3 million indicates that the money was to be used "for the purposes of developing and/or implementing on-line professional development for Arkansas educators. The on-line professional development available through this grant will meet the requirements of the Rules Governing Professional Development approved by the Arkansas State Board of Education."

A budget breakdown provided by AETN and the two ADE grant letters indicate that the money was to be spent in five general areas:

Area	Amount	Description
First Grant		
On-line professional development for teachers	\$942,150	Vendor-provided online professional development courses. AETN's budget does not indicate which vendors would be used or how much they would cost, but AETN's Kathleen Branton said she believes the funding paid for PD programming from Tech 4 Learning, InfoSource, PBS Teacherline and Math Academy.
Arkansas Technology Institute (ATI) Online	\$546,225	AETN's Arkansas Technology Institute is a traditional, face-to-face course created and offered before the online PD funds were available. This course, offered at the AETN studios, teaches technology skills, such as how to use software (e.g., PowerPoint) and production equipment, including cameras and light kits. The \$546,225 was budgeted to pay for the conversion of ATI to an online course, including video taping the course and creating online assessments. Currently the portal listings show seven courses associated with ATI Online. The seven courses, which are provided by the vendor InfoSource, Inc., are Microsoft Office courses, and one titled "Addressing Legal, Ethical, and Human Concerns."
AETN Scholar Channel	\$400,352	The Scholar Channel is a television channel that provides educational programming used in the classroom and as professional development. The professional development programming comes on in three-hour blocks between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m. and between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. AETN Scholar segments are also available through the portal. Branton said the \$400,352 paid for the professional development programming only, not the other programming on the channel. The AETN Scholar courses frequently rank among the most popular with portal users.
Interactive Access Services	\$438,473	According to the AETN budget, this service "provides a place to access all ADE/AETN online professional trainings." This funding paid for the creation and maintenance of the Arkansas IDEAS website during the first year.
SUBTOTAL	\$2,327,200	
Second Grant		
Course Development	\$576,050	With this funding AETN was to develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online Arkansas Studies course that collected the oral history testimonials of Arkansas World War II veterans. This collection of interviews was never made available on the portal and does not provide any PD credit. • An online virtual tour of the Governor's mansion. The virtual tour was never made available on the portal and does not provide any PD credit. • Professional development focused on research-based instructional practices including high yield strategies and/or coaching.
SUBTOTAL	\$576,050	
TOTAL	\$2,903,250	

How AETN and ADE calculated those budgeted amounts is unclear. Some questions about the budgets could not be answered by AETN or ADE either because staff could not remember the reasons for the planned expenditures or because the staff overseeing the program has changed.

In the program's second year, FY2006-07, AETN again received three grants: one for \$235,000 for a classroom walk-through course, another for \$2,656,237 and a third for \$25,000. The grant for \$2.66 million was intended to pay for the same components in the two 2005-06 grants (Online PD for Teachers, ATI Online, AETN Digital Scholar Channel, Interactive Access Services, Arkansas History). In addition to those components, the grant award letter indicated that the money was also to be spent on "research, content development, website maintenance and expansion, software licensing and procurement and hardware purchases and bandwidth expansion."

The documentation includes no explanation or breakdown of the total costs of providing the services. Nor does it explain why it costs roughly the same amount to set up the portal and create new courses as it does to simply maintain them and add courses and resources. For example, \$546,225 was provided in 2005-06 to convert the Arkansas Technology Institute — an existing course offered by AETN to teach technology skills, such as how to operate a camera and how to use PowerPoint — into an online course and develop online assessments. The next year ATI online was again included in the services that AETN was to provide for a total of \$2.6 million. And it was mentioned again in AETN's budget the year after that. AETN's Kathleen Branton said AETN was still building the online course in subsequent years. The current portal course listings include seven courses as ATI Online courses. The courses, which are provided by the vendor InfoSource, Inc., are Microsoft Office courses and one course "Addressing Legal, Ethical, and Human Concerns."

Some funding was granted to AETN to pay for services that were never included on the Arkansas IDEAS portal. For example, AETN received \$81,848.60 to create a virtual tour of the Governor's mansion and \$216,323.40 to gather oral history interviews with Arkansas World War II veterans. The money AETN received for these efforts came from ADE's Online PD program, but neither one has ever been offered through the portal nor used as professional development for teachers. In subsequent years, grant letters awarding funding to AETN indicate that the money was intended to pay for "Arkansas Studies," but AETN officials cannot recall what, if anything, was produced with those funds.

Over the next few years, AETN appears to have used \$2.6 million as a base level of funding for "maintenance." It budgeted in new costs as it added vendor-provided online courses, such as PD360. With the exception of the 2009-10 budget, it is impossible to tell from the documentation what specific costs were included in the "maintenance" line item and which ones increased in price or decreased. AETN's grant awards for Arkansas IDEAS were as follows:

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Main Annual Grants					
	\$2,327,200	\$2,656,237 (includes Arkansas Studies Courses)	\$2,693,921 (includes Arkansas Studies Courses)	\$3,586,921 (includes \$2,693,921 for maintenance and \$180,000 for PD360)	\$3,314,500 (includes \$2,369,500 for maintenance, \$660,000 for Teachscape, and \$225,000 for PD360)

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Additional Grants					
Arkansas Studies Courses	\$576,050				
Classroom Walk-Through*		\$235,000			
PDSaM		\$25,000	\$16,000		
PD360			\$180,000		
Portal Expansion**			\$544,790		
Teachscape and Algebra II				\$260,000	
TOTAL	\$2,903,250	\$2,916,237	\$3,434,711	\$3,846,921	\$3,314,500

* Classroom Walk-Through is a series of courses for administrators.

** There is no documentation describing the portal expansion, except a line in an ADE spreadsheet indicating that the money would be spent on "Implementing, maintaining, and/or expanding Classroom Walkthrough, et al."

Because ADE funded program projects as grants, instead of contracts, grantees, such as AETN and AAEA, were not required to produce specific deliverables. Additionally, grantees never risked losing the money if they didn't perform adequately. ADE gave the funding to grantees in lump sums, rather than as reimbursement for specific expenses. ADE provided AETN's requested funding each year and asked for little additional documentation about AETN's annual budget requests.

An additional concern is the amount of carryover AETN has reported from year to year. AETN received about \$3.4 million in 2007-08, and the agency reported in its FY2008-09 Annual Financial Report to the Department of Education dated August 27, 2009, that it had not spent \$572,313 of that amount. In spite of reporting a year-end balance of funds, in its budget request for the following year, 2008-09, AETN requested and received the same amount of "maintenance" funds it had a year earlier.

At the end of FY2008-09, AETN again reported a year-end balance of \$733,559. It is important to note that AETN reported different year-end balances in its November 19, 2009, Expenditure Report than was reported to the ADE on August 27, 2009. The November 19, 2009, expenditure report indicated there was \$772,542.71 in unexpended funds at the end of FY2007-08, and they reported a year-end fund balance of \$739,314.11 for FY2008-09. In addition, the November 18, 2009 report showed that between FY2005-06 and Y-T-D FY2009-10, AETN had accrued a total fund balance of \$6.6 million in Professional Development Funds. To avoid the accruing of large balances of unused funding, the Arkansas Department of Education may want to consider providing Professional Development Funding to AETN on a reimbursement rather than lump sum basis.

Portal Courses

According to AETN's course database, the Arkansas IDEAS portal offered more than 1,000 credit-approved courses. Deborah Coffman, who oversees the program at the ADE, said the department's goal for the portal is to offer a wide selection of up-to-date courses that satisfy the statutory PD requirements. ADE also tries to offer services that make using the system easier, such as training on how to use the IDEAS portal. ADE is responsible for determining which courses on the portal qualify for credit and which do not. (Some vendors frequently offer online courses in bundles, forcing AETN to purchase less popular courses or those that will not qualify for PD credit in order to get access to the more popular ones.) All courses that grant professional development credit include an end-of-course assessment on which teachers must score at least 80% to pass.

Vendor	Current Number of Credit-Approved Courses Offered	Range of Credit Hours Offered for Each Course
Teachscope	39	1-12
PD360	66	1-4
PBS Teacherline	112	15-45
InfoSource	626	1-14
Total*	1,040	

* Total courses include those created or offered by AETN and ADE. They also include courses with vendors listed as "unknown" or "QK." When asked, AETN could not explain what QK means.

ADE tracks the use of each online course but has not conducted any written cost-benefit analysis of the offerings. (One exception: ADE staff have discussed the PBS Teacherline courses and recently decided to scale back the courses it purchases from that vendor.) Act 2318 of 2005, which established the Online PD program, requires the program to include a method for annually evaluating the effectiveness of the program and its online professional development courses. ADE has never completed an annual program review, but the agency is currently working on one.

The BLR analyzed AETN's course listings to determine how often educators complete each vendor's courses. The following table shows, for each vendor, the number of times teachers have successfully taken and completed vendors' credit-approved courses each year. The table also shows how many credit-approved courses the portal currently offers and the amount of money AETN reported spending on each vendor each year.

Vendor	2006	2007	2008	2009
Teachscope Course Completions	291	1,878	2,640	4,751
Teachscope Expenditures		\$156,666	\$540,834	\$660,000
PD360 Course Completions	0	88	2,872	4,401
PD360 Expenditures			\$180,000	\$180,000
PBS Teacherline Course Completions	24	136	104	1
PBS Teacherline Expenditures*			\$2,240	\$17,157
InfoSource Course Completions**	329	6,767	9,320	8,427
InfoSource Expenditures		\$176,000	\$121,000	\$267,000
Total Course Completions***	956	20,773	32,126	35,043

*The PBS Teacherline expenditures may have included other costs, such as presenter expenses, in addition to the ones listed above, according to AETN.

**The InfoSource contract includes maintenance of the portal itself as well as most of the InfoSource courses. Additional InfoSource courses were billed separately.

*** Total course completions include completions of courses created or offered by AETN and ADE. They also include courses with vendors listed as "unknown" or "QK."

The following tables show the 10 most popular courses for each year as ranked by the number times educators successfully completed the course.

2006: Most Popular Credit-Approved Courses

Course	Credit Hours	Vendor	Courses Completed
High Yield Overview	8	Teachscope	80
Cooperative Learning	4	Teachscope	53
Cues, Questions, and Advance Organizers	6	Teachscope	47
IC3 Overview - 2005 Standard	1	Unknown	32
Write in the Middle: Creating a Community of Writers	2	AETN	23
AETN: Touring a Time: Little Rock Central High School 1957 Crisis*	3	AETN	21
Homework and Practice	6	Teachscope	20

Course	Credit Hours	Vendor	Courses Completed
Understanding Technology Integration In The Classroom	1	InfoSource, Inc.	20
Generating and Testing Hypotheses	6	Teachscape	19
Using Educational Resources On The Web	1	InfoSource, Inc.	18

* AETN offers a variety of Arkansas history courses, which are documentary programs produced for regular broadcast and then posted on the IDEAS portal. AETN's Kathleen Branton said no funds from the Online PD grant were used to produce those programs. Part of the reason these courses have a high number of completions is because state law requires that all teachers who teach Arkansas history obtain two hours of PD in Arkansas history each year.

2007: Most Popular Credit-Approved Courses

Courses	Credit Hours	Vendor	Courses Completed
AETN: Touring a Time: Little Rock Central High School 1957 Crisis	3	AETN	951
AETN Scholar - Annenberg Media: Critical Issues in School Reform: Stories of Engagement: B.U.I.L.D.- Parental Involvement	2	AETN	718
AETN Scholar - Annenberg Media: Teaching Reading Workshop: Connecting School and Home - Parental Involvement	2	AETN	543
AETN Scholar - Annenberg Media: Critical Issues in School Reform: Stories of Engagement: O'Hearn School-Parental Involvement	2	AETN	527
AETN Scholar-Annenberg Media: Assessment in Math and Science: Implementing Assessment Reform-Parental Involvement	2	AETN	526
AETN Scholar - Annenberg Media: Critical Issues in School Reform: Stories of Engagement: Pattonville, MO-Parental Involvement	2	AETN	500
Understanding Technology Integration In The Classroom	1	InfoSource	485
AETN: It Started Here: Early Arkansas and The Louisiana Purchase	2	AETN	448
Cooperative Learning	4	Teachscape	372
Creating Class Materials	1	InfoSource	333

2008: Most Popular Credit-Approved Courses

Course	Credit Hours	Vendor	Courses Completed
ADE: How to Deal with Difficult Parents (When Choking is Not an Option) -Parental Involvement	3	ADE	1,514
Understanding Technology Integration In The Classroom	1	InfoSource	798
AETN: Touring a Time: Little Rock Central High School 1957 Crisis	3	AETN	712
Creating Class Materials	1	InfoSource	685
AETN City of Visitors: The Story of Hot Springs	2	AETN	619
AETN Scholar - Annenberg Media: Teaching Reading Workshop: Connecting School and Home - Parental Involvement	2	AETN	611

Course	Credit Hours	Vendor	Courses Completed
AETN Scholar - Annenberg Media: Critical Issues in School Reform: Stories of Engagement: B.U.I.L.D.- Parental Involvement	2	AETN	567
Using Educational Resources On The Web	1	InfoSource	539
AETN Scholar-Annenberg Media: Assessment in Math and Science: Implementing Assessment Reform-Parental Involvement	2	AETN	536
Addressing Legal, Ethical, And Human Concerns	1	InfoSource	502

2009: Most Popular Credit-Approved Courses

Course	Credit Hours	Vendor	Courses Completed
ADE: How to Deal with Difficult Parents (When Choking is Not an Option) -Parental Involvement	3	ADE	1,396
AETN City of Visitors: The Story of Hot Springs	2	AETN	617
AETN Scholar - Annenberg Media: Critical Issues in School Reform: Stories of Engagement: B.U.I.L.D.- Parental Involvement	2	AETN	602
Understanding Technology Integration In The Classroom	1	InfoSource	589
AETN Scholar-Annenberg Media: Assessment in Math and Science: Implementing Assessment Reform-Parental Involvement	2	AETN	574
Creating Class Materials	1	InfoSource	562
AETN Scholar - Annenberg Media: Teaching Reading Workshop: Connecting School and Home - Parental Involvement	2	AETN	550
SCITV: Educating the Limited-English Proficient Child-1: Parental Involvement	1	Unknown	541
AETN Scholar - Annenberg Media: Critical Issues in School Reform: Stories of Engagement: O'Hearn School-Parental Involvement	2	AETN	508
AETN: Historic Bridges of Arkansas	2	AETN	502
Communicating With E-mail	1	InfoSource	491

Portal Users

According to AETN, the portal had nearly 17,000 educators signed up as registered users at the end of August 2009. However, the number of registered users does not reflect the actual number of users for each year because it includes all educators who have ever registered. Currently there is no annual re-registration, so teachers who registered and have since quit, retired or moved out of state would still be counted among the registered users. The following table shows the registered users and credit hours earned through the Arkansas IDEAS portal, according to AETN.

	2006	2007	2008	2009
Credit hours earned	3,510	44,726	69,163	64,388*
Registered users	1,196	7,998	13,599	16,963*

* Includes figures through August 2009, with another four months to go in the year.

For FY2009, there were nearly 14,000 registered, indicating that about 41% of the state's teachers are registered users, according to data and analysis by AETN. That percentages is likely high because it may include teachers who registered, but are not now licensed. (Additionally, AETN's calculations were based on a total number of teachers of 33,821. ADE's professional licensure division, however, noted that there are 57,383 teachers and administrators [where administrators make up less than 9,000 of the total]. The BLR was unable to obtain the total number of certified personnel by district and cooperative due to difficulties accessing ADE's data warehouse.)

Of the nearly 14,000 registered users, 3,026 of them are not employed by a school district. The fact that so many registered users are not employed by school districts may be an important factor when weighing the value of the program to the school districts, which lost \$9 per student to support it.

The following table uses AETN data to show the percent of all teachers in each co-op service area who are registered users.

Education Service Cooperative Area	Percent of All Teachers Who Are Registered Users
Dawson Education Service Co-op	14.65%
Southeast Service Co-op	20.52%
South Central Arkansas Educational Co-op	25.70%
Western Arkansas Co-op	27.24%
Northwest Arkansas Education Service Co-op	28.12%
Arkansas River Education Co-op	32.95%
Wilber Mills Education Coop	34.11%
Arch Ford Education Service Coop	36.31%
Great Rivers Coop	44.07%
Northeast Arkansas Education Coop	44.45%
DeQueen/Mena Education Coop	49.06%
Southwest Arkansas Education Coop	50.05%
North Central Arkansas Education Coop	53.77%
Crowley's Ridge Education Coop	55.88%
Ozarks Unlimited Resource Coop	67.91%
Co-op Average	35.72%

Source: ADE and AETN

In FY09, only one district (Bradley School District) and three charter schools had no teachers who were registered users. In 19 districts, more than 100% of the teachers were registered users. (The number exceeds 100% because some teachers may have registered as district employees and then left the district. Those teachers are counted in the total number of registered users for the district, but not in the total number of teachers.) The following table shows the districts with the highest percentage of teachers who are registered portal users.

School District	Percent of Certified Employees Who Are Registered Users
Nevada School District	102.63%
Genoa Central School District	102.74%
Maynard School District	105.00%
Gosnell School District	105.88%
Osceola School District	106.25%
Trumann School District	106.30%
Mulberry School District	108.89%
Mansfield School District	108.97%

School District	Percent of Certified Employees Who Are Registered Users
Searcy County School District	110.23%
Greenland School District	112.31%
Highland School District	112.71%
Ozark Mountain School District	115.79%
Valley View School District	117.33%
Buffalo Island Central School District	122.39%
Weiner School District	124.24%
Corning School District	127.06%
Mount Ida School District	127.91%
Hartford School District	136.11%
Guy-Perkins School District	137.14%

Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators

After AETN, the AAEA received the second highest amount of funding from the Online PD program. ADE granted AAEA \$337,000 in 2005-06, \$456,946.48 in 2006-07 and \$163,500 in 2007-08, for a total of \$957,446.48. The BLR reviewed ADE's grant documentation and AAEA's bank records and invoices and found the following:

Grant Amount	Intended Purpose	Description
2005-06		
\$337,000	Neither ADE nor AAEA had any grant letters or other documentation indicating the purpose of this funding.	
2006-07		
\$160,000	Develop and implement a professional development training tool kit in partnership with ADE	The PD Tool Kit started as a seven-module book to guide districts in developing their plan for staff PD. AAEA paid the National Staff Development Council \$153,400 to develop and draft the Tool Kit. The PD Tool Kit does not offer any PD credit.
\$296,946.48	Conduct professional development activities and design materials for the following:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio Journal 	The Audio Journal is monthly "executive briefing" on CD, featuring education speakers, consultants and policy-makers. AAEA purchases subscriptions for the state from an Illinois-based company and distributes the CDs to administrators each month. AAEA officials said some school districts may use the Audio Journal as part of a professional development training, but they knew of no district that uses the Audio Journal by itself to grant PD credit. The Audio Journal subscription started as a \$4,088.48 monthly expense during FY 2007 and increased to \$12,861.52 a month in FY 2008. The price increase was due to an increase in the number of CDs ordered.

Grant Amount	Intended Purpose	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking Ranks in the Middle and High School Redesign 	Breaking Ranks is professional development training provided by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Administrators gathered at their local co-ops and received the training via compressed interactive video. At ADE's direction, AAEA gave each co-op money for meals and materials. AAEA also paid for administrators' travel to the co-ops, books, and a facilitator. The Breaking Ranks training was also videotaped and made available on the portal, although the online version is not approved to provide PD credit.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Training 	Although the grant letter does not specify what leadership training was to be funded, AAEA paid for expenses, such as the hotel, food, and speakers, for the following conferences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology Information Center for Administrative Leadership • Arkansas Association of Curriculum and Instructional Administrators • Arkansas Association of Elementary School Principals
2007-08		
\$163,500	ADE had no grant letter indicating the purpose of this funding, but an ADE spreadsheet noted that the money was for "support materials for PD Tool Kit, etc.	AAEA paid the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) \$30,400 to develop an additional two modules for the PD Tool Kit. AAEA also paid about \$15,000 to fly in two NSDC consultants for a meeting to discuss the development of the new PD Tool Kit modules. The funding also paid for catering and hotel fees for the meeting.

AAEA Expenditures

The BLR reviewed AAEA's expenditures from this funding for 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08. AAEA's 2008-09 records were at the association's auditor and therefore unavailable for review.

The AAEA deposited the Online PD grant funds into a bank account used to pay for a variety of professional development activities. The Online PD grant funds made up the majority of money going into that account. However, between \$16,600 and about \$38,300 each year was deposited into the account from other sources. Therefore it is difficult to determine specifically which expense was funded by the Online PD grants.

Of the four Online PD grants that ADE gave AAEA between FY2006 and FY2008, three were given late in the fiscal year (May and June). Because ADE had no budgets from AAEA justifying these three grant amounts, it appears that ADE simply granted AAEA the remaining funds unspent at the end of the year from the \$4 million available for Online PD.

The AAEA spent money on professional development activities at ADE's request. The AAEA documentation includes a number of memos from ADE directing AAEA to pay invoices for various

ADE professional development expenses. These memos indicate that the payment should be made from the "Janinne Riggs fund" or the "Debbie Coffman fund." Janinne Riggs oversaw the Online PD program for ADE until her recent retirement. Debbie Coffman now fills that role.

The AAEA also spent the money from the account on the items listed in the grant letters: Audio Journal, Leadership Training, Breaking Ranks and the PD Tool Kit. (See above chart.) The organization also spent more than \$97,000 to install a video projector and set up a compressed interactive video lab at the Arkansas Activities Association (AAA) building to be used jointly by the AAEA, the AAA, and the co-ops.

When the Online PD program began, the AAEA was not spending its grant money as quickly as it was receiving it. By August 2007, the account held more than \$600,000. The AAEA moved the money to another bank and began earning between about \$340 and \$2,200 each month in interest. Between July 2007 and June 2008, AAEA transferred more than \$13,500 out of that account (in the exact amounts of monthly interest payments earned) to an "AAEA Capital Technology Fund." Dr. Tom Kimbrell, former AAEA director, noted that that money was used to pay a monthly fee associated with the CIV lab at the AAA.

Other Grantees

Other groups that received significant funding through the Online PD program include the following:

2005-06

Organization	Funding	Purpose
Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative	\$109,200	Implementing an online registration and event management system. The SEARK Co-op contracted with another company to create this system, known as ESCWorks.
Northcentral Arkansas Education Service Cooperative	\$300,500	Expand the state-developed classroom walk-through training for administrators, including high yield strategies and instructional leadership.
Arkansas Leadership Academy	\$280,000	To create a professional development cabinet of advisors to promote quality PD, assist in reviewing PD programs, and provide recommendations and to develop professional development resources, including white papers, research and best practices. ADE's paperwork includes no specific requirements of the Leadership Academy, nor budget showing how the \$280,000 was calculated.
Arkansas Community Foundation	\$70,050	To develop online support for the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority's Integrating Technology Institute, Mathematics/Science Workshops, and Online PD Component Institute

2006-07

Organization	Funding	Purpose
Education Service Cooperatives	\$374,400	Grants of \$20,800 were given to each of the co-ops and three school districts (Little Rock, Pulaski County Special and North Little Rock) to help train educators on how to use the IDEAS Portal.
Arkansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)	\$165,469	The grant funding letter indicates that this funding was for "online professional development activities." Included with this letter is an invoice from Arkansas ASCD (Mary Gunter) for three years of unlimited video streaming rights to the following programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What Works in Schools • Building Academic Background • A Six-Step Process for Teaching • Understanding By Design
Northwest Education Service Cooperative	\$42,000	The grant award letter indicates that this funding was for "creating and maintaining assessments."

2007-08

Organization	Funding	Purpose
ASCD	\$29,721	The grant award documentation indicates that this funding was to pay for "Online PD Activities (Streaming Video)."
Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative	\$236,250	An invoice from NWA Co-op indicates that this funding paid for the statewide license for Teachscape and access to High Yield Instructional Strategies modules.
Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative	\$61,800	Implementing an online registration and event management system, known as ESCWorks. The Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative contracted with another company to create this system.

2008-09

Organization	Funding	Purpose
BG Excelsior Limited Partnership (Peabody Hotel)	\$41,936	This funding paid for food, a room rental, and equipment at the Peabody Hotel. Most of the money (\$40,309.72) paid for food. This expense appears to be made in conjunction with the SMART Leadership Symposium put on for all principals and superintendents.
Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative	\$85,000	Implementing an online registration and event management system, known as ESCWorks. The Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative contracted with another company to create this system.

Summary Conclusion

The Legislature passed Act 2318 of 2005, creating the Arkansas Online Professional Development Initiative. The statute requires ADE to identify statewide teacher professional development needs and work with school districts and AETN to develop a statewide online professional development program. The ADE program was allocated up to \$4 million annually (about \$9 per ADM) to develop and implement a statewide professional development support system. Though the districts were losing \$9 per student in PD funding, legislators hoped the statewide program would offer an efficient online delivery system for PD courses that would be free to district educators. Currently the Online PD program receives about \$4 million of the total \$23 million professional development categorical funding.

This report examined how the funding in the Online PD program was distributed and spent. However, obtaining a meaningful understanding of what the state got for its money proved challenging due to inadequate and unspecific record-keeping. ADE's documentation awarding money for program operations included only short descriptions of the purpose of the grant. It described no specific expectations of grantees and defined few parameters within which the money should be spent. ADE's records also included little documentation indicating how the grantees justified the amount of funding they needed or how they planned to use it.

The Department of Education has used the majority of the program's money to provide grant funding to AETN for managing the online professional development program. Over the last five years, AETN has received annual grant payments ranging from about \$2.9 million to \$3.8 million. The department also provided smaller amounts of funding to other organizations supporting the system and providing other types of professional development, including the AAEA, the Education Service Cooperatives and the Arkansas Leadership Academy.

AETN used its funding to develop the central element of the Online PD program, Arkansas IDEAS, the statewide program of online courses and teaching resources for educators. The program is offered through an online portal, where teachers can access vendor-created online courses, locally created courses that have been adapted for online use, and other reading materials and resources. The portal offers more than 1,000 PD credit-earning courses, and AETN said there are nearly 17,000 registered portal users. AETN tracks the use of each online course, but neither AETN nor ADE has conducted any formal cost-benefit analysis of the course offerings. Act 2318 of 2005, which established the Online PD program, calls for ADE to create a method of annually examining the effectiveness of the program. ADE has never completed an annual program review, but the agency is currently working on one.

In addition to the online courses, the program's funding was used to pay for a variety of other types of professional development. The funding has paid for traditionally delivered PD (e.g., the SMART Leadership Symposium at the Peabody Hotel), and it is used to provide administrators with CDs of national speakers. It funds streaming video segments designed to be used for classroom instruction and paid for a DeWitt School District teacher's trip to the Smithsonian Exhibit Learning Project in Washington D.C. While state law limits how professional development categorical funding in general can be spent and state rules establish the requirements for courses offered through the portal, ADE has no written policies describing what types of professional development or services qualify for the Online PD funding and what types do not.

Based on a review of AASIS records, additional issues to consider include:

- 1.) Grant requirements and monitoring of grantee activities and expenditures.
- 2.) Coding methodology for both the receipt and disbursement of the ADE grant funds.

Appendix A: 6-20-2305(b)(5) Categorical Funding For Professional Development

- (5) (A) Beginning with school year 2007-2008, professional development funding shall be equal to an amount of up to fifty dollars (\$50.00) multiplied by the school district's previous school year average daily membership.
- (B) Funding for professional development for teachers in Arkansas public schools shall be used for professional development activities and materials that improve the knowledge of teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals concerning effective instructional strategies, methods, and skills for improving teaching practices and student academic achievement and training for school bus drivers as outlined in rules promulgated by the State Board of Education.

Appendix B: 6-17-707 Arkansas Online Professional Development Initiative

- (a) There is created the Arkansas Online Professional Development Initiative.
- (b) Under the initiative, the Commissioner of Education shall identify teacher professional development needs in the state and prioritize the needs based on the areas of professional development most needed to improve academic and teaching knowledge and skills of certified personnel.
- (c) Based on the needs and priorities identified in the assessment under subsection (b) of this section, the commissioner shall work with the Director of the Educational Television Division of the Department of Education and local school districts to develop a statewide online professional development program that includes quality professional development courses that:
- (1) Are aligned to the required focus areas identified in the State Board of Education rules governing professional development and the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and Accountability Program;
 - (2) Are aligned with the clear, specific, and challenging academic content areas as established by the Department of Education as required under § 6-15-404;
 - (3) Are aligned with the state curriculum frameworks established by the department for each class level or subject area included in the respective professional development programs;
 - (4) Are research-based and available from sources with expertise in technology-delivered professional development courses;
 - (5) Are consistent with the Southern Regional Education Board Multi-State Online Professional Development Standards in existence on January 1, 2005;
 - (6) Focus on improving student academic achievement by improving a teacher's academic and teaching knowledge and skills; and
 - (7) Include an assessment at the end of the program designed to measure each certified person's level of understanding and ability to implement or apply the information presented in the program.
- (d) (1) (A) The Arkansas Educational Television Network shall support the delivery of the online professional development courses developed as part of the initiative to teachers and administrators in each school in each school district in the state via the Internet.
- (B) In addition to the online courses developed as part of the initiative, the network may continue to deliver professional development by broadcast, compressed, satellite, and face-to-face methods.
- (2) The online professional development courses supported by the network or other providers shall include online registration, course evaluation, and attendance and completion documents.
 - (3) Any provider of technology-delivered professional development under the initiative shall demonstrate an ability to successfully deliver technology-delivered products and services.
 - (4) If a technology-delivered professional development course or service that has been identified as needed under the assessment in subsection (b) of this section is not available, the network or other providers shall work with the department to develop a course or service to meet the identified need.
- (e) The department shall determine the content of and preapprove all professional development courses or programs delivered by the network that qualify for professional development credit as required by the Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts or teacher licensure requirements.
- (f) The department shall provide the staff and resources needed to provide the quality leadership necessary to coordinate the initiative.

(g) The initiative shall include a method for the department, the network, school districts, schools, and certified personnel to annually evaluate the effectiveness of the initiative and its online professional development course and programs.

(h) (1) Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, the department may include as part of a school improvement plan guidelines for the professional development programs to be delivered to the certified personnel employed by a school in school improvement status or a school district in school improvement status or academic distress.

(2) (A) As part of the school improvement plan, the department may require the participation and completion of professional development courses or programs by certified personnel in the school or school district as appropriate for the certified personnel's job assignments and duties.

(B) Certified personnel employed by any school in school improvement or school district in school improvement or academic distress shall participate in, complete, and pass the assessment for the professional development requirements included in the school's or school district's school improvement plan.

(i) The department shall further enhance its leadership role in professional development for certified personnel by:

(1) Developing technology-based professional development programs and other enhanced professional development options for school districts and certified personnel; and

(2) Employing two (2) persons who have a high level of expertise in professional development for the purpose of enhancing professional development opportunities as set forth in this section.

History

History. Acts 2005, No. 2318, § 1; 2006 (1st Ex. Sess.), No. 36, § 1.

Appendix C: Section 21. Special Language of Act 1421 of 2009

SECTION 21. SPECIAL LANGUAGE. NOT TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE ARKANSAS CODE NOR PUBLISHED SEPARATELY AS SPECIAL, LOCAL AND TEMPORARY LAW. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. Of the total amount appropriated for Professional Development Funding, four million dollars (\$4,000,000) may be authorized by the Director of the Department of Education to be used by the Department of Education to develop and implement statewide professional development support systems for teachers that will benefit student achievement. The provisions of this section shall be in effect only from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010.

Appendix D: Rules Governing Professional Development

Arkansas Department of Education
Rules Governing Professional Development
July 2005

1.0 Regulatory Authority

- 1.01 These Rules shall be known as the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Rules Governing Professional Development.
- 1.02 The State Board of Education (SBE) promulgated these Rules pursuant to Act 1185 of 2005, Act 2095 of 2005, Act 2318 of 2005, Act 2007 of 2005, Act 1183 of 2005, §28 of Act 2131 of 2005, Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-704, and Ark. Code Ann. §6-15-201 *et seq.*

2.0 Purposes

- 2.01 To develop a high quality professional development system for all administrators, teachers, and certified instructional support personnel.
- 2.02 Professional development is to improve knowledge and skills in order to facilitate individual, school-wide, and district-wide improvements for the purpose of increasing student achievement.

3.0 Definitions

- 3.01 Professional Development—a coordinated set of planned learning activities that are based on research, are standards-based and continuous.
- 3.02 Certified Instructional Support Personnel—individuals other than classroom teachers or administrators who support teaching and learning through direct contact with students, such as media specialists and counselors.
- 3.03 Arkansas On-line Professional Development Initiative—is a partnership between the ADE and the Arkansas Educational Television Network to provide on-line programs, courses, and workshops through the AETN.
- 3.04 Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (ACSIP)—a plan developed by a local school team based on an analysis of student performance data and other relevant data that provides a plan of action to address deficiencies in student performance as evidenced on the grade-level benchmark assessments, end-of-course exams, high school literacy exam, and other appropriate assessment data.
- 3.05 Learning Teams—a group of educators who meet regularly as a team to identify essential and valued student learning, develop common formative assessments, analyze current levels of achievement, set achievement goals, share strategies, and then create lessons to improve upon those levels.

- 3.06 Study Groups - a group of educators who meet to learn, implement, and reflect on research-based techniques in a focus area(s). Members read and discuss current research, examine and reflect on effective instruction, or examine student work.
- 3.07 Professional Development Plan - outlines the professional development program of activities for a district, school, or individual that is based on student data and is aligned to the ACSIP.
- 3.08 Approved Professional Development Provider - means any organization which provides content for professional development credit, whether delivered in a face-to-face, televised or internet mode of delivery, whose content has been approved by the ADE to meet the annual professional development credit requirements imposed upon licensed teachers and administrators by Arkansas Statutes and ADE Rules. The term “Approved Professional Development Provider” does not apply to an Arkansas public school district which provides a professional development program solely to its own personnel or to an Education Cooperative which provides professional development to districts/schools.
- 3.09 Mentoring/coaching – means increasing capacity for coaching and mentoring others to assist in growth of instructional skills and effectiveness of colleagues.
- 3.10 One professional development day is equal to six (6) hours of professional development credit.
- 3.11 Professional Development Program (“Program”) means a course of instruction intended to provide content which fulfills the requirement for professional development credit for teachers and administrators licensed by the ADE.

4.0 Time Requirements

- 4.01 Beginning with the 2005-2006 school year and each school year thereafter, all certified employees of Arkansas public schools shall complete sixty (60) hours of approved professional development each year.
- 4.02 The 60-hours professional development requirement must be fulfilled between July 1 and June 30 or June 1 and May 31 as approved by the local district. The local district shall document the district’s option.
- 4.03 The sixty (60) hours of required professional development shall include:
 - 4.03.1 Technology
At least six (6) hours shall be in the area of educational technology.

4.03.2 Arkansas History

Pursuant to Act 2095 of 2005 each teacher who provides instruction in Arkansas history, the sixty (60) hour professional development requirement shall include two (2) hours of training in Arkansas history. It is the responsibility of the school district to provide this training or make it available through other providers.

4.03.3 Parent Involvement

Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §6-15-1703 each teacher shall be required to have no less than two (2) hours of professional development designed to enhance understanding of effective parental involvement strategies.

Pursuant to §6-15-1703 each administrator shall be required to have no less than three (3) hours of professional development designed to enhance understanding of effective parent involvement strategies and the importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parent participation.

4.03.4 Administrator

For each administrator, the sixty (60) hour professional development requirement shall include training in data disaggregation, instructional leadership, and fiscal management.

4.04 College Courses

Pursuant to Act 1183 of 2005 a three-hour undergraduate or graduate-level college credit course from an accredited college or university counts as fifteen (15) hours of professional development, if the college credit:

4.04.1 is related to and enhances the teacher's knowledge of the subject area in which the teacher is currently teaching;

4.04.2 is part of the requirement for the teacher to obtain additional certification in a subject matter that has been designated by the ADE as having a critical shortage of teachers; or

4.04.3 is otherwise approved by the ADE as a graduate level course eligible for professional development credit. No more than half of the required 60-hours of professional development time may be met through college credit hours.

4.04.4 Graduate level courses in educational leadership are eligible for professional development credit based on approval by the ADE. The focus of the course must specifically relate to the job assignment as approved by the district.

4.05 Advanced Placement

Pursuant to Act 2131 of 2005, each hour of approved training received by certified personnel related to teaching an advance placement class for a subject covered by the College Board and Educational Testing Service shall count as professional development up to a maximum of thirty (30) hours.

- 4.06 Approved professional development activities, which occur during the instructional day or outside the employee's annual contract days may apply toward the 60-hour minimum professional development requirement.
- 4.07 Certified employees in positions not directly related to instructional activities shall be responsible for completing sixty (60) hours of professional development each year. However, the focus of their professional development may be prorated among those areas specifically related to their job assignment as approved by the district.
- 4.08 Any employee who misses any part of regularly scheduled professional development activities for any reason (such as sickness) must make up that time in other approved professional development activities so that the 60 required hours of professional development are earned during the approved timeframe required under Section 4.02 of these Rules.
- 4.09 Any certified person who provides approved professional development may count two (2) hours professional development credit for each one (1) hour of time spent in presenting professional development content.
- 4.10 Beginning in the 2005-2006 school year, sixty (60) approved professional development hours annually will be required to renew a teacher or administrator license in order to maintain a valid teaching license.
- 4.11 Beginning in the 2005-2006 school year, those teachers who have not maintained a teaching license but who wish to renew their license shall be required to meet the conditions of the Rules Governing the Requirements and Procedures for Renewing a Standard Arkansas Teaching License.
- 4.12 Adult Education

Pursuant to Act 2007 of 2005 certified personnel working solely part time in one of the following settings shall be required to obtain thirty (30) hours of professional development.

 - 4.12.01 Adult basic education;
 - 4.12.02 General adult education;
 - 4.12.03 English as a second language for adults; and
 - 4.12.04 General Educational Development Test examiners

- 4.13 Beginning in the 2005-2006 school year, thirty (30) approved professional development hours annually will be required to renew a teacher license for those certified personnel working solely part time in a setting described in Section 4.12 of these rules.
- 4.14 Beginning with the 2005-2006 school year, a teacher meeting the criteria of Section 4.12 of these rules who has not maintained a current teaching license but who wishes to renew his or her license shall be required to meet the conditions of the Rules Governing the Requirements and Procedures for Renewing a Standard Arkansas Teaching License.
- 4.15 All Institutions of Higher Education will be required to maintain documentation for its employees who wish to meet the professional development hours to maintain a teaching and/or administrative license according to, and in compliance with this Rule.

5.0 Professional Development Criteria

- 5.01 Professional development is the means by which educators acquire or enhance the knowledge, skills, and expectations necessary to increase student learning and must meet the following criteria. All approved professional development shall be aligned to the following Standards developed by the National Staff Development Council:
 - 5.01.1 Context Standards
 - Requires skillful school and school district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement;
 - Organizes educators into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and school district; and
 - Requires resources to support educator learning and collaboration.
 - 5.01.2 Process Standards
 - Uses disaggregated student data to determine educator learning priorities, monitors progress, and help sustain continuous improvements;
 - Uses multiple sources of information to guide educator improvement and demonstrate its impact;
 - Prepares educators to apply research to decision making;
 - Uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal;
 - Applies knowledge about human learning and change; and
 - Provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate.
 - 5.01.3 Content Standards
 - Prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students, create safe, orderly and supportive learning environments and hold high expectations for their academic achievement;
 - Deepens educators' content knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately; and

Provides educators with knowledge and skill to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately.

- 5.02 Approved professional development activities shall relate to the following focus areas:
 - 5.02.01 Content (K-12);
 - 5.02.02 Instructional strategies;
 - 5.02.03 Assessment;
 - 5.02.04 Advocacy/leadership;
 - 5.02.05 Systemic change process;
 - 5.02.06 Standards, frameworks, and curriculum alignment;
 - 5.02.07 Supervision;
 - 5.02.08 Mentoring/coaching;
 - 5.02.09 Education technology;
 - 5.02.10 Principles of learning/developmental stages;
 - 5.02.11 Cognitive research;
 - 5.02.12 Parent involvement; and
 - 5.02.13 Building a collaborative learning community.

- 5.03 All approved professional development, whether designed for the individual, school or district, shall be based on the improvement of student achievement on State assessments and increasing student achievement and academic performance.

- 5.04 Approved professional development takes on many forms and may be earned in the following ways:
 - 5.04.01 Conferences/workshops/institutes
 - 5.04.02 Mentoring/peer coaching;
 - 5.04.03 Study groups/learning teams;
 - 5.04.04 National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification;
 - 5.04.05 Distance learning/on-line opportunities;
 - 5.04.06 Internships;
 - 5.04.07 State/district/school programs;
 - 5.04.08 College/university course work;
 - 5.04.09 Action research; or
 - 5.04.10 Individually-guided as noted in the individual professional development plan

- 5.05 Pursuant to Act 1185 of 2005 an individual may be entitled to up to twelve (12) hours of professional development credit approved by the district/school which may be applied toward the sixty (60) hour professional development requirement for that time period at the beginning of each school year which is used to plan and prepare curriculum or develop other instructional material provided:
 - 5.05.01 The time is spent in his/her instructional classroom, office or media center at the public school;

- 5.05.02 The time is prior to the first student teacher interaction day of the school year; and
- 5.05.03 The time is spent in the focus areas listed in Section 5.02 of these Rules, and may include but are not limited to the following:
 - 5.05.03.1 Grade level and/or vertical team planning to integrate subject areas;
 - 5.05.03.2 Team work to analyze student data;
 - 5.05.03.3 Team work to develop academic improvement plans (AIP) or individual educational programs (IEP);
 - 5.05.03.4 Developing assessments for learning (formative assessments);
 - 5.05.03.5 Professional book studies;
 - 5.05.03.6 Developing student-centered units tied to the State academic standards and student learning expectations;
 - 5.05.03.7 Developing intervention strategies to support remediation;
 - 5.05.03.8 Developing and/or revising the Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (ACSIP); and
 - 5.05.03.9 Developing and/or revising curricula maps and/or pacing guides.
 - 5.05.03.10 Pursuing study as noted in individual professional development plan.
- 5.05.04 No professional development credit shall be given for activities under Section 5.05 of these Rules unless those activities meet the criteria and standard requirements set out in Sections 5.02 of these Rules. Specific activities which do not qualify include but are not limited to:
 - 5.05.04.1 Making and putting up bulletin boards;
 - 5.05.04.2 Clerical work associated with documents such as ACSIP, AIP and IEPs; and
 - 5.05.04.3 Administrative faculty or team administrative meetings.
- 5.05.05 Certified public school personnel who meet the requirements of Sections 5.02 and 5.05 of these Rules shall be entitled to earn one (1) hour of professional development for each hour of approved preparation, not to exceed twelve (12) hours.
- 5.06 Pursuant to Act 2318 of 2005 there is created the Arkansas Online Professional Development Initiative. Requirements for the initiative include:
 - 5.06.1 All professional development delivered by technology shall be aligned to the required focus areas listed in Section 5.02 of these Rules.

- 5.06.2 The ADE shall determine the content and approve all professional development delivered through the Arkansas On-line Professional Development Initiative that counts toward the required sixty (60) hours.
- 5.06.3 The ADE shall select courses/products, which are research-based and are available from sources, with expertise in technology-delivered professional development courses.
- 5.06.4 Courses shall align with the Southern Regional Education Board Multi-State Online Professional Development Standards.
- 5.06.5 Online professional development courses shall include online registration, course evaluation, and attendance and completion documents.

6.0 Professional Development Plan

All school districts, schools and certified personnel shall develop and implement a professional development plan.

- 6.01 The district and school plan shall be included in the ACSIP.
- 6.02 Individual plans (certified personnel) shall support the district and/or school plans.
- 6.03 Teachers, administrators, and classified school employees shall be involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of their respective professional development offerings under the plan.
- 6.04 School Improvement
 - 6.04.1 Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, the ADE may require specific professional development programs for the district or the school designated in school improvement or academic distress.
 - 6.04.2 These requirements may become part of the district or school school improvement plan.
 - 6.04.3 In order to receive professional development credit, the district or school certified personnel shall participate in, complete, and pass the assessment for the professional development requirements included in the district or school improvement plan.

7.00 Approval Process

- 7.01 Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, all professional development programs must be approved by the Arkansas Department of Education in order to receive credit toward the 60-hour requirement.

- 7.02 At least thirty (30) days before a program is offered to teachers and/or administrators, the professional development provider shall provide a detailed description of the entire program including staff qualifications to the ADE.
- 7.03 The ADE shall promptly review the content of the program for compliance with any and all applicable statutes and department rules to determine if any or all of the program content shall be deemed to provide professional development credit and shall establish the time period the professional development provider is approved to offer the program.
- 7.04 Upon notification by the ADE of approval of the program (or a part or parts thereof) for professional development credit, the professional development provider may enroll participants in the program and offer the program for professional development credit for the set time period.
- 7.05 The program provider shall be responsible for the preparation and dissemination of proof of completion of the program (or parts thereof) to all attendees. All such proofs, or copies thereof, shall be submitted by the attendees who are employed by an Arkansas school district to the superintendent of the district.
- 7.06 Each school district shall maintain all documents for its employees which reflect completion of professional development programs, whether such programs were provided by an outside organization or by the district itself.
- 7.07 Each school district shall report the amount of all professional development programs completed by its employees to the ADE at the time and in the matter specified by the ADE.
- 7.08 The ADE shall monitor all school districts, and all licensed teachers and administrators to whom these Rules apply, for compliance with these requirements, and shall administer appropriate sanctions specified in statute and Rule to any district, teacher and/or administrator whom it finds to be in noncompliance.
- 7.09 District and School Providers
School and district professional development plans shall be included in the ACSIP and shall be reviewed annually by the school/district and the ADE.
- 7.09.1 The ACSIP will include an assurance statement that each faculty/administrator in the school/district shall have an individual professional development plan that has been developed in cooperation and collaboration with the employee and the school and/or district.
These individual plans shall include:

7.09.1.1 Six (6) hours of technology, two (2) hours of parent involvement and two (2) hours of Arkansas History as defined in Act 2095 of 2005 may be selected at the discretion of the employee with approval of the district.

7.09.1.2 Up to twelve (12) hours may be selected at the discretion of the employee with the approval of the district in keeping with the identified needs of student data as defined in the ACSIP plan or the employees' individual professional development plan.

8.00 Funding

Professional Development Funding provided under Act 59 of the Second Extraordinary Session of 2003 must be directed to activities that meet the conditions described in these Rules and shall not be used for any other purpose unless otherwise allowed by law or rule.

9.00 Monitoring/Evaluation

9.01 Regular monitoring activities of the professional development requirements within these Rules shall occur when the superintendent of the school district provides written assurance to the Commissioner of Education as required by law. However, the ADE may directly monitor the professional development activities of any school or school district to determine compliance with the professional development requirements.

9.02 The criteria for evaluating the impact of professional development shall be the improvement of student achievement on State criterion-referenced assessments, State norm-referenced assessments, other related indicators as defined by ACTAAP and the evaluations of the professional development offerings. These data shall be used to revise ACSIP and the district, school and individual professional development plans associated with the local improvement plan.