A Statewide Professional Development Conference: Useful Strategy for Learning or Inefficient Use of Resources?

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Abstract

In an environment increasingly skeptical of the effectiveness of large-scale professional development activities, this study examines K-12 educators' reasons for participating and beliefs in the utility in a large-scale professional development conference. Pre- and post-conference surveys revealed that while financial support played a significant role in educators' ability to participate, they were drawn to the conference by the promise to learn substantive issues related to, in this case, performance assessment—what it means, how to implement it, and how to address community concerns. In spite of the conference's utility as a means to increase awareness of critical issues and to facilitate formal and informal learning, well conceived linkages to transfer new knowledge to the school and classroom were lacking.

The professional development of teachers has increasingly been viewed as a fundamental ingredient of successful educational reform and local school improvement in the United States (Fullan, 1995; Little, 1993). For example, by the latter half of the 19th century normal schools and colleges in the US regularly offered summer workshops and institutes for teacher professional improvement. These included such opportunities as workshops, courses, in-services, training sessions, extension work, and internships designed to address the needs of teachers and implement local school, district and state education policies (Little, 1993). Both paradox and promise have helped forge the link between educational reform and training and development. In some cases the quality, training, and competence of education professionals have been viewed as a major obstacle to educational reform—one that needed to be remediated through prescribed training (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Smiley, 1996). In other instances, policy makers, researchers, and educators have argued that teachers are not the problem but rather the primary creators of solutions to the vexing problems that confront educators in a dynamic public education system serving a culturally diverse nation (Smylie, 1996; Bredeson, 1998; Corcoran, 1995; NFIE, 1996). Corcoran (1995) speaks directly to the promise of professional development in education. "It is now widely recognized that the success of these reform initiatives depends in large part on the quality and accessibility of professional development for teachers" (Corcoran, 1995, p. vi).

Even the casual reader of educational reform reports, legislative mandates, and contemporary educational literature would soon discover one common theme: professional development is critical to systemic educational reform and school improvement focussed on enhancing learning outcomes for all children in public education (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996). Research has clearly indicated that teachers-as-learners are critical to pedagogical, social, political, and economic goals here in the US and other countries. For example, the professional development of teachers is offered as a primary educational reform strategy intended to help schools and teachers develop more rigorous curriculum standards, design meaningful educational assessments, facilitate organizational change, guide school improvement plans, and improve teachers' knowledge and skills to enhance student learning outcomes. These include calls to create stable, high quality sources of professional development (NCTAF, 1996); incorporate professional learning into the fabric of daily life in schools (NFIE, 1996; Scribner, 1999); establish professional development as a central component of state and local educational reform (Houghton & Goren, 1995); transform professional development to meet urgent educational needs (Corcoran, 1995); consider alternatives to traditional training models of staff development (Little, 1993); deal more directly with issues of racism and inequity in schools (Weissglass, 1997); and break the mold to classroom practices through new professional development practices (McLaughlin & Oberman, 1996).

Given the centrality of professional development to educational reform expressed in myriad activities, it is equally important to understand teachers' experiences with and beliefs about their own professional development (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Lieberman, 1995). To address part of this larger question, this study examines educators' (including teachers, principals and specialists) experiences and beliefs as they pertain to one vehicle for professional development—professional conferences. While the limitations of conferences as a delivery mechanism for professional growth have long been extolled (e.g., Joyce, 1990; Little 1993), we examined participants experiences in one statewide (Wisconsin) professional development conference to more fully understand (1) the potential benefits of large scale professional conferences and (2) the

influence these conferences may have on professional learning and the school change process. Specifically, we sought to answer the following questions: (1) what motivated participants to attend a large scale conference and what were their expectations; (2) what types of knowledge did participants acquire at the conference; and (3) what role may the knowledge acquired play in participant and/or school improvement?

Conceptual Organizers

We use two conceptual lenses to shed light on this study. First, we borrow Schlechty and Whitford's (1983) useful typology of professional development to examine the intended and unintended purposes and expectations inherent in large scale conferences. Second, we employ a professional knowledge framework to make sense of what types of knowledge these educators may (or may not) have learned in this setting.

A Professional Development Typology

Students of teacher learning have categorized professional development activities in different ways. Perhaps one of the most useful and enduring frameworks to examine specific activities is Schlechty and Whitford's (1983). They described professional development activities as serving one or more of three functions: (1) an *establishment* function (e.g., increasing awareness) when the purpose is to promote organizational change through the implementation of programs, technologies, or procedures in schools and school districts; (2) an *enhancement* function (e.g., apply to and improve practice) to improve teacher effectiveness; or (3) a *maintenance* function (e.g., continued practice) to ensure compliance with administrative and organizational goals and objectives. Viewed through this lens a large scale conference such as the one examined here would be expected to best serve an establishing function.

Professional Knowledge

Implicit in most professional development endeavors is an expectation that knowledge acquired will be used in some fashion at a later time. In this realm, Eraut (1994) provided important frameworks to investigate and understand knowledge acquisition and use. Concerned not only with the relevance of the knowledge acquired, Eraut's work focuses on how knowledge is acquired and the relationship between knowledge acquisition and knowledge use. He argues that most professionals learn continuously, but he warns routine experiences do not necessarily add to the professional's knowledge base. Rather special circumstances or unique occurrences offer the most fertile grounds for adding to the professional's knowledge base. Furthermore, Eraut embeds the concept of the professional knowledge acquisition within the work context. Put differently, the nature of the professional's work plays a major part in determining what knowledge is learned, how it is learned, and how that knowledge is (or is not) used (see also, Scribner, 1999). On the surface, these ideas would seem to seriously limit the utility of large scale conferences conducted beyond the contexts of classrooms, schools, and districts.

Eraut and others (e.g., Marsick & Watkins, 1990) have also attempted to describe various types or classes of knowledge. Generally speaking, Eraut frames professional knowledge as a triad of propositional, procedural, and personal knowledge. Propositional knowledge includes academic knowledge, typically discipline-based, and

theoretical knowledge. Propositional knowledge is concerned with describing actions and is often of little use to practitioners with immediate needs. Limitations placed on professionals by the context of their work often relegate theories (propositional knowledge) learned in the classroom to the mind's attic never to be retrieved. Procedural knowledge is "how-to" knowledge professionals develop that is needed to perform job tasks. Finally, personal knowledge includes "notes and memories of cases and problems which have been encountered, reflected upon and theorized to varying extents and with varying significance for current practice" (Eraut, 1994, p. 17). We kept these knowledge types in mind as we analyzed our data. By overlaying these two frameworks, we hope to shed new light on both the promise and persistent pitfalls of large scale conferences.

Methods

This evaluative study takes a utilization-focused approach (Patton, 1997) to address the research questions outlined above. Working closely with the Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC), a major sponsor and financial contributor to the conference, we designed an evaluation that would summatively show the merit (i.e., strengths and weaknesses) of such a large scale endeavor.

Event and Participant Selection

Due to the evaluative nature of the study and our close working relationship with sponsoring agencies (i.e., WEAC, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, and the University of Oshkosh), both the case (i.e., the conference) and the participants represent convenience samples (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). The three-day conference on student performance assessment consisted of an array of workshops, round table discussions, work groups, consultation time with assessment experts, opportunities to work with school teams, presentations by invited speakers, as well as informal times for teachers to socialize and network with colleagues.

Conference participants represented the gamut of public education in Wisconsin including K-12 teachers, administrators, and other specialists, and higher education administrators. However, to answer the questions and concerns raised by the sponsoring organizations we only surveyed full-time, public school K-12 teachers, administrators and specialists. Furthermore, due to the nature of the population sampled two respondent "cohorts" were used. The first cohort represents all full-time teachers, administrators, and specialists (N=301). Surveys from cohort I inform the first research question and were administered during the opening session of the conference. Cohort II (N=101; a subset of the cohort I) represents those participants supported by WEAC to attend the conference. Along with financial support to attend the conference, professionals in cohort II were obligated to attend a post-conference meeting lasting two hours. At this meeting participants responded to our survey that addressed the second and third research questions. (Note: throughout the narrative below we will refer to our findings by cohort to avoid confusion).

Data Collection and Analysis

To address our research purposes we designed two written questionnaires to collect survey data from conference participants (See appendix). The first survey, which cohort I (N=301) completed at the outset of the conference, consisted of 1) demographic items, 2) information about whether or not they were part of a school team, and 3) how their

expenses for the conference were covered to gain an understanding of participants' expectations of the conference and reasons for attending. We also asked a series of open-ended queries, including: 1) how they found out about the conference; 2) why the conference was of interest; 3) what they hoped to gain from the conference; and 4) what activities in the area of performance assessment were currently going on in their schools. Cohort II (i.e., participants whose conference fees were paid by WEAC) completed a post-conference survey that sought participant perspectives on actual conference benefits, the role WEAC sponsorship played in their attendance, and how the topics and activities were connected to assessment issues and activities in their schools.

We used two primary methods for data analysis. First, we completed descriptive and statistical analyses of all quantitative data. Next, narrative responses were transcribed and organized into text files by question. We then analyzed narrative data using a constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) in which we coded data, developed categories, and identified themes in the open-ended responses.

Limitations

This study focuses on the experiences of educators attending a three-day professional development conference; further the participants surveyed represent convenience samples. As such, the findings from this study are limited in their generalizability. Nevertheless, we believe these data do provide an understanding of several issues including but not limited to the following: (1) participants' beliefs about their own professional learning and the linkage between that learning and their work; (2) the expected and unexpected outcomes of large scale conferences; and (3) the ongoing tension between efficiency and effectiveness as they relate to professional development.

Findings

We begin our discussion of findings by describing the conference, its participants (cohort I), and their responses to the pre-conference written survey. Data analysis on cohort I responses led to the formation of two categories: *motivation* for attending a large scale conference and *utility* of a large-scale conference. Data analysis on cohort II responses informed our understanding of the possibilities (or improbabilities) of connecting knowledge acquired at the conference to school and classroom practice.

Description of Setting and Participants

During the summer of 1996 WEAC, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), and the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh sponsored the Wisconsin State Assessment Institute. These organizations viewed the conference as an opportunity to support professional development in what one WEAC official described as a "hot topic area." WEAC earmarked money to support participation in this conference by covering the conference registration fee ($150) and per diem costs. Participants had to cover the cost of transportation.

Of the total possible number of respondents (N=301), we analyzed 299 usable surveys. Two hundred and thirty-seven females (76%) and 62 males (21%) completed the pre-conference survey (about 3% of the respondents did not indicate gender). Slightly over 69% of the respondents were classroom teachers, 9% principals, 4% Directors of Instruction, and 14% other (e.g. school and district administrators and

specialists). Elementary teachers represented the largest category of participants (52%). Overall, the sample represented a very experienced group of educators with an average of 17 years in education, nine of those years in their current positions. Seventy-eight percent were attending this conference as a member of a school team.

Reasons for Attending a Large-scale Conference

Financial support was a major inducement to attend the institute, especially for teachers. Most participants received financial support from their school, district, and/or professional association to attend the three-day conference. Only about 3% of respondents reported spending their own resources to attend the institute. WEAC, for example, covered over 90 percent of conference costs for approximately one-third of the participants (n=101). Among all respondents, 62% reported paying less than 25% of the cost for the 3-day institute. In the post-conference survey we asked cohort II respondents (N=101) whether or not they would have participated in the assessment institute if WEAC had not covered the majority of the cost. Twenty-four percent indicated they would not have attended and four percent of respondents were unsure. Only five percent said they would have attended even if their costs had not been covered. Educators were willing to give their time, but clearly they needed financial support. As an additional incentive, the Institute also offered all participants continuing education or graduate credit. Since all K-12 educational professionals in Wisconsin must earn an additional 6 graduate credits, or its equivalent, every five years to retain their license, the financial support provided by school districts and by WEAC to its members coupled with credits toward license renewal were particularly attractive incentives.

While financial incentives and credits for license renewal were important factors influencing participants' decisions to attend the three-day institute, the issues and topics addressed at the institute on student performance assessment also provided a strong incentive to attend. According to cohort I respondents, recent adoption of performance based standards by DPI, mandated state-wide competency tests for students at grades 4, 8, and 10, and increased public scrutiny of student learning outcomes, especially those that demonstrate proficiencies through performance, made the content and activities in this institute especially attractive and timely. Specifically, our analysis of cohort I open-ended responses indicated that there were four primary reasons respondents attended the institute. First, the topics addressed and the varied professional development opportunities were relevant to current state-mandated performance assessment activities in their schools and/or districts. Second, participants wanted to know more about student performance assessments. Third, they believed that learning more about performance assessment would enhance their classroom teaching and student assessment skills. Finally, the three-day institute provided participants, especially those who came as members of school teams (78%), a chance to work with colleagues for an extended, uninterrupted period of time. For example, when asked to explain why the conference on performance assessment interested them, they provided responses such as "It provides time to work as a team;" or "Time to work with my colleagues from my school;" "A chance to work with the school team to learn and grow;" and "Time to work with colleagues on our projects."

Expectations of Conference Utility

We found that respondents primarily hoped to gain an awareness of the concepts

and theories, how-to knowledge, and political knowledge from the conference activities. In most cases, respondents reported that they were in the early stages of performance assessment implementation in their schools. As a result, most respondents simply wanted to know more about performance assessment (i.e., Schlechty & Whitford's establishment function). What was it exactly? What are the key ideas, theories, concepts, and language they needed in order to be able to consider its application to their current work? For many respondents, such terms as "rubrics", "portfolios", and "performance-based assessment" remained fuzzy abstractions, not part of their current thinking, language, or practice.

Respondents also hoped to gain other forms of useful knowledge. For instance, respondents wanted to know (1) how new forms of student performance assessment work; (2) how to put together portfolios; (3) how to communicate to parents clearly and confidently information about performance indicators during conferences; and (4) how to integrate performance assessment into their current teaching practices. For example one respondent commented on her interest in acquiring both procedural and propositional knowledge:

> I hope to walk out of here with a clearer understanding of what performance assessment is and [what are] its components. I hope to have some concrete ideas, which can be, employed "day one" of this school year. I hope to bring back some recommended strategies in which to diversify our testing methods currently being used.

These same respondents also hoped to gain insight into the dynamics and politics associated with changes in student performance assessment. That is, they wanted to learn more about how to disseminate information to their colleagues and communicate clearly the purposes and importance of new forms of performance assessment to parents, school board members, and others in the community. For instance, one person's comments reflected a common hope among respondents that the conference would provide her school's performance assessment team with the know-how to influence others about the potential for new ways of assessing student work: "The development of camaraderie among our team to work together to carry the message of performance assessment back to our district."

Connecting Professional Learning to Work in Schools

At the conclusion of the three-day institute, we asked cohort II respondents whose participation had been supported by WEAC to complete a second written survey. Of particular importance to us were these respondents' views on the enhancement and maintenance functions of conferences as a professional development activity (i.e., the connection between what they had learned and how this might influence their professional practice). When respondents were asked, "Do you plan to implement changes in the way you assess performance as a result of information obtained at this conference?," 30% of the respondents indicated they were planning to make such changes. Only three percent of respondents said they would not be making any changes. However, when we asked if their team or school was planning to implement changes in performance assessment, the number of affirmative responses dropped. Only 23% of respondents believed their school would be implementing changes in performance assessment, while 11% did not believe any changes would be made in assessment practices in their schools. These findings may reflect the predisposition of attendees to

reconsider their assessment practices while their colleagues, not in attendance, were less likely to be making significant changes in their practices in the near future. Whether or not significant changes in teachers' performance assessment practices will be successfully implemented in schools remains an empirical question. Regardless of the outcome, like any innovation, successful implementation of performance assessment requires careful planning, adequate resources, and purposeful strategies for the dissemination and diffusion of the innovation.

We were also interested in knowing what these respondents would do with the knowledge and skills they had acquired during this three-day institute. When asked how they intended to share what they had learned when they returned to their schools, most participants (86%) indicated that they would share what they had learned with their colleagues. As encouraging as this appears, most strategies mentioned for sharing information with colleagues were informal. In other words, few respondents described systematic ways in which newly acquired information on performance assessment and knowledge about assessment practices would be disseminated in their schools. The most frequently cited format was in meetings—faculty, team, curriculum, and departmental (32%). Other strategies for sharing information included working with colleagues and modeling particular uses of assessment practices in their schools (24%), staff in-services and workshops (18%), distributing printed materials (11%), and working in teacher study groups (7%). Sixteen percent of respondents indicated they "did not know" how information would be disseminated in their schools.

The professional development of teachers and change processes in schools require sufficient resources for optimal impact on the lives of teachers and students. We asked respondents to describe the types of resources, if any, that were available to support the implementation of new forms of student performance assessment in their schools. The most frequently listed resources revealed that these educators primarily looked inward. For example, according to 42 percent of respondents the quality and professional expertise of their own staff, teachers, and administrators were the most important resources available to support teachers' continued learning and successful implementation of performance assessment changes in their schools. This suggests that the respondents believed the richest (or perhaps the only) possibilities to support teacher learning and substantive change, in this case performance assessment practices, were already in place in schools, not externally in some remote bureaucracy, corporation, or private benefactor. School level capacity was important, but individual will and commitment were essential to successful change. In addition on- site professional expertise, existing staff development funds, and school/district sponsored professional development activities were cited as key sources of support (24%). Another important resource was printed materials/literature (17%). External funds (10%) and outside experts (7%) were also listed as resources available. Twenty-seven percent of respondents indicated that there were no resources available, or if there were, they did not know how to access them.

Discussion

As noted earlier, we remain cautious about the generalizability of our findings because the survey respondents represented a convenience sample of educators at one professional development institute. Despite this limitation to external validity, we believe our findings highlight several important issues related to the role of large scale conferences and workshops in the larger context of professional development. We organize our discussion according to the following topics: (1) this conference's place in

Schlechty and Whitford's typology; (2) the types of knowledge educators sought (and perhaps acquired); and (3) factors that facilitated or impeded the usefulness of this often maligned professional development activity.

Functions of a Large Scale Conference

Clearly, this large scale conference served an *establishment* function. That is, the purpose of the conference (according to its organizers) was to introduce the latest concepts of and approaches to student performance assessment. Our data support that most educators expected to have basic questions about student performance assessment answered at the conference. Most respondents indicated they simply needed to know more about performance assessment. These findings are consistent with others' perspectives on adult and professional learning. For example, these findings parallel Hall and Hord's (1987) stages of concern model for educational innovations. According to Hall and Hord, at the early stages of any innovation, teacher interests center on awareness and informational concerns. Once dealt with adequately, then teachers' concerns shift to task and impact concerns. Our data from open-ended responses also indicate that teachers' stages of learning and levels of concern are similar to the sequence of stages in teacher career development: survival, exploration and bridging, adaptation, conceptual change, and invention (Huberman, 1989). During the initial stages of this innovation, i.e., changes in teachers' assessment practices, the survival stage is intertwined with what Huberman (1989) calls "discovery." "Empirical studies show that these two aspects occur in parallel, and that the excitement and challenge of 'discovery' is what brings many teachers through the attrition of day-to-day 'survival'" (Huberman, 1989, p. 349).

To a lesser degree, but worth mentioning, is the *maintenance* function the conference served. Participants attended the conference during a time of great debate and legislative change in Wisconsin's education landscape. New state requirements were beginning to emerge and these teachers and administrators wanted to not only increase their awareness of the initiative, but also, ensure that they were in compliance with the new legal requirements. However, this conference did not show promise according to Schlechty and Whitford's *enhancement* function. Our findings suggested that while respondents (i.e., cohort II) did learn valuable information at the conference, it was not clear how that knowledge would be transferred to their own classroom practice or to their colleagues.

Finally, we would be remiss if we did not mention the opportunity to gain continuing education credits required by the Wisconsin DPI as an important purpose of the three-day conference. However, as we describe in the preceding two paragraphs, our skepticism (or perhaps cynicism) that participants were probably motivated more by the chance to "knock out" continuing education hours than by intrinsic interest in learning an important topic on the state's education landscape was tempered by our findings.

Knowledge Acquired

Giving up three days of their summer break was strong evidence that these participants were interested in knowing more about assessment. The types of knowledge discussed by Eraut and others that we outlined above provide insights into the kinds of learning respondents claimed to have experienced. In particular they wanted three types of professional knowledge: *propositional, procedural*, and, what we call *political*

knowledge. That is, participants expected to learn the concepts, theories, and language—or propositional knowledge (i.e., how to talk about performance assessment), how to actually implement new performance assessment models such as portfolios in practice (procedural knowledge), and how to learn how others had successfully implement these new performance assessment models in the face of potentially skeptical parents, the business community, and their own colleagues (political knowledge).

Factors that Facilitate or Impede Usefulness

Inherent in this conference were several factors that respondents believed facilitated its usefulness in spite of popular criticisms of this professional development vehicle. First, the large scale nature of the conference provided the almost 300 respondents with numerous learning activities from which to choose. The availability of choices was important to participants given their varying degrees of awareness of student performance assessment. For instance, we found that elementary teachers (accounting for slightly over two-thirds of the respondents) demonstrated a better understanding of issues around student performance assessment, its link to teaching and the curriculum, and how various types of student performance measures (e.g., portfolios, demonstrations, and projects) would be implemented in their classrooms than did their secondary school counterparts.

Incentives and resources to support professional development are important. Time, money, and graduate credits for license renewal influenced respondents' motivation to participate in this institute. Without financial support from WEAC, from local school districts, or other agencies, respondents stated overwhelmingly that they would not have attended this conference. The financial support from WEAC, the largest teacher union in the state, also suggests that unions are beginning to reexamine ways in which they can support their members beyond contract bargaining and the protection of members' rights to due process. This resonates with a recent statement on the role of teachers' unions by Bob Chase (1997), President of the National Education Association:

> Membership polls tell us that most teachers want their union to match its traditional emphasis on decent salaries, benefits, and working conditions with a more aggressive commitment to professionalism and quality.
> And I agree. Our sights are set on tougher academic standards, stricter discipline, less bureaucracy, higher quality schools. These goals, shared by teachers and school boards alike, compel us to transform collective bargaining into a collaborative process - negotiations focusing not only on traditional bread-and-butter issues, and also on issues of employee involvement and school quality (Chase, 1997, not paginated).

Furthermore, two other important themes emerge from respondents' preferences and descriptions of what they hoped to gain in this three-day institute. The first is finding time to work with school colleagues. Given the reputation of large scale professional development conferences in recent literature, we found it somewhat ironic that respondents viewed this conference as a place that provided the time and place for colleagues to collaborate. Although this finding was somewhat surprising, it makes sense given traditional school structures that often result in teachers' career-long isolation from their professional colleagues. Teachers' self-reliance as practitioners and as learners is evident in these survey data. In part, this is a legacy of the one-room school where teachers were isolated from their professional colleagues and thus developed a

powerful sense of individualism. Ironically, sometimes the only way teachers and principals can find the time to work together is to leave their schools. A second theme was the importance of social interaction in professional learning that cut across structured sessions and informal exchanges among these educators.

Conclusion

As we stated earlier, professional development has risen in status to become one of the principal mechanisms to achieve the 1990's reform agenda. As professional development has become a primary strategy for reform implementation, so has it gained the attention of not only school and district educational practitioners and policy makers, but state level policy makers as well. The results of this study of a state wide conference to educate practitioners about performance assessment underscore at least a few important points. For instance, from these educators' perspectives workshops and professional conferences serve an important purpose by (1) introducing and demystifying often abstract reform concepts; (2) deprivatizing teacher practice in ways that foster the "cross-pollination" of practical ideas; and (3) providing a venue for teachers and other educators—committed to addressing daily moral imperatives of their work—to explore pressing issues that can broaden the professional frames through which they approach their profession.

However, as professional development takes on increased significance at the state and even federal levels, this study also highlights the need to strengthen linkages between schools, school districts, and state level education agencies (e.g., state departments of education and state teachers unions). While a majority of participants in this study attended the conference as part of a school team, and many were supported by WEAC and/or their school districts, alarmingly few participants were confident that they could disseminate their newly acquired knowledge to colleagues in their schools. So, while large scale professional development conferences may have their place in overall professional development programs, coordination between the various levels of our educational system must occur to ensure that the professional knowledge gained is internalized by teachers, principals, and others into their respective practices.

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Appendix
Survey Items

1. Cohort I Survey
   - Gender:
   - Indicate current position (official title):
   - Level (e.g., elementary, middle, or high school):
   - Number of years in current position:
   - Total number of years employed in education:
   - School size (approximate number of students):
   - Are you attending this workshop as part of a school team? (If yes, how many people are in your team?)
   - What percentage of total costs (including registration, lodging, per diem, travel) of attending this three day conference is being paid by the following? (Indicate percentages)
     - Personal funds
     - School and/or district support
     - Professional association (e.g., WEAC) support
     - Other (If "other" please specify)
   - How did you find out about this workshop?
   - In the area of performance assessment, what activities are currently going on in your school?
   - Why did this conference on performance assessment interest you?
   - What are the three most important things you hope to gain from this conference?
2. Cohort II Survey
   - Name:
   - District:
   - School:
   - School Address:
   - Did you attend this conference individually or as part of a school (or district) team?
   - What did you learn about performance assessment that you believe would benefit you and your school? Please list up to 3 examples.
   - How did you find out about this conference on performance assessment? Please specify.
   - Would you have attended this conference if WEAC had not covered the cost of attending? Why or why not?
   - What is your school currently doing in the area of performance assessment?
   - Do you plan to implement changes in the way you assess performance as a result of information obtained at this conference? (Check one).
   - Do you (or does your team) plan to implement changes in the way teachers in your school assess student performance? (Check one).

> If so, how do you plan to share what you have learned in the three-day conference in your school? Please explain.

○ What resources, if any, are available to support the implementation of performance assessment in your school? Please explain.

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