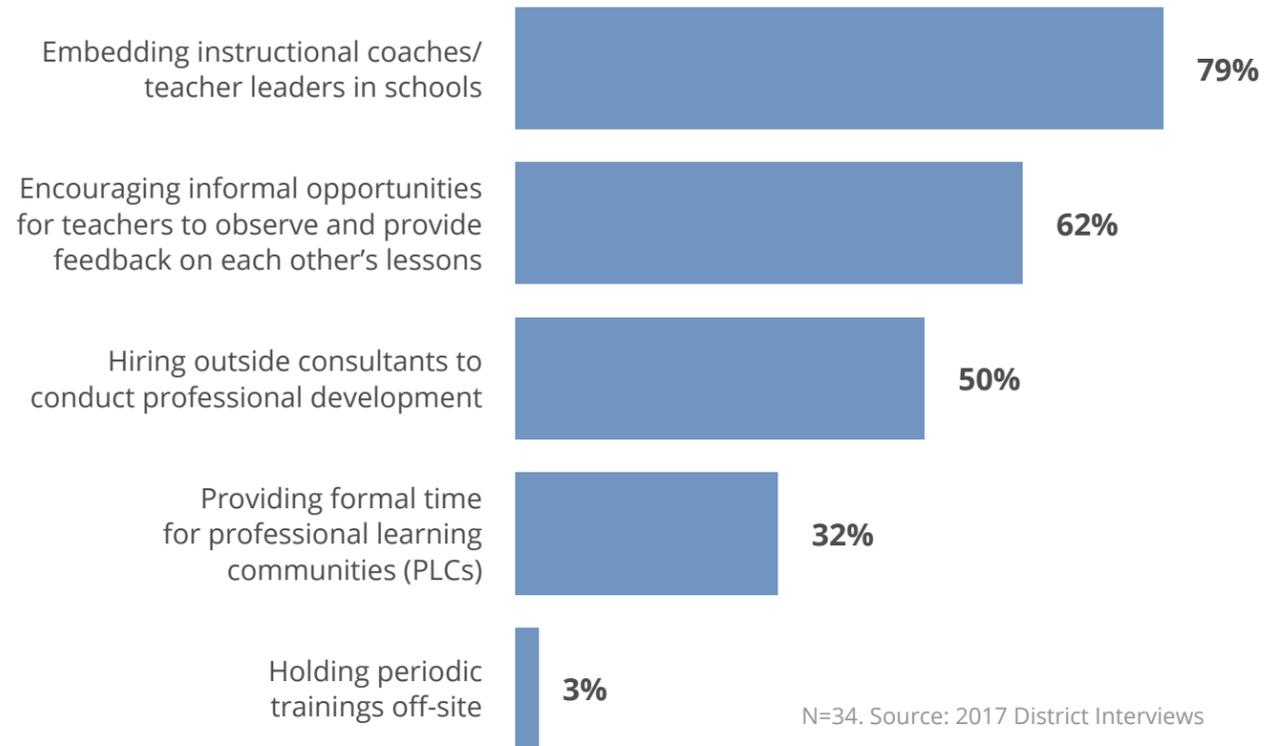


Most of the district leaders we spoke with report drawing on internal expertise, such as embedding teacher leaders in schools, to improve teachers' instructional practices around the California State Standards.

For more of *The Center's CA Insights* on PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, visit us at TheCenter.WestEd.org/professional-learning.

In the Professional Learning domain, we focus on professional learning opportunities — both formal and informal — that advance educators' understanding and application of the California State Standards. Here, district leaders, principals, and teacher leaders describe the kinds of professional learning they receive and provide, and how those experiences vary in approach, frequency, and adequacy. In addition, we highlight the key role that teacher leaders play.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO HELP TEACHERS IMPROVE THEIR PEDAGOGY AND INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES FOR STANDARDS IMPLEMENTATION?



LEARNING FROM PEERS

In this open-ended question, we asked districts to describe their approaches to professional learning for teachers. The majority of responses described strategies to place instructional coaches and other teacher leaders in schools, and/or group teachers together in classroom settings to participate in peer observation, feedback, and collaborative co-teaching activities.

Three-quarters of the principals we spoke with in our focus groups reported offering opportunities for teachers to learn alongside and from peers during the school day.

EXAMPLES OF APPROACHES TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING THAT DRAW ON INTERNAL EXPERTISE



“Every other month, we do peer observations, and we do it throughout the grade level so it’s three days every other month. [However, finding] subs is always a challenge.”

– Principal



*“Teachers have a **shortened [day] to work in collaborative groups**. Schools use site funds to release teachers to work in collaborative groups.”*

– District Leader



*“[The ideal approach is to] do peer-to-peer, or your instructional coach comes in and you create a lesson, peer review [the] lesson, and an instructional coach teaches it. Especially [for] new teachers, [you can say,] ‘**Watch me do this,**’ and then you have an opportunity to debrief it afterwards.”*

– Teacher Leader