

# Wisconsin Virtual School teachers receive professional development covering a variety of topics, but face challenges with student engagement<sup>1</sup>

Administrators from Wisconsin Virtual School, a state-level online learning program, surveyed their teachers to gather information about the professional development they received, the challenges they encounter while teaching online, and their perceived needs for additional training.<sup>2</sup>

Most teachers participated in professional development about **online education while teaching**, but fewer than half participated during preservice education.

While teaching online

88%



Prior to teaching online, but after preservice education

69%

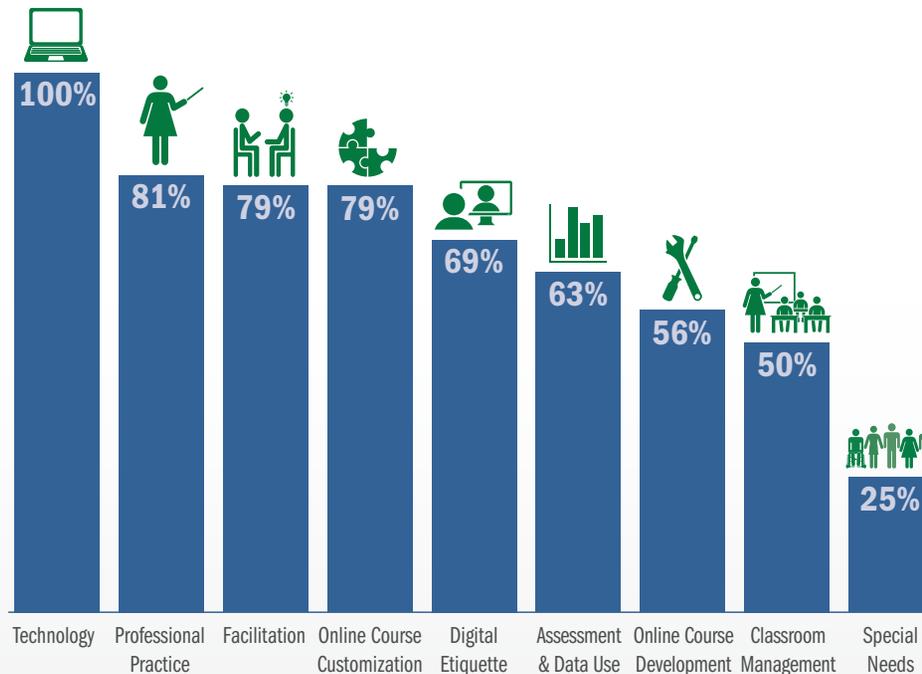


During preservice education

31%



All teachers participated in some type of professional development about online education. However, the **topics varied**.



Teachers reported that their **top challenges** were related to student perseverance and engagement.



Teachers preferred **unstructured professional development** to address their top challenges.



**Unstructured**  
(such as mentoring, online forums, or Internet search)



**Structured**  
(such as a graduate course or workshop)

Interested in learning more about your online teachers' professional development, training, and needs? Use the REL Midwest survey for free!

[https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midwest/pdf/REL\\_2016110.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midwest/pdf/REL_2016110.pdf)

## Data source

Zweig, J., Stafford, E., Clements, M., & Pazzaglia, A. M. (2015). *Professional experiences of online teachers: Training and challenges* (REL 2015–110). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest. [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midwest/pdf/REL\\_2016110.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midwest/pdf/REL_2016110.pdf)

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Wisconsin Virtual School (WVS) is a supplemental online course provider that partners with school districts throughout Wisconsin to offer online courses to middle and high school students. WVS was created through a partnership between the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and Cooperative Educational Service Agency 9 (CESA 9). WVS has been operated out of CESA 9 since 2000 and has had more than 27,000 enrollments to date. More than half of Wisconsin's school districts have participated in the program.

<sup>2</sup> Wisconsin Virtual School leadership distributed the survey to its 54 online teachers. The results are based on the 48 teachers who indicated that they taught an online course during the 2013/14 or 2014/15 school year.

## Additional information

For more information about this infographic, contact REL Midwest by e-mail ([relmidwest@air.org](mailto:relmidwest@air.org)) or by phone (866-730-6735).