



WYOMING  
INSTITUTE FOR  
DISABILITIES

# Growing Our Own: Building Capacity with Wyoming's Professional Learning Community in Assistive Technology

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## Assistive technology needs in Wyoming

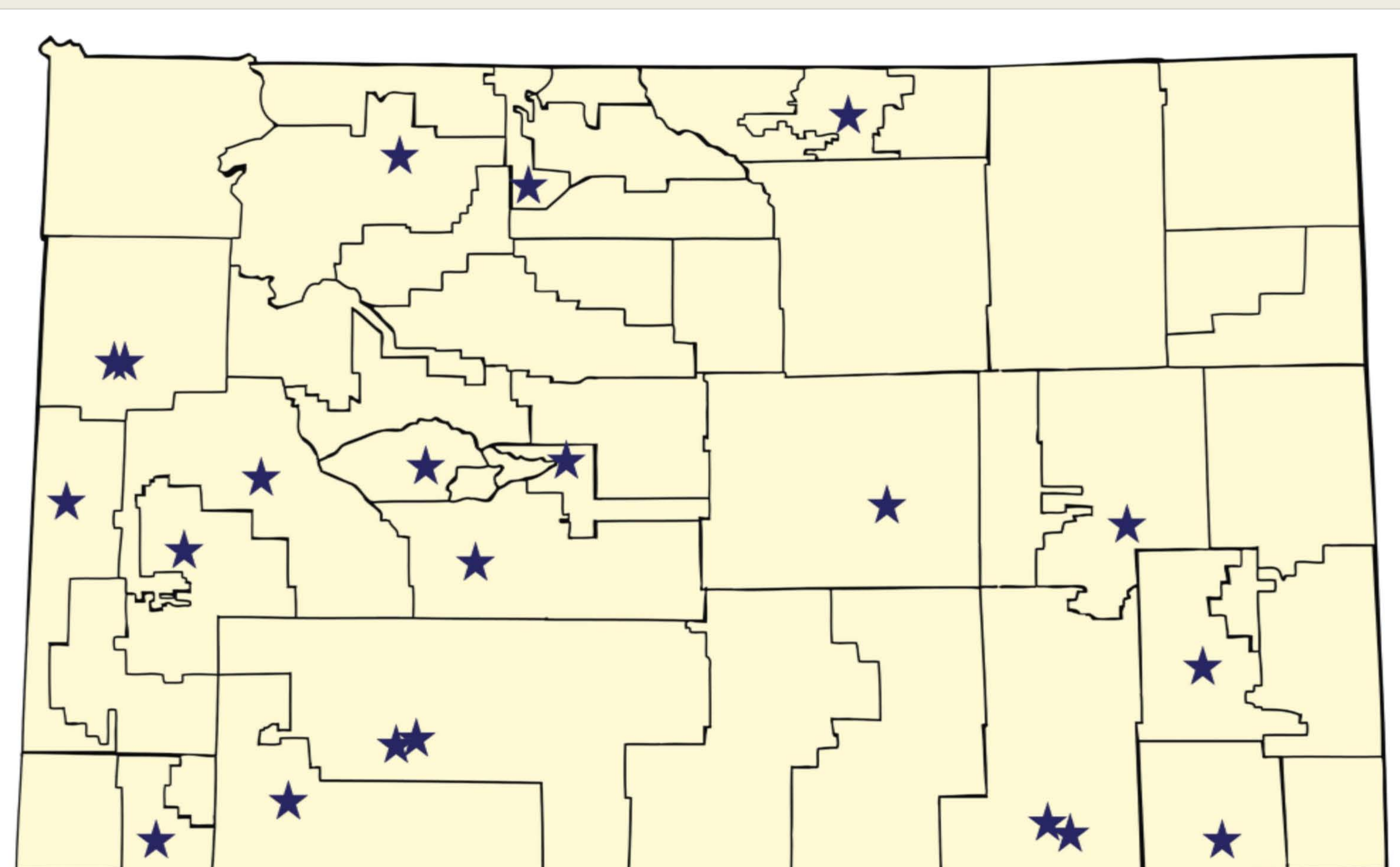
- Only 15% of students with a disability receive AT
- 75% of students with a disability are served in rural communities
- Limited, if any, AT expertise in rural districts
- Service providers' (OT, PT, SLP) travel complicated by geography, few roads, prolonged winter weather

## About WY PLC in AT

Wyoming's Professional Learning Community in Assistive Technology, a collaboration in 2012, 2013 between the Wyoming Department of Education and Wyoming Institute for Disabilities to improve the outcomes of students with disabilities, is building capacity in education.

*Assistive technology (AT)* is a device used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of an individual with a disability.

## WY PLC in AT



Members by Wyoming school districts

### Members were expected to

- Identify personal development goals to increase understanding of assistive technology
- Identify goals to improve the districts' integration of assistive technology
- Make and report on progress toward personal and professional goals
- Attend in-person training and leadership, networking activities
- Effectively integrate AT for students in their districts
- Provide district data about student AT implementation
- Participate in ongoing distance trainings

### Wyoming Institute for Disabilities

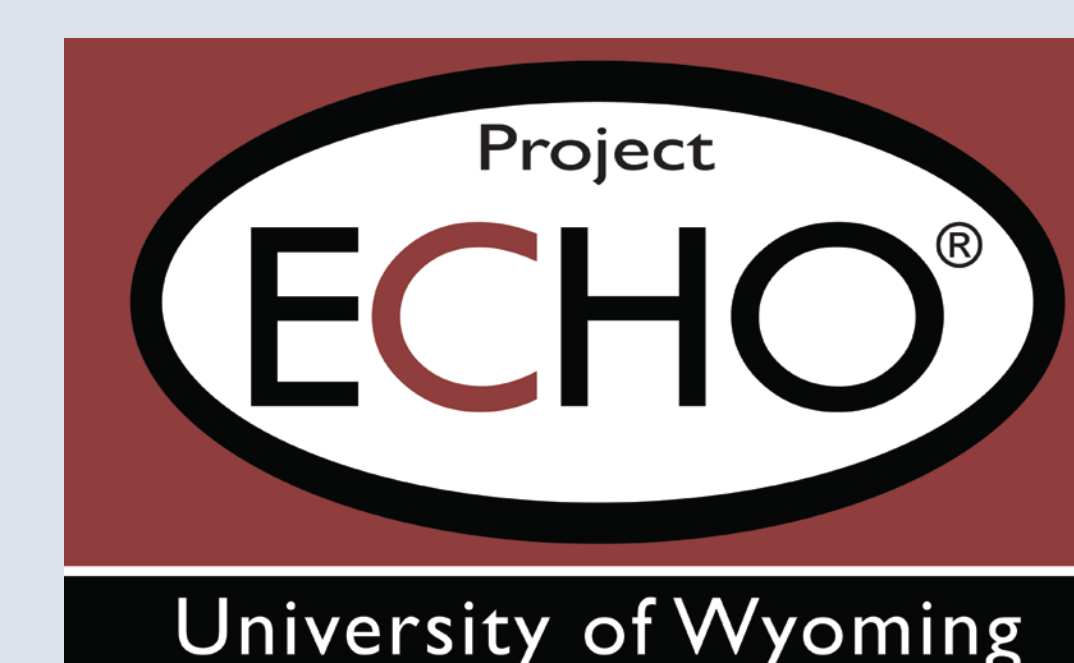
- Employed a rigorous application process
- Selected 21 members with diverse roles and backgrounds
- Provided 2 weeks of in-person training about fundamentals and best practices
- Facilitated community building, leadership, networking opportunities
- Disbursed stipends and funding for travel
- Delivered ongoing training, support for subsequent years

### Beyond expectations, members

- Provided recommendations to WY Department of Education for statewide device reutilization, assistive technology consideration process, and parent information
- Formed AT leadership team to support educators throughout the state
- Delivered trainings in their districts and at state, national conferences
- Remain an ongoing and recognized leadership team
- Helped WIND develop UW ECHO in AT

## Next: University of Wyoming ECHO in Assistive Technology developed from foundation of Wyoming PLC in AT

- Uses technology to leverage scarce resources
- Improves outcomes by reducing variation and sharing best practices
- Facilitates co-management of cases; "learn by doing" with experts
- Conducts rigorous and HIPPA/FERPA monitoring of outcomes



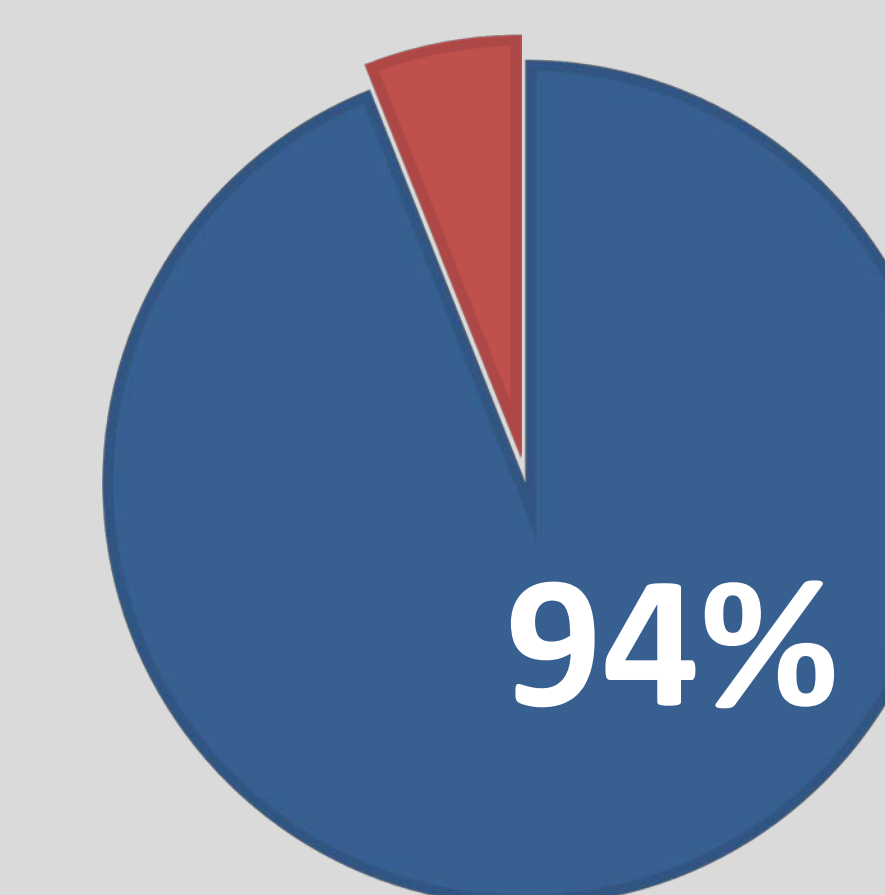
## Addressing the needs

## External Evaluation

Findings from pre- and post- measurement of skills, surveys of accomplishments, data reporting, and telephone interviews with supervisors include:

### Self-Report of members' participation

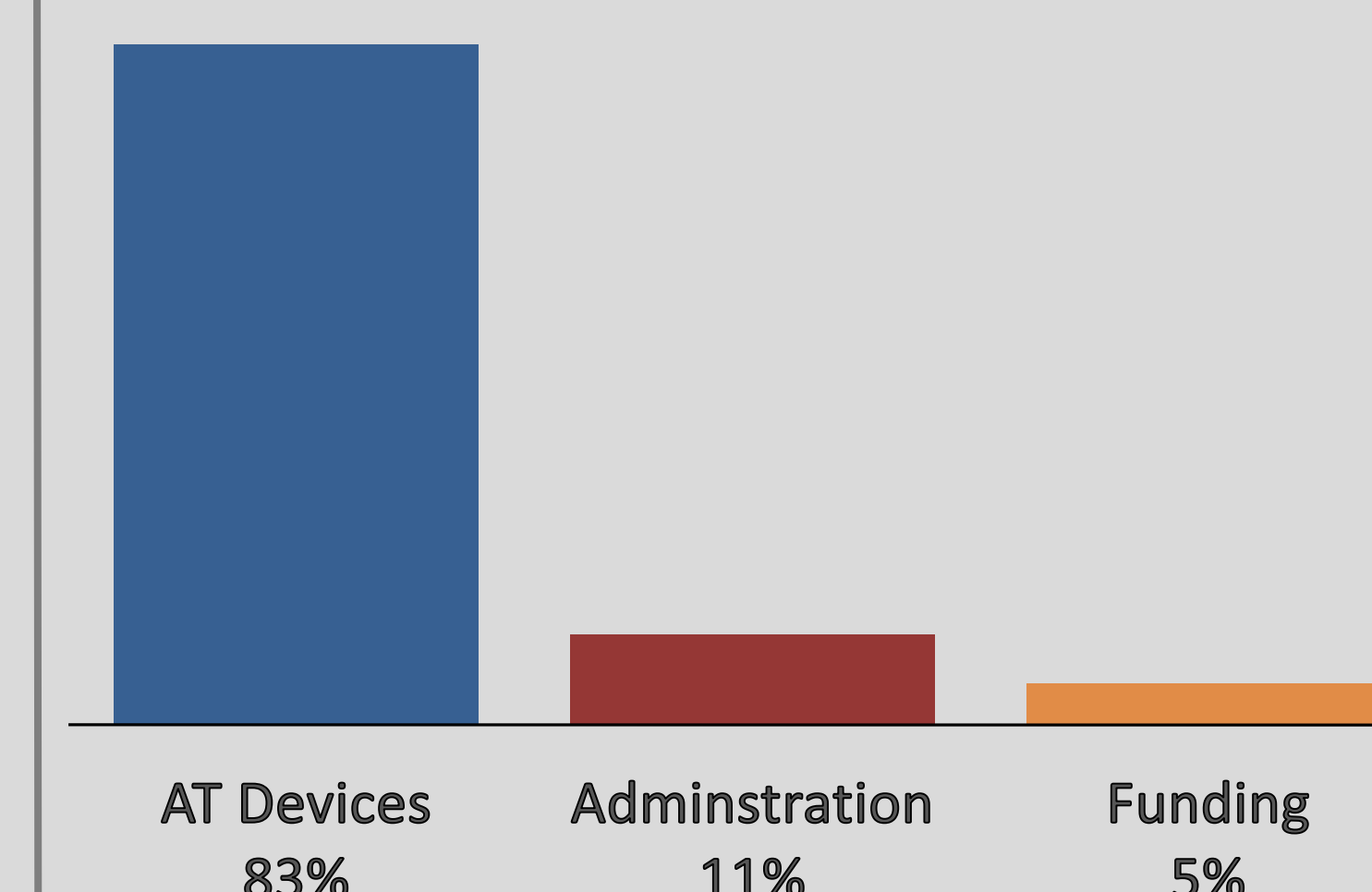
#### Goals



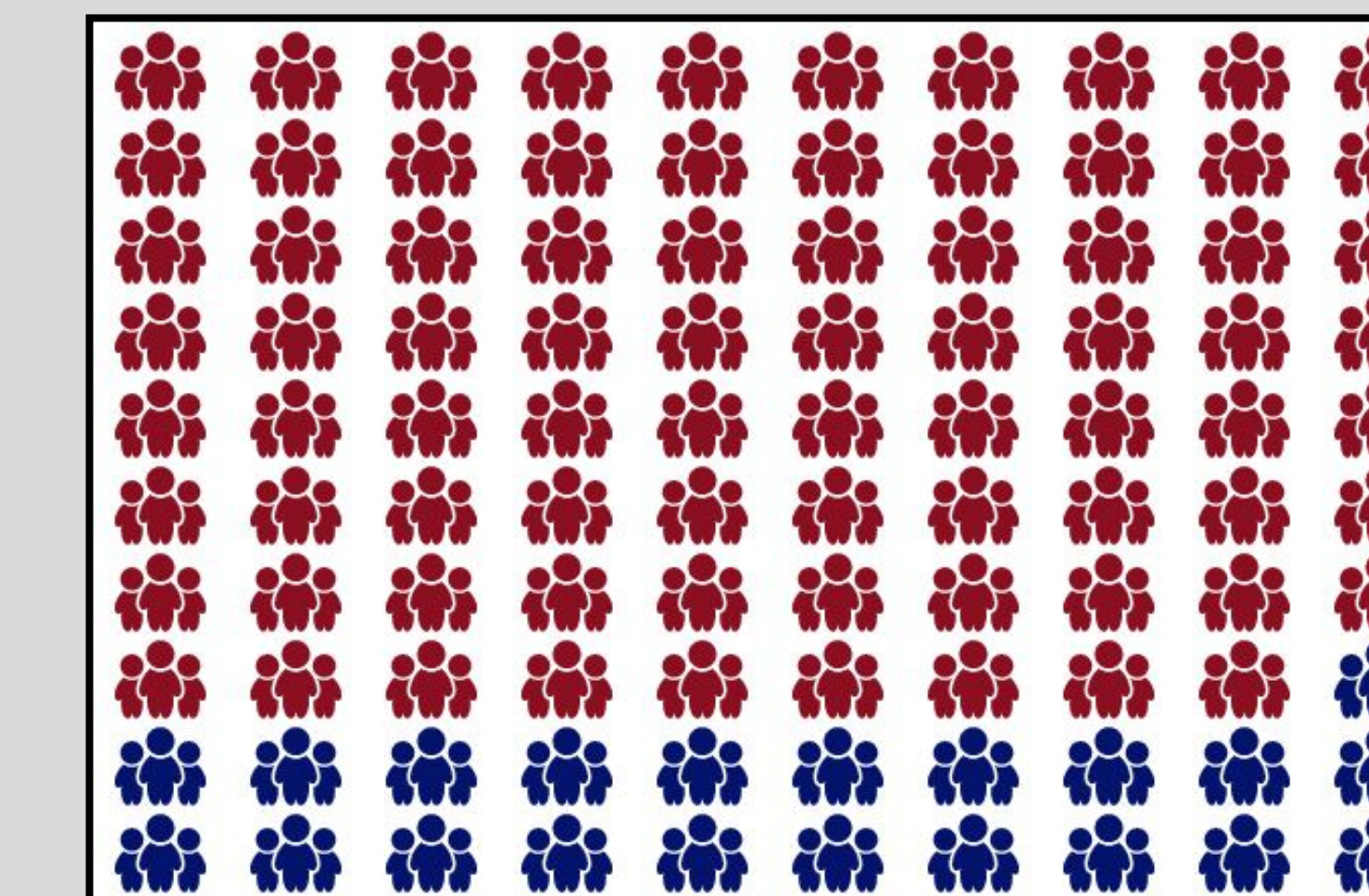
94% of members achieved up to 3 of their goals.

#### Skills

Members mastered the skills to provide technical assistance to 2,257 educators on behalf of 1,041 students.



#### AT for students



79% provided AT for more students.

#### AT policies and procedures



68% of districts from which there is a member implemented new procedures or policies for AT.

### Interviews with members' supervisors

Acquired tools to integrate AT



Increases in Skills



AT to More Students



- 100% reported members have tools for integrating AT into curricula
- 92% reported considerable or great increases in members' knowledge and skills about AT
- 83% reported that more students are receiving AT as a result of PLC membership

Data Drive Enterprises, 2014