

Teacher and Principal Evaluation (TPE)

Communication #17

Year Three: Stocktake

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TPE Action Team

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On May 28-29, 2013, USDE conducted their annual review of all of Maryland's Race to the Projects; including Project 48: Teacher and Principal Evaluation. As you will recall, the Teacher and Principal Evaluation Action Team was created last fall to bring greater purpose and focus to this initiative. USDE had expressed serious concerns over the progress of Maryland's TPE initiative, which they considered off-track for meeting its completion dates, and imposed expectations conditional to the continuation of funding for Race to the Top. Throughout the spring, the TPE Team has maintained a collaborative yet aggressive strategy intended to deliver teacher and principal ratings for all field test participants by May 17, 2013 and the submission of TPE Plans by June 7, 2013.

To date, 100% of the participating LEAs have provided teacher and principal effectiveness rating for more than 8,600 educators across Maryland. This reporting represents 14% of the teachers and 26% of the principals across the state; exceeding by nearly three-fold USDE's original 5% expectation. The data from this sizeable sampling is invaluable to informing the analysis that will direct us in understanding and determining the rating parameters for distinguishing between highly effective, effective, and ineffective levels of performance. Once determined, these parameters will be applied to our three state field tests to identify correlations between performance ratings and local intuitions about specific educators. This information, combined with the precision being experienced in the Maryland Tiered Achievement Index, the lessons learned from field test experiences and simulations, and the recommendations from the committee that investigated the application of SLOs for incorporating HSAs into evaluation, are gradually moving Maryland towards what USDE has characterized as a stable and fair state model for measuring teacher and principal performance that includes Student Growth as a significant component. The State is sincerely grateful for the support and the cooperation that the participating RTTT LEAs contributed to this effort.

Over the course of the past two weeks, the TPE Team has provided direct technical assistance in the form of conference calls and clarification to assist LEAs with compliance in the submission of their final plans.

Recall that USDE's January 9, 2013, letter of conditional approval of Maryland's TPE Plan required two additional expectations: 1) That each high school tested area teacher and each high school principal include at least one Student Learning Objective based on the Maryland High School Assessments (HSAs) in evaluation systems and 2) That Maryland commit to using the PARCC assessments (when available) as a high quality measure of student growth in evaluation systems.

Over the past several months, there has been increased dialogue at the national level around the readiness of educators to simultaneously implement the Common Core Standards, transition to the PARCC Assessments, and apply new Teacher and Principal Evaluation processes. This conversation intensifies as TPE initiatives move towards full implementation and as effectiveness ratings begin to contribute to performance decisions about teachers and principals. Of further complication is the overlap of the MSA with the PARCC Assessments and the 20% contribution of test scores (MSA) that exists in Maryland. To facilitate the transition of MSA to PARCC, Dr. Lowery has worked with the Governor's Office, Superintendents, and the Maryland State Education Association to seek flexibility that will allow for a gradual easing of teachers and principals into this accountability. While the State Evaluation Models remain at the 20% MSA measure, Dr. Lowery's advocacy on behalf of educators has secured an option in local models that will allow LEAs to apply a 10% MSA and 10% School Progress Index split during the 2013-2014 school year. This value will increase in local evaluation models

over the following two years as teachers and principals become increasingly familiar with the Common Core Standards and the PARCC Assessments; making the value a 15% MSA/PARCC and 5% SPI split in 2014-2015 and 20% MSA/PARCC in 2015-2016. Consideration beyond these dates can be given once the state and the LEAs glean data and information from each year's evaluation experiences.

Concurrently, Linda Burgee, at the direction of Dr. Lowery and the Superintendents, coordinated a representative committee that crafted recommendations for incorporating HSAs into evaluation systems. Most significantly, these recommendations included a model for high school tested subject teachers that provided for two SLOs based on annual measures that could include an HSA associated measure and one SLOs based on lag data that would include the HSA score as a measure. This structure is identical to the evaluation parameters already in place for MSA tested area teachers and subsequently, the TPE Team recognized a potential opportunity to bring greater cohesion and balance to the state evaluation models.

Simultaneous to the investigations around HSAs and the splitting of MSAs with the SPI, data began to emerge during early May that reflected negatively on the contribution of collective measures, like the SPI, on individual teacher performance rating scores. This phenomenon was replicated in multiple LEAs with similar results and the concern was shared with LEAs during their April monthly TPE meeting, with Superintendents at their May PSSAM meeting, with the Maryland Council on Educator Effectiveness at their semi-annual meeting on May 7, 2013 and referenced in Communication #16. Prior to submitting any amendments, it was recognized that any recommendation to remove or de-value the SPI in the state evaluation models, would be best accomplished by informing our intent to proceed with the State Superintendent (5/8), the Maryland State Board of Education (5/9), MSDE Core Team (5/16), and USDE (5/22). If the SPI were to be removed from the state teacher model, consideration would need to be given to maintaining an evaluation related focus on the Indicators within the index. With the SPI being shared across the teaching staff and Indicator elements constituting small values within the SPI, it was doubtful that teachers would have associated attention to such measures as a means for elevating their personal performance ratings. Teachers would be more likely to gravitate to higher value measures within their control as a means of designing their professional development to elevate their ratings. As such, it is unlikely that the evaluation process would contribute to increasing attention to the indicators within the SPI. The TPE Team felt that the SLO process, which can carry a higher value, be directed to school or district indicator priorities and impact the immediate delivery of instruction, holds the greater promise for using the evaluation model to move the SPI Indicators.

Last month, the Maryland State Board of Education conducted a two-hour public work-session to increase their informational capacity, to provide their input, and to partner in the path forward for TPE. The State Board focused exclusively on seven decision points that were supplied by the TPE Team. While not necessarily all inclusive, these seven Decision Points were considered critical to conducting year four of Project 48. Following are the seven Decision Points including brief narratives and recommendations. You should see evidence of the information referenced previously in this communication and a clearer picture of how the TPE project plans to proceed.

Decision Point 1	<p>The merit of the School Progress Index in teacher evaluation and its maintenance in the Maryland State Teacher Evaluation Model</p>
	<p>The merits of applying collective measures of school performance to the individual evaluation of teachers has been debated and attempted in many places. The Maryland School Progress Index (SPI) was originally created on behalf of the LEAs in response to the ESEA flexibility waiver. Prior to the emergence of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), the SPI was adapted to provide another "multiple measure" for evaluation purposes. Subsequent application of the SPI in state and local models indicated a highly correlated negative impact on teacher evaluation with little positive contribution. Within the 20% MSA measure, it appeared that teachers benefited more from their actual test measures (MSA scores) than from the SPI.</p> <p>From its inception as an evaluative measure, there were concerns regarding the duplication of MSA values within the SPI, the fairness of sharing measures across teachers not delivering direct instruction, and the miniscule impact the values would have on leveraging statistical changes in the measurable Indicators within the SPI. The increased precision and fairness demonstrated</p>

	<p>when the Maryland Tiered Achievement Index (M-TAI) was applied to MSA scores held greater promise than the flaws inherent within manipulating the SPI for individual evaluative purposes. Concurrently, the emergence of SLOs as a viable multiple measure that was embraced by educators reduced the need for SPI as a supplemental multiple measure to MSAs. It was decided that an alternative means for incorporating measures of non-MSA based SPI Indicators into evaluation should be determined.</p> <p>The TPE Team recommends the elimination of the SPI from the Maryland State Model with the following understandings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That two SLOs for all teachers be valued at 15% each • That a third SLO be valued at 20% for HSA tested area teachers • That a third SLO be valued at 20% for non-tested area teachers 	
<p>Decision Point 2</p>	<p>The standardizing of three Student Learning Objectives in the Maryland State Teacher and Principal Models to include one SLO that is based on the emerging protocols for incorporating HSAs into evaluation</p> <p>The conditional letter from USDE requires that MSDE utilize HSAs within its evaluation models. A committee of LEA and state level stakeholders worked during the spring of 2013 to develop a plan for addressing this requirement. These recommendations were shared with Superintendents and provided to the TPE Team for consideration in the state evaluation models.</p> <p>The incorporating of lag data within the new cyclical evaluation design of the state evaluation models allows for the application of HSA scores similar to the applications of MSA scores. The committee recommended that this expectation be incorporated within a protocol that has two annual SLO measures and one lag data SLO measure. This lag data measure would capture HSA scores and satisfy this condition for USDE. LEAs are required to include a similar application of HSA data to their local Teacher Evaluation Models.</p> <p>The TPE Team recommends that the protocols developed by the committee to study HSAs be adopted within the design of the state models to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One HSA SLO that is lag data driven and valued at 20% for HSA tested area teachers <p>Additionally, the TPE Team recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One SLO that is lag data driven and valued at 20% for non-tested area teachers • One SLO valued at 15% determined by priority identification at the district or the school level • One SLO valued at 15% determined by priority identification at the classroom level 	
<p>Decision Point 3</p>	<p>The determination of Effectiveness Ratings for the Maryland State Teacher and Principal Evaluation Models using a standards setting that is based upon results from the three state pilot experiences</p> <p>Regardless of the methodology that is used, making the determination about how to discriminate between levels of effectiveness ratings remains a difficult and critical process in any evaluation model. At the end of the state field tests, MSDE will have data from nineteen LEAs that reflect percentages of levels of effectiveness from the application of their teacher and principal models. The State will also have point accumulation measures for teachers and principal that participated in the state model field tests. MSDE will analyze and apply this data to a standards setting process to make determinations about where to place rating discriminators on the point accumulation scale.</p>	

	<p>Using collective and LEA specific data from the State Field Test, MSDE will identify the common placement of where the discriminators for levels of effectiveness should be initially placed on the state's point accumulation scale. These discriminators will be applied to the teachers and principals involved in the LEAS that field tested the state models. The rating results will then be returned to each of the LEAs for analysis and correlation with local evaluation perspectives from those knowledgeable about the teachers and the principals in the ratings. Based on this information, MSDE would then identify the cut scores for determining year one in the state models</p> <p>MSDE recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cut score for Highly Effective be set at the ----% of the teacher population • The cut score for Ineffective be set at the ----% of the teacher population • The cut score for Highly Effective be set at the ----% of the principal population • The cut score for Ineffective be set at the ----% of the principal population <p><i>The data analysis to support this work has not yet been completed. The percentage numbers will be supplied and shared once this analysis is finished</i></p>	
<p>Decision Point 4</p>	<p>The distribution of mini-grants that require decentralized quality control assurances on the part of LEAs should be provided to support local implementation needs</p> <p>It was recognized in January, 2013, that LEAs possessed different levels of readiness often determined by the scale of demographic, fiscal, and organizational elements. MSDE has been carefully realigning and collapsing projects related to TPE into a common project as a means of directing resources to LEAs in an attempt to level the playing field for districts to support the shift in evaluation requirements.</p> <p>The redistribution of funds through local implementation mini-grants supports the concurrent benefits of addressing LEA interests, assisting with State evaluation investigations, and providing quality assurances to MSDE and USDE. As the projects move to completion, additional thought will need to be given to issues of TPE sustainability and possible resources in support of the maintenance of project accomplishments.</p> <p>MSDE recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A determination of funds available to project 48 be established • That all mini-grants be reviewed to insure that all areas of assurance have been addressed • That the TPE Team facilitates the execution of the mini-grants once final TPE plans have been submitted by each LEA to MSDE 	
<p>Decision Point 5</p>	<p>The determination of a method for monitoring and validating local quality controls must be designed</p> <p>Conditional to USDE's approval of MSDE's TPE plan, was the demonstration of assurances that LEAs would exercise appropriate levels of quality control with decentralized evaluation processes and related data.</p> <p>The issuance of mini-grants with stipulations for such assurances is seen as an initial incentive for LEAs to construct authentic and compatible data platforms and processes for the execution and maintenance of teacher and principal evaluations. The mini-grants are designed to challenge LEAs to consider priority requirements elements of evaluation application and reporting to insure</p>	

	<p>that effective de-centralized methods are in place. To supplement these assurances, a third party resource will be utilized to deliver technical assistance and to conduct random reviews of the LEAs to insure local compliance with conditions within their mini-grants.</p> <p>MSDE recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That a review and acknowledgment of LEA assurances be conditional to release of Mini-grants funds • That a third party resource be identified to conduct random quality control accountability reviews and to deliver technical assistance <p><i>Note: Consideration should be given to a collective effort on the part of MSDE to consolidate LEA visits and technical assistance across the interests of all RTTT projects.</i></p>	
<p>Decision Point 6</p>	<p>A plan that articulates Teacher and Principal Evaluation with the concurrent initiatives of the Common Core State Standards and the PARCC Assessments must be finalized and communicated</p> <p>Teacher and principal anxieties grow as TPE, CCSS, and PARCC begin to merge towards a common operational end point. While most of the unknowns surrounding TPE have been addressed, the relationship and coordination of this work around CCSS and PARCC require increased attention and detail. For TPE, this includes an implementation timeline and a plan for professional development that articulates with the other two initiatives.</p> <p>A coordinated effort must occur between TPE, CCSS, and PARCC that increases operational efficiencies, minimizes duplicity of effort, and builds collective organizational and LEA capacity. For TPE, this means the crafting of an intricate and highly detailed plan for the delivery of professional development that interfaces with and complements professional development for CCSS and PARCC. This comprehensive professional development plan will need to be coordinated with the cyclical developmental needs in the new evaluation model and designed to serve the interests of current educators and those in educator preparation programs.</p> <p>MSDE recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A professional development planning retreat be conducted to design an intensive and complex plan for the delivery of TPE Professional Development from June 3013 to September 2014 • An intentional outreach occur with leadership overseeing the CCSS and the PARCC Assessments to maximize the efficient delivery of PD across multiple audiences and divisions; providing for common messaging and avoiding redundancies of information 	
<p>Decision Point 7</p>	<p>Determinations regarding either approved local models or defaulting to the Maryland State Teacher or Principal Models must be rendered as quickly as possible after the June 7, 2013, submission date</p> <p>From the beginning LEAs knew that they needed to have fully approved evaluation plans in place for SY 2013-2014 that would result in teacher and principal effectiveness ratings in June 2014. In the absence of an approved local plan, LEAs would default to a state model. The timeline allowed for developmental assistance in fall of 2012 with first submissions of local plans in December 2012. Following field testing, LEAs were permitted to revise and/or re-submit local plans for final approval by June 7, 2013.</p> <p>The extension of the submission date for local TPE plans from May 15th to June 7th elevated the importance of rendering approval or default determinations to LEAs as quickly as possible after June 7, 2013. These determinations will be essential to facilitating the professional development</p>	

plans of the LEAs and MSDE in preparing educators for the return to school in the fall. The extent of LEAs using the state model will dictate the degree to which MSDE can craft LEA generic versus state model specific professional development.

MSDE recommends that:

- The review process should occur in the following sequence:
 1. Previously approved plans re-affirmed
 2. Overtly un-approvable plans declared in default
 3. Plans with complex applications or requiring further investigation
- That additional team members or subject experts assist in determinations around #3 above
- That greater details contributing to default or conditions related to approval be included in the final determinations

As cautioned in the April decision to delay the submission dates for TPE plans, an enormous amount of analytical and responsive work is now being accomplished in an extremely compressed timeframe. Like participating LEAs, MSDE is also attempting to comply with the June 7, 2013 date for re-submitting TPE plans; with the added caveats of making programmatic and budget amendments to USDE and revising existing state model graphics (see attached drafts of the revised graphics for the state teacher and principal models). It is a challenging circumstance that the State's work must now be conducted concurrently, rather than in advance of the LEAs' work. The Division of Academic Policy will be working with the TPE Team to revise the Guidebook in June and to craft language regarding procedures for making changes to the state and/ or local TPE Plans beyond the June 7th date.

Finally, as previously announced, the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center @ WestEd (MACC@WestEd), has launched a survey to gain insight and feedback from practitioners in Maryland's districts and schools on the development and implementation of the Teacher and Principal Evaluation system to-date. The TPE Team appreciates everyone who has already completed the survey, and encourages all school-level educators to complete it once by the deadline of **June 7, 2013**. It should take no more than ten minutes to complete. Individual responses will go directly to MACC@WestEd and will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous.

If you have not already done so, please click here for the Maryland Teacher and Principal Evaluation Survey: <http://websurveyor.msde.state.md.us/wsb.dll/s/25g282>. For any questions about the survey, please contact: Dr. Rima Azzam, MACC@WestEd Director of Operations, (202) 429-9783 or razzam@wested.org.

Inquiries of a general nature or about TPE in its entirety may be directed to Dave Volrath.