

Teacher and Principal Evaluation (TPE)

Communication #14

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TPE Action Team

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Following the Maryland State Department of Education's (MSDE) March meeting with the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), all future work that is exclusive to Teacher and Principal Evaluation (TPE) has been moved to project 29/48. Remaining resources in other projects previously associated with TPE have been migrated to Project 48 to support the work of TPE going forward. These resources will facilitate implementation mini-grants and allow for the strategic planning of year four TPE initiatives. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) have received copies of the mini-grant process and are encouraged to begin to formulate their responses to assurances and needs. The TPE Team anticipates receiving details shortly from the Budget Office that will initiate the awarding of mini-grant funds to LEAs. The priority of this initial round of mini-grants is to level the ability of LEAs to execute evaluation functions and to demonstrate operational assurances to USDE. Superintendents were briefed on the mini-grants at their April Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland (PSSAM) meeting. They also received information on the Maryland Tiered Achievement Index (MTAI) and the State's recommended practice for utilizing lag data. In regard to the lag data practice, it is strongly recommended that principals determine which student MSA scores will be attributed to which teachers for next year's evaluations before the end of this school year. This information can be more readily obtained and affirmed now while it is still fresh in the minds of the teacher(s) and it will expedite the MSA scoring conferences at the start of next school year. Superintendents asked and were granted additional time to debrief from the Field Tests prior to submitting their final TPE models, therefore local plans must be submitted by June 7, 2013. MSDE will attempt to render determinations about local models as quickly as possible.

With the completion of field testing, we should be reminded that the purpose of this year's work is to develop evaluation processes that have the potential to accurately capture the performance of teachers and principals. The results of the Field Test are intended to test and refine these processes, not to evaluate or rate any particular educator. The goal at this time is to build confidence in the evaluation models. To that end, we appreciate the hundreds of teachers and principals who participated in this attempt to validate local and State evaluation methodologies. Our next work will utilize data received from the tests to conduct standard settings that will inform decisions about how to delineate between ratings of educator effectiveness.

From April 10-12, members of the TPE Action Team and colleagues from Calvert County attended the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) National Educator Effectiveness Summit, along with approximately 29 other states. It was gratifying to see that Maryland had moved to the forefront of readiness to fully implement TPE in 2013-2014. Participants were particularly impressed with the collaborative approach that Maryland is employing and the extensive communication protocols being utilized. There was much interest in Maryland's methodologies for measuring student growth (MTAI and Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)), our approach to overcoming the use of lag data, and the project team design that has accelerated the TPE initiative. These examples were used by the Summit's planning committee to deliver a breakout session on "Non-Tested Grades and Subjects" and a whole conference session on responding to "The Rocks in the TPE Road". The Summit challenged LEAs to think about TPE problems in advance and to craft solutions prior to the crisis. As we considered next steps, our participants projected these six rocks in the Maryland TPE road:

- *Misalignments between Students Growth and Professional Practice measures*
 - *Differentiating highly effective, effective, and ineffective ratings*
 - *Consistent messaging within and across LEAs*
 - *Inconsistencies in applying evaluation process and the resulting comparisons of teachers*
 - *Developing TPE skills while concurrently implementing TPE processes*
 - *Ascertaining the extent of the impact of test scores on the teacher rating*
- ...and there could be more

The TPE Team will consider these as we craft professional development activities for next year.

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

Field Test

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The focus of Field Test activities is now centered in the LEAs. The work has taken on a sense of reality and urgency, and results to date are extremely encouraging.

The MTAI is performing with gratifying precision – rankings of teachers cascade in close alignment with principal judgment. The measure is discriminating among the kinds of practice that might have been glossed over by prior evaluation approaches – sorting ineffective from effective, and effective from highly effective for the State assessment portion of TPE approach in use. The model is forgiving of the prior ability of the students; that is, teachers are not penalized by starting with challenging students, teachers are not penalized by ceiling effects, and teachers do not appear to get an advantage merely by having received desirable assignments.

At least one LEA has been run the entire process through to composite effectiveness ratings. Another LEA has fit the model to the principal evaluation. The TPE Action Team wants to work with LEAs to study the performance of the model against their local data. Using impact data will inform efforts to move from the 4-tiered performance categories using the standard deviation approach developed by Calvert to a general strategy to award 10 or 20 points, as the case may require.

LEAs have asked how to address SLOs, which may not be finished at present. Some have suggested making an informed guess and others have suggested imputing a “partial attainment” value across all cases. Either approach is acceptable. Moreover, this will be a satisfactory conclusion of the Field Test experience. LEAs should not expect that MSDE will ask them to recalculate and resubmit final ratings. LEA may do so for internal purposes, but their responsibility to the Field Test will have been discharged.

Dr. Dolan, the independent Field Test monitor, concluded her site visits on April 2, 2013. There are several ‘promising practices’ that appear to correlate with an LEA’s level of readiness for full implementation of TPE. These include:

- ✓ Enacting stakeholder inclusive committees that meet regularly
- ✓ Building new TPE processes on existing systems
- ✓ Having an immediate and long-term plan for developing and training all appropriate personnel on the multiple components of the local TPE model
- ✓ Focusing on the opportunities the TPE process offers to improve instructional practice and student learning
- ✓ Establishing clear communication plans for the TPE process with common and consistent messages and opportunities for stakeholder feedback
- ✓ Ensuring the data systems at the central office, school, and classroom level can facilitate collection, analysis, retrieval, and reporting of the necessary data
- ✓ Collaborating with other field test LEAs to address emerging issues

Of great interest to the TPE Action Team was Dr. Dolan’s initial perception of the common Field Test issues that were apparent across all LEAs. Most notable issues were:

- ✚ Benefit from additional time to prepare and make effective use of the data collected during the Field Test year
- ✚ Alignment of student assessment results with the calendar for teacher and principal evaluation and personnel decisions
- ✚ Conflict between the Common Core curriculum/PARCC and existing student measures
- ✚ Challenge for LEAs to base 20 percent of the evaluation for certain teachers on MSA scores

- ✚ Requirement of participant and evaluator time associated with the new TPE systems
- ✚ Need for SLO models and exemplars from different grade and content levels

It is reassuring that there are actions currently underway for each of these issues. In response to extra time, the final submission date for TPE plans was pushed back to June 7, 2013 at the request of superintendents. Superintendents felt that the need for additional time to react to Field Test data outweighed the need for an earlier determination of model approvability. LEAs will need to give consideration to this later date as they craft end-of-year informational releases and plan end of professional development activities. In response to calendar and assessment alignments, a continuous evaluation cycle was provided to demonstrate ways to maximize the effective use of lag data and to demonstrate the distribution of evaluation throughout the year. MSDE will be applying this process to an actual staff list to demonstrate how principals might efficiently use this new developmental approach to better manage time and resources. Finally, the MTAI appears to be solving the scoring of MSA's in ways that benefit effective teachers and principals and Linda Burgee is working with educators across the State to provide SLO exemplars and ways to incorporate HSAs into the writing of SLOs.

Dr. Dolan will provide a collective report, including fidelity and readiness determinations, to the Maryland State Board of Education on April 23, 2013. Individual LEA specific reports will be provided to each Superintendent on May 3, 2013.

As regards the greater TPE Project analysis, the MACC@WestEd is close to releasing a survey for field-based practitioners, which MSDE will host online. They are eager to begin raising awareness among LEA staff to ensure that survey responses are robust and representative of all systems. MSDE and MACC@WestEd are also narrowing the definitions of the variables that will be requested from LEAs to close the analysis of the Field Test. At present, a short list of critical determinations have framed themselves as questions, and LEAs are asked to suggest questions that are important to them. A minimal data structure, of approximately two dozen variables is under design; with the hope that MSDE will be able to provide the majority of the data.

Inquiries related to the Field Test that are of a design or technical nature (i.e. School Progress Index or MSAs), may be directed to Ben Feldman.

SLOs

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Phase 3 Regional SLO Training was held for the western region on April 8, 2013. Approximately 60 participants had the opportunity to review the newly developed online training modules and work in LEA teams to plan professional development for system-wide implementation. The Central Region Training will be held on April 11, 2013 and the Eastern Region on April 17. We are collecting feedback on the modules at each session in order to make necessary revisions before the modules are released to the LEAs later this spring. If you have questions about registration for the Regional SLO Training, please contact Linda Burgee at lburgee@msde.state.md.us.

The superintendents recently requested that MSDE facilitate a statewide SLO conference. The purpose of the conference is to provide an opportunity for district-level staff to collaborate and share their work regarding SLOs. Representatives from Anne Arundel, Calvert, and Somerset County Public Schools will be working with MSDE to plan this conference. The target date for the conference is mid-June 2013. Our first planning meeting will be held on April 17 and further details will be shared with you after that meeting

This week we had the opportunity of sharing our SLO work with participants at the CCSSO State Consortium on Educator Effectiveness Summit in Louisville, KY. Brad Jupp, of USDE, attended part of the session and complimented Maryland on its SLO work, describing the

	<p>State as leaders in the country, particularly with regard to our tools and how we have organized our professional development for LEAs. He described our cross-divisional Team as a model approach. The participants were equally impressed with our online modules and the level of support being provided to the LEAs. It was also clear that many other states have identified assessment literacy as a critical need for quality assurance in the SLO process. The next steps that the MSDE team identified with regards to assessment were further validated by the discussion at the Summit. There are a number of resources from other states that we may wish to review as we further refine our work.</p> <p>Inquiries regarding Student Learning Objectives or interest in scheduling training for specific audiences should be directed to Linda Burgee.</p>
<p><u>Professional Development</u></p> <p>Ilene Swirnow iswirnow@msde.state.md.us</p>	<p>As the 2012-2013 Field Test winds down, the TPE Action Team has been busy planning for a strategic delivery of professional development initiatives beginning in July 2013. Moving forward, the professional development will be integrated with a focus on SLOs and Leadership Development. We are finalizing plans for a session in early summer entitled <u>Leadership for Quality Evaluation Systems</u> for executive officers. This session will be devoted to both the professional practices and student growth aspects of implementing TPE. It will focus on the integral nature of SLOs and the importance of building structures and processes to effectively manage the work. Details will be forthcoming later this month.</p> <p>This professional development strategic plan will include the assistance of the MSDE staff from a variety of divisions. For example, we are currently working with the Division of Instruction to plan the Educator Effectiveness Academy sessions that are designed specifically for principals. This coordinated effort will allow us to deliver a coherent, integrated message to the school-based teams of the relationship between TPE, SLOs, and the implementation of the Common Core at the Academies.</p> <p>Inquiries regarding the evaluative professional development skills of executive officers, principals, assistant principals, and instructional supervisors may be directed to Ilene Swirnow.</p>
<p><u>Communications</u></p> <p>Laura Motel lmotel@msde.state.md.us</p>	<p>As part of WestEd's work to analyze the TPE Project, the TPE Action Team is launching a new survey to gain insight and feedback from our districts and schools on the development and implementation of the TPE system. Hearing from Maryland's educators, principals, administrators, local school system staff, and others in our State's education system is critical as we all prepare for the full implementation of TPE in the 2013-2014 school year. The information provided will help to improve and refine evaluation instruments and practices in our schools and inform our work as the TPE system moves forward. This survey will take about 10 minutes to complete. Individual responses are strictly confidential and anonymous, and are only reported in the aggregate. LEAs will be receiving directions shortly. Please join us in encouraging colleagues to share their views by responding to this survey. Your voices are essential to improving and refining the TPE system in Maryland.</p> <p>The TPE Team engaged in outreach activities with the Maryland Association for Secondary School Principals, the State of Maryland International Reading Association Council, CCSSO, and PSSAM. Communication #15 will be distributed the week of April 22, 2013.</p> <p>Inquiries regarding communications may be directed to Laura Motel.</p>