

Teacher and Principal Evaluation

"Influencing Transformation"

Communication #25

April 7, 2014

(This Bulletin was delayed to provide information to superintendents in advance of publication)

Sphere Four Outcomes

By the end of Sphere Four, leadership personnel should know and be able to attribute students to teachers and principals and to score the component pieces of the teacher and principal evaluations. They should also know and be able to conduct the end of the year evaluation conference and set professional practice goals for educators receiving a full evaluation

Refinements

Based on information gathered during the February 5, 2014 Quality Control Webinar, Sphere Four Technical Assistance and Professional Development trainings will include increased focus on:

1. **Assisting evaluators to manage the evaluation process workload**
2. **Assisting LEAs to facilitate TPE communications**

End of March Pulse Checks...

- ...have purposeful visits been made to schools to observe principals?
- ...have 75% or more of teacher observations been conducted?
- ...are evidence and/or artifacts being collected to support the evaluation of professional practice?
- ...are teachers' and principals' SLOs being monitored?
- ...were all mid-year conferences been completed with principals and teachers?
- ...were teachers' and principals' goals being revised, reinforced, or revisited as a result of mid-year conferences?
- ...are end-of-year conferences being scheduled for teachers and principals?

Quality Control

4/30/14 Quality Control
Webinar

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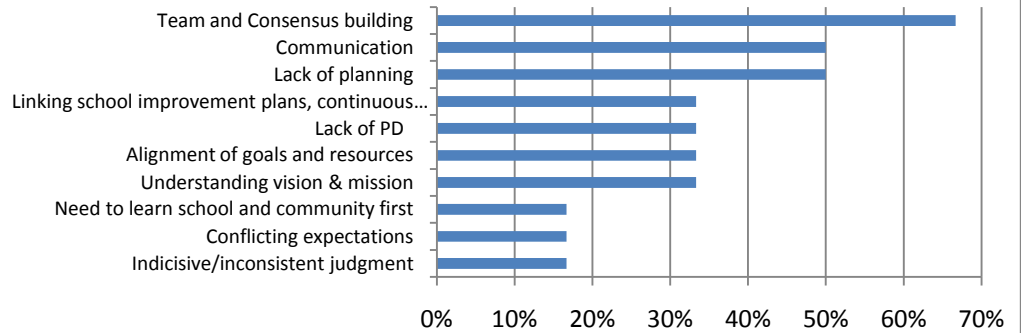
ESEA Waiver Update

Conversations are continuing between the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) regarding the approval of priority needs within the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Waiver Extension Request. The State hopes to receive preliminary direction from USDE about budget sensitive and associated program dependent portions of the request. Concurrent to the Waiver Extension Request, Maryland is seeking a no-cost extension of Race To The Top (RTTT) funds to support the work of Teacher and Principal Evaluation (TPE) through next year. A significant portion of funds in Project 29/48 will be directed to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in the form of LEA Sustainability Grants. Information about the use of LEA Sustainability Grants will be communicated once the State receives approval of the ESEA Waiver Extension and authorization to expend TPE funds for a fifth year.

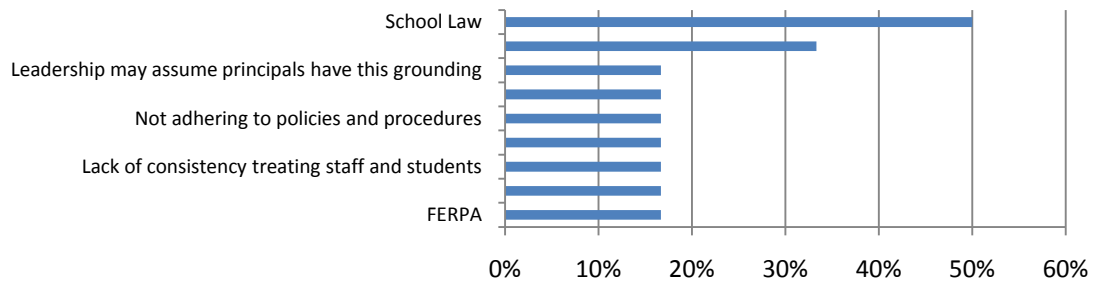
Principal Pipeline & Governor's Academy

Research is repeatedly demonstrating that the principal is the key to an effective school. Maryland's superintendents have identified a critical need for highly effective principals, especially at the middle and high school levels. Governor Martin O'Malley has challenged MSDE to create a pipeline that would identify, nurture, and support the development of great principals. State Superintendent of Schools, Lillian M. Lowery has similarly embraced this vision. The purpose of the Principal Pipeline Project is to increase the State's capacity for developing highly effective leaders. Superintendents were recently asked to provide input that reflected the perceived needs and vulnerabilities of entry-level principals. This input contributed to a collective prioritization activity. This information will be used to construct the work that will be delivered to promising and current principals during next year. It will be coordinated across the existing "Spheres of Influence" professional development delivery model to support and sustain the year-five work of TPE and Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). The following charts represent this collective prioritization, as sorted within the six ISLLC Standards for Principals.

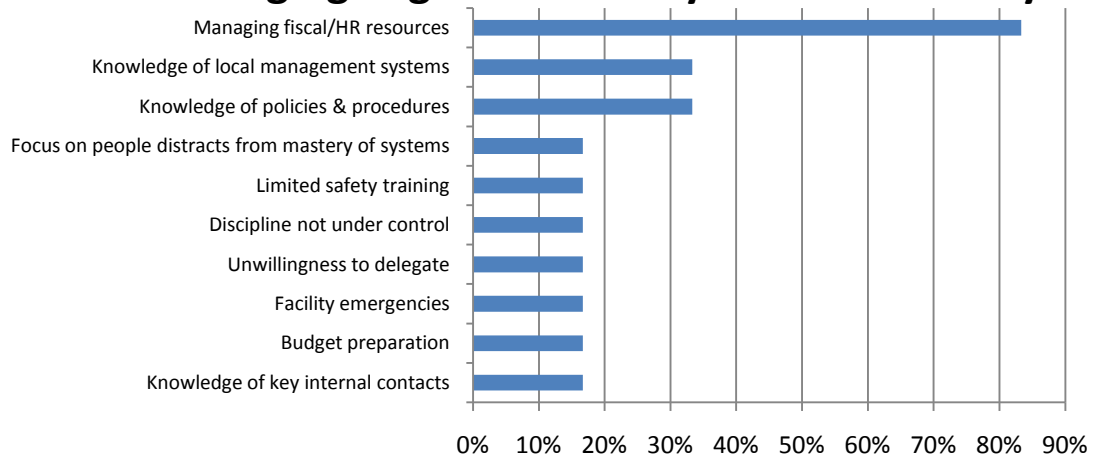
Vision Mission and Goals



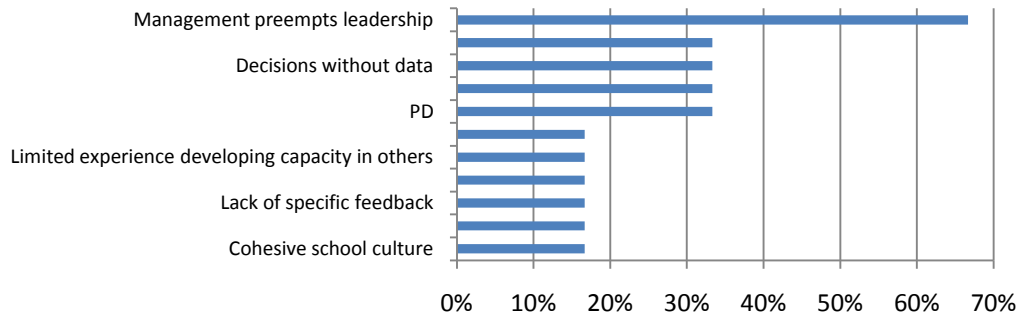
Ethics and Integrity



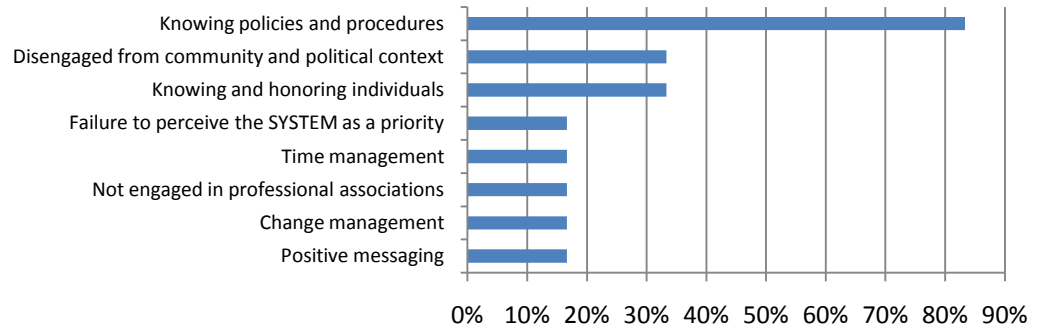
Managing Organizational Systems and Safety



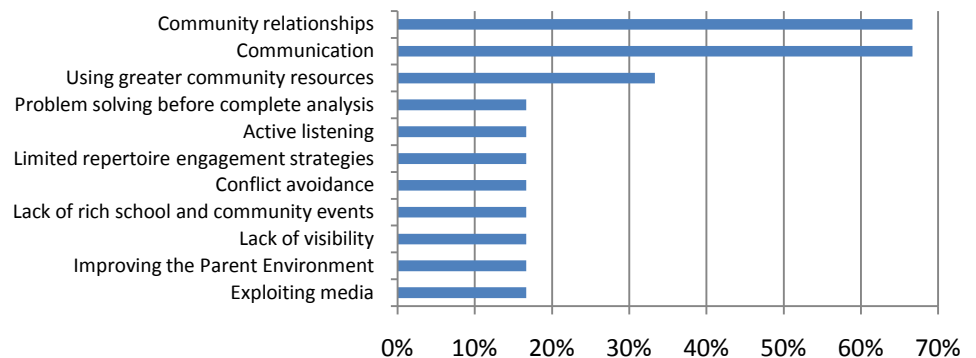
Teaching and Learning



The Education System



Collaborating with Families and Stakeholders



The Governor’s Principal Academy will be a one-year program within the Principal Pipeline, conducted by MSDE, for local school system leaders who have been identified by their district as “promising principals” and ready to assume school leadership. It will be comprised of a cohort of 48 participants from across Maryland who are committed to participating in four convenings and maintaining a network of professional support, inquiry, and practice throughout the year. It is intended to be a practitioner-based experience, designed to prepare promising leaders to do the work of the principalship. The content of the experience will be crosswalked with the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework and the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium to ensure that attention is given to essential standards and indicators of success. Convenings will be facilitated by a collection of local and national experts and closely linked to the work of Teacher and Principal Evaluation, the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards, and the PARCC Assessments. Participants in this initial year will be identified by their local school system and endorsed by their superintendent. First year Academy priorities will focus on high school and middle school principal needs. Candidates, nominated by their district and selected by MSDE, must commit to attending and participating fully in all Academy convenings and network cohort activities. LEAs will submit two recommended candidates and an alternate candidate to MSDE by May 1, 2014. MSDE will conduct final interviews and notify candidates of acceptance by June 10, 2014.

Principal Evaluation Models

The current State Principal Evaluation Model incorporates elements of both the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework (Principal Evaluation Components 1-8) and elements from the Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (Principal Evaluation Components 9-12). The Council of Chief State School Officers is presently refreshing the ISLLC Standards for Principals. The State will be monitoring this work to determine its impact on existing Principal Models and its relationship with the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework.

Annual TPE Deliverables

Recall that in Year Three (July-June 2013), we narrowed our attention to two primary deliverables: 1) Effectiveness ratings for all field test teachers and principals and 2) Approvable TPE models for the 22 RTTT LEAs. Both were accomplished.

We have taken a similar “two-deliverable” approach to Year Four (July 2013-June 2014): 1) Effectiveness ratings for all teachers and principals and 2) Data necessary to conduct the analysis of local and state TPE models. This second deliverable is not only critical to making determinations about the performance of evaluation components and ratings, but it is essential to justifying and executing future changes to TPE models referenced within the State’s ESEA Waiver Extension Request. In essence, our inability to access this data would compromise the flexibility we are seeking to alter course based on what we are yet to learn about TPE. Ben Feldman, TPE Technical Assistance lead, has been working with a representative group of LEA experts to develop a seamless collection process that will capture the necessary data in responsible, efficient, and confidential fashion.

MAAC@WestEd Annual Information Gathering

Again this year, the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center (MAAC) at WestEd will serve as a third party critical friend in facilitating the gathering of information on the progress of Teacher and Principal Evaluation. This year’s accounting will consist of statewide teacher and principal surveys; interviews with superintendents, principals, and teacher union leaders; and focus group meetings with teachers in four LEAs. The information gathering process will begin on April 21 and conclude on May 13 – with the teacher and principal surveys available through that time. Dr. Lowery and local superintendents encourage every teacher and principal in Maryland to take advantage of the survey to share their perspectives on the new evaluation processes. Information from this annual information gathering activity will be combined with feedback from the Quality Control Webinars to guide the informing and communicating of TPE work in the coming year.

Technical Assistance

Ben Feldman

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Data Collection Work Group: Status Report

The TPE “Part C” deliverables required by USDE include:

- Design a comprehensive data collection strategy to capture the results of this year’s consequential teacher and principal evaluations using the approved qualifying systems; and
- Collect and analyze evaluation data from all participating RTTT LEAs.

The first of these deliverables is essentially complete.

Ten LEAs volunteered to form a Work Group to tackle the development of the data collection tools. The first meeting was a conference call, followed by an on-site convening hosted by Anne Arundel County Public Schools and at which the technical representative from the MAAC@WestEd attended. A webinar in late March allowed the Work Group to review and refine the data collection instruments. These instruments, which reflect the consensus endorsement of the Work Group, were shared with all 24 LEAs during the April 3 Sphere of Influence Technical Assistance Group Webinar. To view the webinar, go to:

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/902025898>

Data for teachers and principals will be detail level but will be de-identified, reported using a record number created by the LEA. Only the LEA will have access to the underlying demographics and identification of individual participants. Regardless of the underlying scoring system used by the LEA, all data will be normalized and reported using a 100 percentage point system. For each component variable in the LEA’s TPE model, the LEA will report the percentage points that component is worth and the actual percentage points the educator earned. The file layouts are designed to accommodate local variations, such as additional or unique components within Professional Practice or Student Growth.

LEAs will report data with and without the MSA component. This reflects the flexibility provided by the ESEA Extension Waiver Request presently under review with USDE which removes the MSA from the final official evaluation. The rating without the MSA is the official rating to be reported for the 2013-14 school year.

Teacher data will be received on July 15, 2014; principal data will be received September 1, 2014. MSDE analysis will aggregate teachers by school within the LEA, and principals within the LEA. The data will also support parallel research agendas, answering questions of internal importance to LEAs and allowing MACC@WestEd to conduct an independent analysis to understand how the models are performing. These analyses, including the accompanying conversations that will continue through summer and fall, will inform continuing refinements and improvements to the models and to the TPE initiative.

These data represent the ultimate artifact for Project Year 4 of the RTTT TPE project. The completeness and integrity of the data will be the compelling demonstration to USDE that each LEA has been able to implement and execute a quality evaluation system. LEAs with an interest in investigating any local relationships involving the 2014 MSA and teacher performance are reminded to complete the attribution of students to teachers prior to leaving for the summer.

LEA Implementation Grants

LEA Implementation Grants are open for invoicing through September 30, 2014. Participating LEAs are reminded that in order to invoice against their Implementation Grants, they need to post claims in the AFR system. This is required for all RTTT grants. Using the AFR system is something all LEAs are already familiar with. In each Notice of Grant Award (NOGA), there is a box – “AFR Required?” For all Race to the Top NOGAs, this box is marked Yes. Additionally, this is a reporting requirement identified in the NOGA and by reference, in the assurances on the back of each NOGA. Invoices are submitted to Dave Volrath or to Ben Feldman at MSDE. Once the invoice is matched against the C-125 assurances, a Request of Grant Payment will be processed. Please contact Ben at bfeldman@msde.state.md.us or at 410 767 0142 if your grant manager requires assistance.

Leadership Development

2/25-5/1/14 LEA Direct
Assistance
Window

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Summit 4

Summit 4 in the series Influencing Transformation: A Series of Summits, Leadership for a Quality Evaluation System was held on Friday, 14 March 2014, at the Anne Arundel Community College for LEA executive officers – those who directly supervise and evaluate principals.

The outcomes for this summit were designed so that executive officers will be more prepared to calculate the final evaluation rating for principals and to conduct a purposeful and meaningful end-of-year conference with the principal. A full day's worth of activities included an overview of the process as well as a self-analysis of the progress in the teacher/principal evaluation cycle as well as a reflection on the preparedness for the steps in the cycle soon to come. Executive officers discussed the steps and considerations in preparing for the end-of-year evaluation conference and in determining the principal's evaluation rating in both professional practice and student growth. The afternoon was dedicated to the idea of “putting it all together” and the courageous conversations that accompany an evaluation conference, especially in this first full year with the new evaluation system and some of the inherent situations that may arise. For example, executive officers discussed how to handle a situation in which there may be a disparity between the professional practice and student growth portions of the evaluation. Colleagues brainstormed about the need in such a case to look more deeply into the data for further analysis as well as to determine if the evaluation instrument was used correctly.

The feedback for the Summit was overwhelmingly positive. Participants expressed great appreciation for the opportunities to discuss strategies with colleagues from across the State, to exchange ideas, to problem-solve roadblocks, and to share instruments and materials that have proven successful.

The next Summit in the series will be held on 10 June 2014 at the Anne Arundel Community College. Details will be forthcoming.

April 1 2014 CCRS presentation

Principals are reporting that the professional learning experiences they receive are not specifically tailored to leadership tasks and therefore do not provide guidance about how to bring the needed instructional and assessment changes in their buildings.

To address this need, the TPE Action Team is offered a professional learning opportunity for executive officers.

On April 1st, Dr. Sandra Alberti, from Student Achievement Partners, delivered a full day workshop on tools that will help principals facilitate conversations with their teachers as they observe the implementation of the instructional shifts required by the new standards.

This presentation helped to answer questions regarding:

- Is the instruction in your schools/classrooms reflecting the shifts required in the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards?
- Do you know how to support your principals as they lead the implementation process in their schools?

Using MSAs To Inform SLOs

Several LEAs have sought direction on the understanding of how MSAs might inform an SLO. The State's guidance is that an SLO should be an annual measure, i.e. accomplishable between the start and end of the school year. Test scores and other accountability measures contribute to the identification of audiences of students in LEAs or schools needing particular attention; in best practice this would be apparent in the LEA's Strategic Plan or the School Improvement Plan. Teachers and principals could in turn craft an SLO linked to specific audiences that the teacher actually touches during the year; determining a measure of attainment using an existing inventory, local benchmarks assessments, standardized assessments, or similar curricular-based or teacher-based assessments. The degree of attainment of the SLO (not a change in state test scores) results in a measure that is applied to the evaluation. Any change in State test scores will be a reflection of all teachers accomplishing high levels of their SLO attainment with multiple audiences of sub-groups. Given the vulnerability of test scores until July 2016, we would discourage the application of a direct test score within an SLO at this time.

Communications

5/5/14 Communication
Bulletin #26

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NEW April 2014 issue of Maryland Classroom – *Blackboard Learn: Resources for Teaching and Learning at Your Fingertips*

Maryland Classroom is the educator newsletter that has been the key channel for communicating important school improvement information to local board members, central offices, and school-based staff for over 18 years. The April 2014 issue focuses on *Blackboard Learn*, an online repository of instructional and informational resources aligned to the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards. The website is a one-stop-shop where teachers can find model units and lessons, modules to support student intervention and enrichment, professional development opportunities, and many other resources to help enhance and improve their classroom instruction and student learning. Parents, students, and others can also find a wealth of useful resources on *Blackboard Learn*, including handouts, guides, and videos about the new standards and assessments. The April issue of Maryland Classroom is available at:

http://www.msde.state.md.us/mdclassroom/Vol19_No3_042014.pdf

PTA Parents Guide to New Assessments in Maryland

The Parents Guide to New Assessments in Maryland is a new resource from National PTA, in conjunction with MSDE, that is designed to help parents understand the new standards and assessments. The Guide includes an overview of the new assessments, sample PARCC test items, information on what parents can expect, and additional resources to help parents prepare and support their children. The Guide can be found at:

http://www.msde.state.md.us/w/PTAGuide_MD_MDCCRS_042014.pdf

PARCC Assessment Field Test

The PARCC field test began on Monday, March 24. To inform all stakeholders about the PARCC assessments and 2014 field test, MSDE has released two new communication products.

Maryland Public Television (MPT) PSA Spots on PARCC

MSDE has worked with MPT to create short PARCC video PSA television spots. We believe they are effective in communicating our key messages in a brief, easy-to-understand format.

They are currently airing on MPT and the videos can also be viewed and downloaded at:

<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/msde/programs/parcc/video.html>.

PARCC Resource Guide

In addition, MSDE has developed the *PARCC Resource Guide*. This Guide is an interactive pdf document with links to a wide variety of PARCC field test information and general resources. Viewers can click on both the underlined name of the resource document as well as the image document itself to access each resource listed. The resources are organized by audience and include materials relevant to all audiences, those with specific information for teachers, and resources developed to inform parents. The PARCC Resource Guide is available at:

<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/msde/programs/parcc>

MSDE asks that you please share the communication resources mentioned above with your colleagues and other relevant stakeholders.

From the Newsroom

Student Leaders to Test The New PARCC Assessment

Students Taking Part in Maryland Association of Student Councils Meeting Will Review the Test
March 26, 2014, http://marylandpublicschools.org/press/03_26_2014.html

PARCC Field Test Begins On Monday, March 24

New Assessments Align To Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards

March 21, 2014, http://marylandpublicschools.org/press/03_21_2014.html

Maryland Continues to Make Strides with Race to the Top

Federal Report Highlights Maryland's Efforts to Support Educators, Implement New Standards

March 19, 2014, http://marylandpublicschools.org/press/03_19_2014.html