

Teacher and Principal Evaluation (TPE)

Communication #11

February 27, 2013

TPE Action Team

Dave Volrath

dvolrath@msde.state.md.us

410-767-0504

March marks the beginning of three critical months in the TPE Project, culminating in LEAs submitting final changes to their local evaluation models on May 15, 2013 or choosing to use the State evaluation models. During this time, the combined concurrent work of the Field Test Monitor, WestEd, and the TPE Action Team is designed to collect information, provide supports, and guide LEAs to approved models in June and full implementation in SY 2013-2014. The monthly meeting of LEA TPE Teams was conducted on February 21, at the Meeting House in Columbia. The meeting focused on four topics – the role of the Field Test Monitor, the role of WestEd, student data detail from MSDE, and reports from the seven 2011-2012 TPE Pilot LEAs.

Dr. Meg Dolan clarified her role as Field Test Monitor by highlighting her three primary responsibilities: 1) to verify Field Test fidelity; 2) to gather qualitative data; and 3) to report findings to LEAs to make model determinations and to WestEd to complement their comprehensive analysis of the TPE Project. Dr. Dolan explained the structure of her March LEA visits, which will include meetings with representative teachers, principals, and central office leadership participating in the local Field Tests. Drawing from questions crafted from LEA recommendations and MSDE interests, Dr. Dolan will obtain qualitative data similar to what was described to Superintendents in December. With limited dates to conduct visits in March, Dr. Dolan initiated a preliminary process for identifying visits to LEAs. LEA points of contact are encouraged to coordinate visitation dates with their Superintendents. The TPE Project Timeline calls for the completion of visits by March 31 and the compilation of qualitative feedback by April 15. A typical three-hour visit agenda would look like this:

1 hr.	Central Office	3-6 individuals	Human Resources, Executive Officers, Data Managers, etc.
1 hr.	Principals	3-6 principals	From elementary, middle, and high schools
1 hr.	Teachers	6-9 teachers	Representative sampling of subjects, tested areas, & levels.

The conversations will revolve around the fidelity of Field Test implementation and qualitative feedback from each group. Questions with each group will focus on the elements of your local models and the five TPE project areas – Communications, SLOs, Professional Development, Field Testing, and Teacher/Principal Evaluation. Responses will be crafted in confidence with each LEA and collectively without LEA identification. Dr. Dolan has completed two of her scheduled visits and is providing some initial anecdotal feedback to the TPE Team. As possible, this information will be shared with Superintendents on March 1.

Rima Azzam and Dixie Stack explained WestEd's role in the TPE Project and the relationship that WestEd will maintain from the Field Test to the end of the TPE Project in July 2014. During March, WestEd will partner with MSDE and the LEAs to identify those essential quantitative measures that are available to supplement the Field Test study. These will be merged with the qualitative data in April to provide findings to inform LEAs by May 1, 2013. A full Work Plan with prospectii has been developed and submitted by WestEd for review and has been approved by MSDE. The measurables within the prospectii will in turn be shared with Superintendents and LEAs.

Dr. Feldman shared a sample of the student data detail that MSDE will be providing to LEAs to assist them in completing their teacher and principal evaluations. This student information will be generated by MSDE for LEAs to incorporate into the calculation of educator ratings. MSDE will conduct a trial simulation using the data points during the first week of March and, pending a successful trial, will provide local student data detail to LEAs in mid-March.

The third session of the February 21 meeting allowed representatives from the first year Pilot to share their experiences and discoveries with the other LEAs. LEAs were relieved to know that many of their concerns were similarly expressed by the original Pilots.

TPE was a major topic of discussion during the RTTT presentation at the February MSBE meeting. Recognition was given to the focus and the cohesion that has been brought to the project with attention given to the timeline and the precision that will be required to successfully position LEAs for next school year. Much is yet to be learned to inform TPE decisions going forward and delaying the project will only serve to defer these discoveries to a later point. For transitional purposes, a methodology for equating the final year of MSA scores within the context of the new PARCC assessment measures will need to be constructed.

Information and questions regarding the Field Test, WestEd, and student data detail will be addressed with Superintendents during their March 1 PSSAM meeting.

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

Field Test

Ben Feldman
bfeldman@msde.state.md.us

Student MSA/Matrix/TRSG/SGP detail files are now complete. The file layouts were shared with LEA participants at the February 21 Field Test meeting; actual data will be posted to the secure server during the week of February 25.

To insure the local integrity of teacher-student attribution, teachers must have the authority to participate in the identification of which student scores are associated with their instruction. Use of a worksheet, scan form, or other approach will reflect local techniques and tools. Some LEAs have informed MSDE that this work is already settled. One LEA has institutionalized a fully automated roster validation system, which allows the teacher multiple opportunities during the year to adjust and correct this information. Many Maryland school systems use third party vendor tools to manage their local assessment programs and these tools take the LEA very close to having the rosters well sorted out. Moreover, LEAs can use their SCGT submissions as a useful point of departure.

MSDE anticipates that LEA central offices will play a role in this work. The teacher confirms which students should be claimed. This information – returned to the Information Technology Unit, to the Research and Evaluation Office, or to the LAC – should be easily analyzed using the student detail data, which already contains the matrix address, the associated TRSG value (for those LEAs using TRGS), and the student growth percentile.

MSDE will provide look-up tables, which will convert the TRSG median values to 10 performance standards that are established by running deciles against the 2011 data. Deciles are never again used. If the LEA uses TRSG and the teacher only instructs one subject, the performance category is multiplied by 2, and that value becomes the 20 percentage point MSA contribution. If the teacher instructs ELA and mathematics, the two performance category values are added together, and that is the MSA contribution.

Anchoring roster validation within the LEA is intended to minimize confusion and error. The teacher will be able to triage students who are incorrectly attributed and to claim students who should be. Because the MSA data will always be a function of the prior spring, no matter how lagging data is finally addressed, that will have no bearing whether the teacher has a new grade or school assignment the following year. If teachers do cross LEA boundaries that is a different matter, which is already under consideration as part of a larger strategy to provide LEAs access to the universe of student performance data so that LEA records can always be complete. This will have no

effect on the conduct of the 2013 Field Test.

LEAs will use whichever approach is simplest and appears to produce the greatest alignment that will be acceptable within the school system. MSDE does not believe this will impose an unreasonable burden, and MSDE hopes to determine the degree of burden within the next few weeks as staff actively partner with LEAs to engage in the actual work. Nevertheless, there is no way to avoid the task of linking teachers to students.

Upper and lower limit scores to convert TRSG matrix medians to 10 performance categories are almost complete. MSDE is comparing two approaches to this calculation, working directly from student detail and from students organized into virtual classes using the 2011 Student Course Grade Teacher file. MSDE hopes to have this deliverable complete by March 1. MSDE will provide the matrix solution for all principals whose schools administer MSA. This deliverable will not likely be ready until later in March. Action Team staff will conduct a complete trial-run, the results of which will be shared at the March LEA meeting.

Field Test Monitor site visits are largely scheduled and will commence during the week of February 25.

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

Linda Burgee
lburgee@msde.state.md.us

On-site training and technical assistance continues to be provided by the MSDE SLO Team. Chief Academic Officers received training on quality control for SLOs at their recent MSDE meeting. The CAOs indicated that they particularly appreciated the opportunity to discuss and share ideas in this "job-alike" setting. The central office and Pilot school staff in Garrett County also recently participated in professional development on SLOs.

As you are aware, including the HSAs as part of SLOs is a requirement for evaluations beginning with the 2013-2014 school year. The MSDE SLO team will be engaging in a number of activities to help formulate how Maryland plans to meet this requirement.

Activities include:

- Seeking input from LEAs that are currently using HSAs as part of the SLO process;
- Scheduling a session to discuss this issue at the March TPE Field Test Meeting;
- Researching how other states have used similar data;
- Soliciting input from the Superintendents and Executive Officers, as well as other stakeholder groups; and
- Establishing a Google Group as part of our on-line discussion forums.

Based on the information we gather, we plan to develop a draft menu of acceptable options for the use of HSAs as part of the SLO process and then seek feedback on these options before making final decisions. If your district is currently using HSA data as part of the evaluation process or you have input you would like to share, please email Linda Burgee at lburgee@msde.state.md.us so we may consider your input as we draft a plan.

Inquiries regarding Student Learning Objectives or interest in scheduling training for specific audiences should be directed to Linda Burgee.

Professional Development

Ilene Swirnow
iswirnow@msde.state.md.us

The Professional Development Team has been involved in a number of projects recently. On February 12, the Team met with Calvert County principals, executive officers, and content specialists to give an overview of the principal evaluation instrument. The workshop topics included calculating the rating for professional practices, using principal

SLOs as a measure of student growth, the timeline for the evaluation process, and the factors that go into determining a range value for principals' professional practice outcomes. On February 21, the TPE field test meeting included a reflection on the 2011-2012 TPE Pilot program, which provided all participants with lessons learned and insights from the Pilot year. The TPE Professional Development Team is available, at your request, to help districts during the Field Test. Contact Ilene Swirnow for further information.

LEA teams are encouraged to submit potential topics electronically for the March TPE Meeting. We will try to reschedule the sessions on Applying Lag Data and on Transitioning CCSS, PARCC, and TPE.

Inquiries regarding the evaluative professional development skills of executive officers, principals, assistant principals, and instructional supervisors may be directed to Ilene Swirnow.

Communications

Laura Motel
lmotel@msde.state.md.us

The new TPE Google Group is up and running and invites have been sent out to primary LEA TPE contacts as well as a number of other LEA staff members involved in TPE who requested invites from the Group Owner, Laura Motel. Please be aware that invites expire after one week, so if you received an invite previously but did not sign up and join the Group, please email Laura to resend the invite. Other interested LEA staff may also request an invitation to join the Group by contacting Laura directly (lmotel@msde.state.md.us) – please include your full name, LEA, position/title, and work email address in the email. A new group discussion category has also been recently added, "Using HSAs in SLOs." The purpose of this discussion category is to share feedback and ideas regarding the use of HSAs in SLOs. The TPE Action Team encourages LEA staff to take advantage of this discussion platform to provide an outlet for ideas, successes, and questions related to the field testing and implementation of TPE in Maryland.

We have received positive feedback regarding the TPE Meetings being held at the Meeting House in Columbia and are considering moving the March 21 LEA Meeting to Wednesday, March 20, 2013 at that location from 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (the only day and time available). This information will be shared with Superintendents at their March 1 PSSAM meeting and a follow-up memo will be distributed. Please hold this date in the interim.

Communication #11 was delayed to allow for the inclusion of information that may have emerged from the February 26 MSBE meeting.

Inquiries regarding communications may be directed to Laura Motel.