

Race to the Top Progress Update Monthly Call

Directions: In preparation for monthly calls, a State must provide responses to the questions in Part A for their overall plan, and responses to the questions in Part B for *two* application sub-criterion.

Part A: *In preparation for monthly calls, States must provide information that addresses the three questions below on the implementation of all aspects of its approved scope of work. This may include a written response. If your State already has a state-specific system to report on its progress, please work with your program officer to determine the best method of providing this information for your State.*

1. What were the State's key accomplishments and challenges this past month?

Accomplishments:

- Finalized MOU with NLNS delineating deliverables that will be provided to MSDE, Prince George's and Baltimore City, and to IHEs to train future leaders
- Finalized MOU with NMSI who has committed \$2.7 million to the certification of secondary STEM teachers
- First Teacher Induction Academy was conducted for 225 participants
- Dave Volrath is working directly with the 7 pilot school systems to develop, refine, and implement new educator evaluation systems. Liaison contacts are being established with the other 17 LEAs.
- Conducted final technical assistance session for LEAs to assist them in completing their 2011-12 scope of work. 11 of 22 LEAs attended the sessions.
- Consultant was selected as a portal design specialist to assist in the implementation of the Course Registration system and the development of frameworks for the Teacher Toolkit Portal
- Over 100 teachers from across the state of Maryland participated in three training sessions for the ITEEA project
- Received updates from all 54 projects detailing implementation activities for the second grant year.
- Met with biology teachers on August 15 to review lessons developed for the STEMnet hub
- Continuing to define inter-project dependencies between technology and DAADS projects
- Continuing to collaborate with LEAs on JAD sessions and environment scanning site visits

Challenges:

- To date, deliverables as delineated in the MOU with USM for program evaluation either have been late or not delivered. These deliverables include: interview summaries with executive sponsors; an evaluation plan; a plan for including LEAs in the evaluation process; and, a budget for FY 12, 13, and 14. A meeting was held with the CORE Team, Dr. Kirwan, and Dr. Lorion on August 11 to resolve issues and reiterate expectations.

- The STEM Instructional and Career Support project (#20) expressed concern that another change in funding categories is being requested. Although the amount is less than \$100,000, the project team is concerned that this request would require a budget alignment at MSDE which may delay project activities.
2. Is the State on track to meet the goals and timelines associated with the activities outlined in its approved scope of work? If not, what strategies is the State employing in order to meet its goals?

We are waiting to receive deliverables from USM regarding program evaluation. Hopefully, the meeting involving the Core Team, Dr. Kirwin (Chancellor of USM), and Dr. Lorion (Chair of CAIRE) has resolved the issues that have been of concern and we can move forward with this project. If deliverables are not received, decisions will have to be made regarding the vendor for this project. Delays in gaining approval of amendments have resulted in some projects falling behind in meeting goals and timelines as outlined in the initial project schedule. To assist in accelerating lost time, specialists from other projects have been used until permanent employees can be hired.

Pending approval of amendments submitted last week, the goals in the approved scope of work will be achieved.

3. How can the Department help the State meet its goals?
- Finalizing the technical assistance request with USDE focused student growth measures as it applies to the educator evaluation system will provide needed support and assistance to MSDE and the 7 pilot LEAs.
 - Provide insight on what other states are doing relative to procuring Curriculum Management Systems, E-Learning Systems, and other pertinent enterprise applications.

Race to the Top Progress Update

Sub-criterion C3

Part B: *In preparation for monthly calls, States must submit written responses to the following questions for two application sub-criteria (e.g. (A)(2) and (D)(4)).¹ All responses in this section should be tailored to the goals and projects associated with this sub-criterion.*

Application sub-criterion: (C)(3)

STATE's goals for this sub-criterion:

- Develop and implement the instructional improvement system

Relevant projects:

- 14/31 Develop and Implement a State Curriculum System
- 15/7 Expand Instructional toolkit
- 16/20 STEM Instructional and Career Support
- 17/32 Implement a Test Item Bank System
- 18/33 Implement a Computer Adaptive Test delivery System
- 19/34 Complete and Item Load and Set Up for the Item Bank and CAT System
- 20/35 Adaptive Testing Units for High Schools
- 21/42 Implement a Statewide System to Support Instructional Intervention
- 22/6 Develop On-Line Instructional Intervention Models
- 23/55 Develop Framework for Teacher Toolkit Portal
- 24/56 Develop and Implement a Course Registration System
- 25/10 MSDE-IHE Teacher preparation Workgroup
- 26/43 Implement a System to Support E-Learning for Instructional Intervention, Enhancement, and Enrichment
- 27/46 Equating of MSA for Use on Growth Model

1. What is the extent of the State's progress toward meeting the goals and performance measures and implementing the activities that are included in its approved scope of work for this sub-criterion?

Project 25/10, MSDE- IHE Teacher Preparation Workgroup

To ensure that new teachers in Maryland are fully prepared, incorporating the effective use of instructional improvement systems into teacher preparation programs is critical. Work on this grant began this spring. An initial introduction of the project was provided to the IHE Deans, directors of Teacher Education Programs, and coordinators of alternative teacher preparation programs. The faculties of IHE teacher preparation programs and alternative programs were surveyed to identify who would need the information on the Common Cores Standards for their courses. Survey results yielded 176 responses. However, eight of the teacher preparation programs did not respond. They were contacted again. A model has been designed that would

¹ On each monthly call, program officers and states should work together to select two sub-criteria for the following month.

allow for multiple meetings on the same subject, to be held in four geographic areas of the state. The first set of meetings will introduce the purpose of the grant and allow participants to provide input into the structure of the remaining meetings that will be devoted to the primary subject matter areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and STEM. It is anticipated that 228 individuals will participate in the four meetings. Dates and sites for the first series of meetings are now being selected. At present, the project is on target. We will be in a better position to assess specifics of the quality of implementation as we conduct the sessions and receive feedback/evaluations from the participants.

Project 14/31, Develop and Implement a State Curriculum System

This project maintains common core curriculum standards, provides instructional and assessment alignment, and provides teachers with design tools, lesson plans, and course syllabi necessary to help them develop courses that are common core aligned. To date, this project is on target to support Maryland teachers' transition to the new common core curriculum starting with the summer 2012 Educator Effectiveness Academies (EEAs). The project team has finalized business requirements needed for RFP development and procurement of a centralized Curriculum Management System. The project team has also defined acquisition requirements for a Year 2 business analyst position to lead the team in determining CMS design and other relevant business & functional processes. Other accomplishments include: (a) Attended multiple webinars for COTS candidates for a Curriculum Management System, and (b) Gathered information from other systems to better understand interfaces between other projects and the Curriculum Management System.

Project 17/32, Implement a Test Item Bank System Project

The Project 17/32 Implement a Test Item Bank System has begun with the hiring of a Subject Matter Expert/Business Analyst on July 18, 2011. Since then, the requirements development has been initiated to be able to prepare and release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Test Item Bank System. A Request for Information (RFI) has been developed and will be released in the next few weeks to gather additional technical information for the custom off the shelf (COTS) systems that may be procured to meet the needs of this project. A webinar to introduce the project is ready to share with the Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) in early September. A survey has been developed to gather information from the LEAs and a process for future ongoing communication is planned for a September implementation. Preparation for a presentation for the Maryland Assessment Group Conference in November 2011 has been completed. During this session, key project milestones will be discussed, survey results will be shared, and stakeholders will be invited to participate in ongoing communications for requirements gathering. To date, project interdependencies have been investigated to be able to connect to other projects, and recurring meetings are scheduled to continue to assure that projects are closely aligned. The project work plan has been developed and is being reviewed and revised to include current developments and information gathering results.

Project 18/33, Implement a Computer Adaptive Test Delivery System

The Subject Matter Expert/Business Analyst for Project 18/33 Implement a Computer Adaptive Test Delivery System was hired and started 7/18/2011. Since then, the development of an RFI for the Computer Adaptive Test System(CATS) for cost, functionality, and interoperability has been ongoing. A technical requirements document is in development. A survey instrument for gathering LEA specific requirements has been developed and will be incorporated along with the Project 17/32 as a process. Information about the CATS project will be introduced within the context of the Item Bank System (Project 17/ 32) during the LEA webinar planned for September 2011. A presentation is in development for the Maryland Assessment Group Conference that will discuss the CATS key project milestones, will share implementation updates and survey results, and will invite stakeholder participation in ongoing communications for requirements gathering and roll out.

Project 19/34, Complete an Item Load and Set Up for the Item Bank and Computer Adaptive Test System

This project is not yet underway. As planned, this project will begin in Year 2.

Project 20/35, Adaptive Testing Units for High Schools

This project is not yet underway. As planned, this project will begin in Year 3.

Project 26/43, Implement a System to Support E-Learning for Instructional Intervention, Enhancement, and Enrichment

This project will select vendor available tools and materials via internet access to implement an advanced web-based, multi-media learning environment for (a) student learning remediation, and (b) advance accelerated learning to augment classroom instruction. The State is on target to meet our goals as a result of the amendments approved by USDE. The project team continues to work with LEAs to understanding the types of interventions, enhancement, and enrichments that are needed as part of the required project's organizational change management process. Some recent accomplishments include; (a) Business Requirements were documented and validated, (b) LEA site visits for software installation review conducted, (c) Research was initiated relative to a procurement approach with the Maryland Education Enterprise Consortium (MEEC), and (d) Project interdependency meetings were held and relationships documented.

Project 22/6, Develop In-Line Instructional Intervention Models

This project interfaces with the e-learning project (Project #43) for instructional intervention, enhancement and enrichment, and develops the necessary content and instructional activities that a student can use for enrichment and remediation. This project is slated to begin in October, 2011; therefore, project deliverables have not been developed at this time. However, to prepare for its execution, initial discussions about content/topics have already begun ahead of schedule with the curriculum teams. An example of how the project team is working ahead of schedule is the

recently concluded toolkit meeting held on July 5, 2011 with Curriculum Coordinators to discuss modules as well as other toolkit resources. An additional meeting was held on August 5, 2011 to discuss solicitation requirements for an RFP to be released in October of 2011.

Project 16/20, STEM Instructional and Career Support

This project establishes a partnership with the Maryland Business Roundtable (MBRT) to support educator effectiveness and student engagement in delivering STEM instruction to students. It also supports teachers and principals by establishing a STEM support hub that links industry experts and the resources of their workplace to STEM instructional objectives. Ultimately, this project will promote student engagement in STEM careers through the creation of an on-line system that allows students to communicate with STEM experts directly, and to view STEM workplace experience opportunities. In accordance with these stated goals, the project team is actively engaging and has completed 74% of the scope of work required for completion for the first year. Some of the accomplishments to date include: (a) Meeting with biology teachers to review lessons developed for the STEMnet hub; (b) Completed the initial survey of students' career goals, (c) initiated Website development and testing with vendor partner, and (d) Assessed areas for sustainability relating to STEMnet following the four year grant period.

Project 23/55, Develop Framework for Teacher Toolkit Portal

This project identifies the professional learning resources for teachers and principals that will be available on line from the Online Instructional Toolkit. This project supports all Race to the Top education reforms focused on improving teacher and principal professional development to improve individual job skills and performance. This project encountered staffing challenges as a result of USDE amendment approval delays. A Professional Development Specialist previously identified with strong interest for the position, accepted another position after several months of waiting. As a result, the project team potentially faces additional delays resulting from lead times necessary to re-advertise and hire for the position. Notwithstanding, the project team was able to retain the interest of a development consultant and welcomed her to the team on August 22.

Project 15/7, Expand Instructional Toolkit

This project will identify multi-media and instructional resources that will expand the instructional toolkit, meta-tag items, and manage the on-line portal for the Instructional Improvement System. As part of the execution of this project, courses will be aligned with the state Common Core Curriculum, and best practices in accordance with development of lesson seeds, project ideas, simulations, print and video resources will be reviewed from classroom teachers throughout Maryland as well as from public domain sources. The execution of this project will include synergistic collaboration with Maryland Public Television to catalog, aggregate, articulate, and conduct technical correlations for adolescent literacy, STEM and algebra II from local, regional, national, and international sources. In accordance to these objectives, this project has made tremendous progress on the attainment of the same, and is on target to meet its goal of providing an initial set of knowledge and resources to support Maryland

teachers' transition to the new common core curriculum starting with the summer 2012 Educator Effectiveness Academies (EEAs). Some of the recent accomplishments of this project include: (a) Executed the Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement, (b) Refined and updated the project schedule with detailed implementation activities, and (c) Conducted kickoff meetings to coordinate activities on pertinent deliverable with MPT.

Project 21/42, Implement a Statewide System to Support Instructional Intervention

This project provides teachers with a system that enables them to develop and document instructional interventions to improve both class and individual learning while tracking outcomes. This system especially important to promote individualized learning programs for the student by placing them at the center of the learning process allows them to interact with the teacher to plan a course of action for the student and track progress. In accordance with these objectives, the State is on target to meet stated goals as a result of the amendments recently approved by USDE. The project team has made progress collaborating with LEAs through a number of site visits to further document pertinent details relative to new processes that will be employed to improve student instruction. Some of the project's accomplishments include: (a) defined business requirements necessary to procure the needed Student instructional and Intervention System, (b) Conducted project interdependency meetings to identify inter-project dependencies, and (c) developed a draft RFP that is currently being reviewed with MSDE Procurement Division.

Project 24/56, Develop and Implement a Course Registration System

This project procures and implements a centralized course registration system to support both the delivery of professional development training to educators, as well as track their professional development history. In the last several months, the State has made progress towards meeting the goals and performance measures. One key activity was developing a requirements traceability matrix (RTM) that documented all the requisite business requirements needed to procure the Course Registration System. The project team has also engaged with other RTTT projects in cross-project collaboration activities to explore solutions that can be jointly pursued. As part of these efforts, the team has undertaken environment scanning to research available systems in the marketplace, and held a number of JAD review sessions with the LEAs to help refine requirements that will ultimately inform the feature set of the deployed system.

- 2 What methods, tools, and processes is the State using to determine the progress toward the goals and performance measures and the quality of implementation of the activities described for this application sub-criterion?

As with all sub-criteria, we are utilizing project management techniques for monitoring and controlling the program at the project/activity level and for determining progress towards

milestones and goals. Microsoft Project Professional is being used to develop project level schedules. Project schedules have been detailed for 54 projects with specific activities planned for the remainder of the year. Project managers review their respective project schedule with their program director to ensure that project activities, issues, risks, and concerns are discussed. Monthly reports are also submitted by each project manager. Technology projects also follow the State's Department of Information Technology (DoIT) software development life cycle (SDLC) process. Technology projects are also subject to additional quarterly reviews by DoIT. Communication, both verbal and electronic, occur on a regular basis between MSDE and its various vendors (e.g., MBRT, MPT). Finally, the quality of implementation of the activities will be determined by our overall program evaluation that has been built into the grant. The formative and summative evaluation tools to be developed by USM for each project will enable us to assess the degree to which we met goals and objectives established for each project.

- 3 What is the State's assessment of its quality of implementation to date?

Maryland feels that the quality of implementation has been excellent.

- 4 If the State is not on track to meet the goals, performance measures, timelines and quality of implementation related to this sub-criterion as outlined in its approved scope of work, why not, and what strategies is the State employing in order to meet goals and performance measures?

The project team for 23/55 recognized external factors, such as previously delayed amendment approvals, posed a risk of meeting defined objectives and milestones identified for the first year of the grant. Following the recent approvals for this project, the State is accelerating recruitment activities so as to retain the services of the professional development specialist. In parallel, the State will continue to exercise best effort to execute the project to the best of its ability by borrowing internal resources from other departments to assist in the development of professional development frameworks as detailed in the project schedule.

5. What are the obstacles and/or risks that could impact the State's ability to meet its goals and performance measures related to this sub-criterion?

The state's long procurement process and the state's internal technology procurement approval processes could pose a potential risk that could impact our ability to meeting the timeline developed for necessary for meeting our goals.

Maryland, August 2011

Evaluation: Based on the responses to the previous question, evaluate the State's performance and progress to date for this sub-criterion (choose one)

Red (1) Orange (2) Yellow (3) **Green (4)**²

² Red – requires urgent and decisive action; Orange – requires substantial attention, some aspects need urgent attention; Yellow – aspect(s) require substantial attention, some aspects good; Green – good, requires refinement and systematic implementation.

Maryland, August 2011

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 74 hours (annually) per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (34 CFR 75.720, 75.730-732; 34 CFR 80.40 and 80.41). Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0011.