

Race to the Top

Progress Update – December 2011 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:

- Project 2 - Formative assessment - Proof of concept development started for Assessment for Learning System
- Project 11 - Infrastructure -Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition (OBIEE) test systems installed and year 1 dashboards in User Acceptance Test Testing (UAT) co-location of OBIEE systems were completed.
- Project 27 - Design initiated on four of twelve Year 2 dashboards. Proof of concept for P20 Life-span and STEM dashboards demonstrated for Governor's P20 Council.
- Project 28 - OBIEE live training completed. Four Multi-media training modules completed with avatars. Completed UAT testing
- Projects 32-35 - Request For Information proposals received from prospective vendors -Proof of concepts sessions scheduled with stakeholders - Requirements in progress for procurements
- Projects 47/48 - Educator Effectiveness and growth module system design completed with new value matrix model. Detail design of system is in development with LEA collaboration team.
- Presented project updates at the State of Maryland Department of Information Technology (DoIT) Quarterly Portfolio Review. No issues were identified.
- Met with DoIT on 12/07/2011 to review SDLC documentation for non-DAADS Technology projects
- A prototype of the new online assessment system was shared with local supervisors, and input Pre-Assessment data reports have been created and distributed to 17 of 18 local school systems participating in the Curriculum and Formative Assessment Development for ITEEA project
- Conducted product review and orientation of the Oracle suite of Content Management Tools as an alternative solution for the Curriculum Management System project. Follow-up meeting is being scheduled for the start of 2012
- MBRT held additional training sessions for Biology Specialists and teachers on November 18, 2011 at Johns Hopkins School of Nursing. Twenty-eight volunteers participated doubling the number of specialists engaged in the program.
- Developed draft architectural diagram for non-DAADS Technology projects
- Interviewed five (5) candidates for the Senior Network Engineer position. Second round of interviews is being scheduled for 2 finalists.
- All 22 LEA scopes of work were approved by the State Board of Education
- Project schedules for years 3 and 4 will be completed by project managers by December 30, 2011

- CAIRE established evaluation team assignments for the 54 projects. The CAIRE evaluation team is now meeting monthly
- Salisbury University and University of Maryland Eastern Shore hired a coordinator for the five Eastern Shore counties and have identified potential leader candidates and mentors to form the first cohort to participate in the leadership development program designed by NLNS.
- Notice of grant awards were sent to 16 LEAs to provide incentives for teachers to obtain ESOL certification.
- Selected seven new charter schools to pilot the newly created Quality Standards for Charter Schools.
- Received proposals from Baltimore City and Prince George's County for incentives to teachers and principals in the lowest 5% schools. In final approval process
- Received proposals from Baltimore City, Prince George's County, Baltimore County, and Kent County for incentives to teachers in shortage areas. In final approval process.

Challenges

- Comments were received from the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) requiring additional updates to solicitation documents. Project Manager is making necessary updates and is in the process of resubmitting RFP for approval. The solicitation process has been delayed by approximately one month.
 - Project #55 has experienced a staffing related delay in hiring a professional development specialist. A specialist was initially selected but accepted an external competing offer. The project team must now re-advertise the position and begin anew. MSDE is implementing a number of contingencies to mitigate prolonged scheduling delays.
 - Intensifying efforts to become involved in lowest performing Baltimore City Schools through the Breakthrough Center. A letter will be shared with Dr. Alonzo alerting him to our concerns and inviting him and members of his staff to discuss progress to date and identify next steps to ensure involvement with schools.
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?

Maryland is on target to meet the goals and timelines associated with activities outlined in its approved scope of work

3. How can the Department help the State meet its goals?

Approve the 44 project amendments as soon as possible.

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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:²(D)(3), (D)(5)

STATE's goals for this sub-criterion:

- Increase distribution of teachers and principals in high-poverty, high-minority, and hard-to-staff schools
- Ensure teacher transition into the profession
- Give teachers and principals the opportunity to become highly effective educators

Relevant projects:

(D)(3)

- 31/13 Building Leadership Capacity in Low-Achieving Urban and Rural Districts
- 32/73 Teach for Maryland
- 33/50 Compensation to Teachers and Principals in the Lowest 5% Schools
- 34/51 Compensation to Teachers in Shortage Areas
- 35/26 Elementary STEM Certification
- 36/75 Maryland Approved Programs (MAP) Cost for LEAs, Providers, and IHEs (UTeach Maryland)
- 37/54 International partnerships to Recruit Teachers in Critical Needs Areas
- 38/53 Incentives for Teachers Who Obtain ESOL Certification

(D)(5)

- 39/25 Teacher Induction Academies
- 40/15 Professional Development for Executive Officers
- 41/24 Educator Instructional Improvement Academies
- 42/17 Expand Maryland Principal's Academy to Target Principals of Low Achieving Schools
- 43/21 Develop Online PD on Educator Effectiveness Improvement Content

(D)(3) Projects

Project 31/13: Building Leadership Capacity in Low-Achieving Urban and Rural Districts

This project directly supports educational reform initiatives of Race to the Top by seeking to increase the number of effective and highly effective leaders in urban Baltimore City, Prince George's County (PG) and five rural Eastern Shore counties (Dorchester, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester). A sub-grant has been awarded to New Leaders for New Schools (NLNS) to train cohorts of future leaders in Baltimore City and Prince George's County. NLNS is also working with the Notre Dame of Maryland University (NDMU), formerly the College of Notre Dame, to develop a course to be added to the NDMU Education Administration program, which will incorporate the NLNS model, especially the elements of data driven instruction and principal as instructional leader, into their training. In addition, NLNS has agreed to work with two public Eastern Shore universities, Salisbury University (SU) and the University

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

² All highlighted fields will be pre-populated by the Department Program Officer prior to State completion.

of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES), an historically black university, which already had partnerships with five rural Eastern Shore counties through Maryland's Professional Development Schools (PDS) network. NLNS is working with SU and UMES to develop and refine systems for recruitment, selection and training of promising teacher-leaders resulting in a cadre of system-selected principal candidates. The training will incorporate data-driven, outcomes-based methodology. NLNS will also provide training and access to its Effective Practice Incentive Community (EPIC) system, consisting of on-line training modules, teaching and management scenarios, and assessments, which will enable sustainability beyond the life of the grant.

Accomplishments that show evidence of meeting goals/activities and making progress:

- The MOU was finalized between NLNS and MSDE and the signed copies were distributed to all on Aug. 8, 2011.
- NLNS's Cohort 10 resident principals completed the 2010-11 school year (nine in Baltimore City and six in Prince George's) and presented their projects at a meeting (MSDE attended this). NLNS conducted end of year assessments for Cohort 10 participants and conducted a Transition to Principal meeting. This academic year (2011-2012), the Cohort 10 participants began their new assignments. In Baltimore City, six became principals, one a managing assistant principal, and two became assistant principals. In Prince George's all six Cohort 10 participants were assigned as principals.
- NLNS met with several key individuals from Notre Dame of Maryland University (NDMU) to plan details of the educational administration course NLNS is developing with NDMU in a series of meetings this fall. This will be a required course for the four different educational administration programs at Notre Dame. Discussed were content, curriculum, name of new course offering and an introduction to EPIC Knowledge system. The working title is "Leadership in Today's Schools." The course, "Leadership in Today's Schools," will be offered a total of four times during the life of the grant. (Fall 2012, Spring 2013, Fall 2014 and Spring 2014). They are now drafting a summary overview of the course, coupled with determining the book list in anticipation of placing the course on the registry so students can enroll for the fall 2012 semester. NDMU has agreed to track the graduates of the four educational administration programs after the end of the grant to ascertain how many of these persons are placed as principals and their successes in the role.
- The Salisbury University/University of Maryland Eastern Shore (SU/UMES) partnership has met and begun working with NLNS to develop processes to support identification and recruitment of potential leaders in the five rural Eastern Shore school systems of Dorchester, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester. NLNS met with the newly hired SU/UMES coordinator to discuss Scope and Sequence for EPIC delivery. The SU/UMES coordinator has met with all five Eastern Shore school system superintendents, and activities are underway to identify eligible schools, potential candidates and mentors. Mentor training must occur before activities occur, and it is anticipated that NLNS will assist with this, also.
- NLNS completed 62 Finalists Selection Interviews for Baltimore City and Prince George's County schools for Cohort 11. Reference checks followed for all candidates who passed the Finalist Selection Day. The final selections included 8 in Baltimore City and 8 in Prince George's. They all participated in the national NLNS training in Boston this past summer.
- MSDE conducted a successful Educational Administration Network meeting on Friday, October 14, 2011, which included updates from both grants. The Network includes 16 state approved

Educational Administration Programs (including the grant awardees). This Network group will be instrumental in the sustainability of the project successes after the grant is over.

- Presentation of an overview/update of the RTTT grants to the Deans and Directors occurred during the Fall meeting October 27, 2011.

The greatest challenge of the project in the first year was the late start. Timelines for project activities had to be adjusted accordingly. In addition, the selection of a coordinator for the SU/UMES project was also delayed. The position was advertised three times before a candidate could be selected who met the expectations required. As stated previously, the coordinator has met with all five Eastern Shore counties and identified potential candidates and mentors.

Currently, the project participants are meeting the expectations described in the grant. It is expected that with continuous communication and regular reporting, the project will fully and successfully meet its first and second year goals by the end of year two.

Project 32/73 - Teach for Maryland Summary Report

This Race to the Top project is designed to expand the number of teachers prepared to teach in high poverty/high minority schools, and to aid in the retention of teachers in such schools using the expertise of the Breakthrough Center and Maryland's Professional Development Schools (PDS) learning community model. The project is open to both traditional and alternative pathways for teacher preparation. In January 2011, the Teach for Maryland Consortium Manager began her work. Sub-grants were awarded in March 2011 to Loyola College now Loyola University Maryland, College of Notre Dame now Notre Dame of Maryland University, Goucher College, and Mount St. Mary's University and their PDS partners to develop initial teacher preparation programs. Salisbury University was added to the Consortium in June. Loyola University is partnering with two K-8 schools located in Baltimore City Public School System; Notre Dame of Maryland University is partnered with two K-8 schools in Baltimore City and Goucher is partnered with three charter schools in Baltimore City; two partner schools are K-8 and one is 6-12. Mount St. Mary's University is partnered with two middle schools in Frederick County Schools. Salisbury University is partnered with three elementary schools and the Wicomico Early Learning Center in Wicomico County. This partnership is focused on early childhood learners. It is anticipated that 200 teachers will be prepared to teach in high needs schools during the first four years of this project. The project is designed to identify the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and processes as components of teacher preparation programs that will prepare teachers to be effective in high poverty/high minority schools. Guidelines to inform all teacher preparation programs will be created and disseminated as a result this project.

Since March 2011, five Teach for Maryland Consortium meetings and the first annual Teach for Maryland Consortium Summer Institute have been held. The overall goal of the Consortium meetings is to identify the components of teacher preparation programs that will prepare teachers to be effective in high poverty/high minority schools. Consortium members have identified a framework for examining program components: skills, knowledge, dispositions and processes that would be structures in teacher preparation programs. Consortium members have participated in a day of "Collaborative Conversations" with more than 25 Maryland Teachers of the Year to identify teacher preparation issues related to classroom management, data analysis, planning, parent outreach, and persistence and optimism. Presentations and discussions at Consortium meetings have focused on the state and national guidelines for teacher preparation, as well as resilience, dispositions, cultural dispositions, a review of best

practices, and *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*. At the conclusion of the Summer Institute, Consortium members identified changes that they have or will integrate into their teacher preparation program in collaboration with their PDS partners. Project managers have provided on-site and electronic technical assistance to each of our project partners, and budgets and required paperwork has been reviewed. Project managers have participated in strategic planning meetings, steering committee meetings, school visits, as well as teacher professional development opportunities. Project managers have continued to examine materials and resources, solicited input from Consortium membership and leaders in the field, and provided materials for professional development and programmatic change. An overview/update of the RTTT grants was provided to the Deans and Directors representing all Maryland institutions of higher education during their 2011 Fall Meeting on October 27, 2011. An overview/update of the RTTT grants was provided to the all Local School System Professional Development School (PDS) Contacts during their 2011 Fall meeting.

The greatest challenge of the project in the first year was the late start. Timelines for project activities had to be adjusted accordingly.

The Teach for Maryland project has met all milestones to this point and accomplished all planned deliverables. In mid-December, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was disseminated to potential new partners with the intent of adding three more partnerships of either Maryland Approved Programs or Alternative Preparation programs along with their identified PDS partnerships. This RFP will facilitate "Early Start Up" which will permit the newly identified partnerships to become active members earlier than initially proposed by bringing on new partners for this year's Consortium meeting in late third quarter, during the Summer Institute, and fourth quarter activities. The same model will be used to bring on two additional members in year three. This will result in ten teacher preparation partnerships in the project, more than was originally projected. Guidelines to inform all teacher preparation programs will be created and disseminated as a result this project.

Project 50: Compensation to Teachers and Principals in the Lowest 5% of Schools

Work on this project began by identifying the LEAs and schools in those LEAs that met the criteria for eligibility in this project. It was determined that Tier I and Tier II schools would be eligible (SIG); therefore, Baltimore City Public Schools and Prince George's County Public Schools were the only school systems eligible for these funds; - nine schools in Baltimore City and four schools in Prince George's County.

With the eligible LEAs and schools identified, MSDE worked to draft recommendations for the procedures for distribution, accountability, and criteria for selection. MSDE also worked to calculate the amounts of the grants each LEA would receive, as well as to determine the value range of the incentive per individual. These recommendations were presented to the State Board of Education for approval, which was given on March 22, 2011.

MSDE also requested and received guidance from the Attorney General's Office in order to ensure compliance with the Education Reform Act of 2010, the genesis of the incentive project.

Since the RTTT approval for the State Scope of Work occurred in April 2011, MSDE submitted and received approval for an amendment to move year one funds to years two, three, and four. MSDE then developed grant forms, distribution procedures, and assurances, which were disbursed to the eligible LEAs for completion. After receiving initial submissions from Baltimore City and Prince George's County,

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the LEAs were sent clarifying questions, their responses to the questions were reviewed, and each LEA was asked to make revisions to their application and submit a final version.

Baltimore City's final application has been received and approved. A notice of grant award was drafted and has been submitted to MSDE's Procurement Office. We are still waiting to receive a final version of Prince George's County's application.

Technical assistance has been provided to both Baltimore City and Prince George's County to support the development of their proposals. Both districts are dialoguing with their unions to reach agreement on their proposals as well.

We have reached all of the year one milestones in the Microsoft Project plan for this project and are on track for year two. We have received the final grant application from Baltimore City and developed the notice of grant award, which has been submitted to procurement for processing. We are also in close contact with representatives in Prince George's County and are monitoring their progress towards the submission of the final version of their application.

Early on in this project, an issue arose regarding the timeline for allocating the grant funds to the LEAs. After meeting with the LEAs, it was decided that it would be best to submit an amendment to USDE requesting that the funds for the incentives be allocated to each LEA over a three-year period, beginning July 1, 2011 of the 2011-2012 school year rather than over a four-year period as originally planned. Superintendents had voiced concerns over the difficulties in awarding incentives in mid-year and said the funds could be better used in the recruitment and retention of highly effective teachers and principals at the beginning of the school year. While this was an important change to make to this project, the process of submitting the amendment delayed MSDE in delivering the grant applications to the LEAs.

During the process of writing their applications, participating LEAs also had to negotiate with their local bargaining units to ensure that their proposals for this grant were agreed to by all parties. In the case of Prince George's County, MSDE reviewed the LEA's initial grant application and responded with a few recommendations and questions that needed to be addressed in their final submission. The changes requested by MSDE, though seemingly minor, did cause issue with the local bargaining unit and required further negotiations and significant revisions to the LEA's application. MSDE continues to provide assistance to Prince George's County as they revise their application.

Questions also arose as to how fixed charges should be addressed in the LEAs' C-125 grant budgets. We met with staff from MSDE's Office of Finance to answer these questions and then worked with LEAs to make sure their C-125 and the language in their grant application were accurate. This too delayed the LEAs in delivering the final versions of their grant applications and MSDE in beginning the process to issue the grants to the LEAs

Judging by the work that has been done to this point, the quality of implementation has been excellent. MSDE was very thorough in its work to craft the recommendations for the procedures for distribution, accountability, and criteria for selection, as well as in the identification of the eligible LEAs and schools and calculations of the grant awards. Project leads held meetings with local superintendents to get their input on the project and also met with MSDE staff members who could offer insight into various aspects of the project. Project leads have also developed strong relationships with LEA representatives, which will be vital as implementation progresses.

The LEAs have been very thorough in their work on this project as well. Baltimore City's grant application was very detailed and provided a wealth of research and analysis to back its plans. Baltimore City will use this grant to incentivize staff for demonstrated improvement in areas of student attendance and school climate. In its application, Baltimore City provides data to support its assertion that improved attendance correlates with increases in academic performance. Baltimore City also developed individualized growth targets for each of the nine schools eligible for this grant. Staff at schools that meet all of the targets will be eligible for the award.

While Prince George's County is still in the process of finalizing its application, the work they have done to this point and their resolve to create a thorough, well-researched proposal demonstrate the LEA's commitment to the high quality implementation of this project. Prince George's County's application is also research based and they have developed a strong professional development based application (the concept is fully supported by their union).

RTTT Project 51: Compensation Incentives for Teachers in Shortage Areas (STEM, Special Education, and ELL

Work on this project began identifying the eligible LEAs and schools and defining the procedures for distribution, accountability, and criteria for the selection of teachers for incentives. Once the eligible LEAs and schools were identified, MSDE calculated the recommended grant amounts for each LEA. During this process, MSDE project leads also met with local school system superintendents for their input on the project.

MSDE also submitted an amendment request to USDE asking that funds be awarded to the five LEAs that have Tier III schools (Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Dorchester County, Kent County, and Prince George's County) rather than to all LEAs, as was stated in the original RTTT proposal; that funds from year one be equally distributed over years 2, 3, and 4 rather than a four-year period as originally intended; and that the criteria for selection of teachers in year three be revised since the definitions of effective and highly effective will not be completed and ready for use by 2012-2013.

Next, MSDE developed the grant forms, distribution procedures, and assurances for the LEAs to complete to apply for funds. Once USDE approved the amendment, MSDE was able to distribute the grant forms and assurances to the eligible LEAs.

MSDE began receiving the grant applications from the LEAs in August. Dorchester County responded that they would not apply for a grant. MSDE has revisited the project with Dorchester County, but they again decided not to participate. Unused funds will be redistributed for future years of this project. MSDE project leads reviewed the LEAs submissions, sent clarifying questions, reviewed the responses to those questions, and asked for revisions to applications when needed. During this process, MSDE was communicating frequently with LEA representatives.

Currently, MSDE has received and approved Kent County's application and a notice of grant award was developed and has been submitted to MSDE's Procurement Office. The final applications from Baltimore City and Baltimore County have been received and approved as well, but we are still waiting to receive signed C-125 grant budgets from these LEAs before we can move forward with issuing notice of grant awards. We are also still waiting to receive a final version of Prince George's County's application.

We have reached all of the year one milestones in the Microsoft Project plan for this project and are on track for year two. We have received the final, approved grant application from Kent County and a notice of grant award has been submitted to Procurement for processing. We have received and approved final applications from Baltimore City and Baltimore County. Representatives from both of these LEAs assure us that they are working to get their C-125 grant budgets signed by their local superintendents and MSDE project leads continue to check in with them regularly on their status. We are also in close contact with representatives in Prince George's County and are monitoring their progress towards the submission of their application.

The obstacles and challenges we have faced with this project are similar to those described for project 50. An amendment was submitted to USDE requesting to change the eligible LEAs to only those with Tier III schools; to distribute year one funds over years 2, 3, and 4; and to revise the selection criteria for teachers in year three. This delayed MSDE in distributing the grant applications and assurances to the LEAs. Additionally, LEAs had the challenge of negotiating with their local bargaining units during the application writing process for this project as well. PGCPs has been delayed in submitting the final version of its application for this project because the LEA needed to go back and negotiate again with its local bargaining unit regarding the revisions required by MSDE. Finally, in this project the LEAs again had questions about how fixed charges should be addressed in their C-125 grant budgets. After meeting with staff in MSDE's Office of Finance, it was determined that Baltimore City would need to revise its C-125 to remove fixed costs. This has delayed MSDE in beginning the process to issue the grant to Baltimore City.

As with project 50, judging by the work that has been done to this point, the quality of implementation has been excellent. The work that MSDE has put into this project has been very thorough. Project leads gave a great deal of thought to the identification of the LEAs and schools that would be eligible for this grant, as well as to the grant forms, distribution procedures, and assurances. Again, MSDE has held meetings with local superintendents to get their input on the project and also met with various MSDE staff who could offer insight into specific aspects of the project. Strong relationships have also been forged between project leads and LEA representatives, which will be vital as implementation progresses.

The LEAs have put in a great deal of effort on their part as well. While some of the initial applications sent in by the LEAs may have needed further revisions or clarification, they were committed to making the necessary changes to improve their project plans. The LEAs have been very responsive to all of MSDE's requests, revisions, and questions in regards to this project.

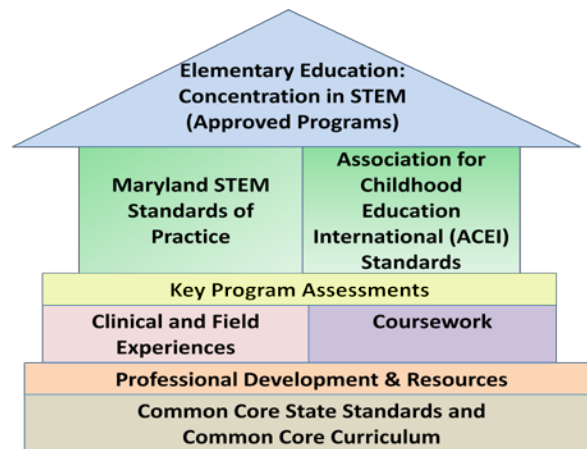
Project 35/ 26 - Elementary STEM Certification

Maryland approved traditional and alternative teacher preparation pathways have received funds to form a Network to develop, pilot, revise, and implement Elementary STEM teacher preparation programs. In addition, grant funds are supporting teams to develop Elementary STEM teacher standards of practice. During implementation, all project partners are engaging in program development, data collection, and coordination with local school system partners.

The project designs of the Network partners reflect a problem-based approach to teaching an integrated STEM curriculum to elementary students: a pedagogical strategy identified through research to increase student achievement. Maryland's Professional Development School (PDS) Network is providing the base for piloting field experiences to train prospective Elementary STEM teachers as well as for practicing teachers who wish to expand their expertise.

Elementary STEM Certification project managers have met with the MSDE STEM curriculum and instruction team to coordinate efforts and share resources for this project. In particular, we have worked with the MSDE STEM coordinator as the STEM Standards of Practice for students are being developed. Discussions are on-going about how the Student Standards of Practice will translate to Standards of Practice for teachers and how teacher preparation programs can support those standards.

Since May, three Elementary STEM Network meetings and the first annual Elementary STEM Summer Institute have been held. The overall goal of the Network meetings is to support new Elementary STEM programs based on the Maryland STEM Standards of Practice, the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) Standards, and the Common Core State Curriculum. Network members are identifying key program assessments, coursework, clinical and field experiences, professional development and resources to support program development (see graphic).



Discussion at meetings has focused on: reacting to drafts of STEM Standards of Practice; project assessment; introduction to Elementary STEM resources; the engineering/technology design process; and, definitions of technology.

On-site technical assistance has been provided to each of our project partners and initial program/course offerings, budgets and required paperwork has been reviewed. As part of these meetings project managers have the opportunity to participate in key project activities such as project advisory committee meetings, visits to schools, and observations in teacher preparation and other courses, as well as teacher professional development opportunities.

Project managers also continue to examine elementary STEM materials and resources as well as discussing the resources and approaches to STEM pedagogy and assessment with individuals currently involved in the field. In June 2011, MSDE Project Managers attended the BEST (Bridging Engineering Science and Technology) for Engineering is Elementary (EiE) educators' workshop in Boston, Massachusetts. As a follow up to this meeting, MSDE contracted to provide on-site professional development on EiE to our Network members. In addition, one of the project managers presented as part of a panel at the Triangle Coalition Conference in Alexandria, Virginia in October 2011.

Network project partners are enhancing their approved initial elementary certification programs to include a concentration in STEM. Project managers have met with the MSDE Branch Chief for Certification to discuss options and the process for an endorsement in Elementary Education STEM for practicing teachers. The Certification Office will determine the direction for an endorsement in Elementary STEM.

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Given the fact that there are no national STEM standards, the adoption of the STEM Standards of Practice in Maryland for students is a critical milestone for the development of elementary STEM programs at both the initial and endorsement level. These standards of practice will guide the alignment of the elementary STEM programs and their supporting components in order to enhance the STEM preparation and aptitudes for elementary teacher

The Elementary STEM Certification project has met all milestones to this point and accomplished all planned deliverables. In early December 2011, the proposal guidelines to add an additional project partner for 2012-2014 were released. Guidelines for the additional four project partners for 2013-2014 will be released in December 2012. The addition of these projects exceeds the original goal of seven total project partners. Due to starting the project in March 2011 and through the efficient use of travel funds a total of twelve project partners can be supported.

Project 36/75: Maryland Approved Programs (MAP) Cost for LEAs, Providers, and IHEs (UTeach Maryland)

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is partnering with the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) to sponsor the replication of the UTeach model of teacher education in the STEM areas of certification. The UTeach program has been in place since 1997 and is now engaged through the UTeach Institute in replication projects in 21 universities across the country. In this partnership, MSDE will grant \$1.4 million (RTTT funds) to up to two qualifying four-year institutes of higher education supplemented by additional grant funding of up to \$2.7 million from NMSI to assure replication beyond the RTTT funding period. During the late spring, summer and early fall of 2011, much time was spent in developing an MOU that met the federal guidelines, and at the same time ensured that the project would have funding past the completion of the RTTT timeframe. This was vital in order to be sure of program completers at the participating institution(s) as well as to guarantee sustainability beyond the life of the RTTT grant, as well. Negotiations with companies that fund STEM project through NMSI agreed to the expenditure of MSDE funds first with the additional monies to kick in during the final two years of the project.

The University System of Maryland, the originally cited partner, would not to commit to all facets of the project as initially presented; however, there is good reason to assume that at least one USM university will make application at this point. In addition, it was a challenge to develop an MOU that was agreeable to all three partners – not caused by any lack of collaboration, but because of the necessity of meeting procurement and other legal requirements for two states, a university system, and a non-profit funder. MSDE project manager worked with legal counsel and that of the counterparts in Texas to assure compliance with all requirements.

In July 2011, two members of the faculty of the University of Texas, which houses the UTeach Institute, came to a two-day meeting of the Elementary STEM project participants with the intent of working with both those interested in secondary STEM, but to assure alignment of the curricular components of Elementary STEM and that of the secondary level coursework. (UTeach is contemplating the development of an elementary program, as well.)

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Dr. Mary Ann Rankin, formerly the Dean of the College of Natural Sciences at Austin, where the UTeach Institute is housed, became the CEO of the NMSI. Dr. Rankin traveled to Maryland at least four times to meet with university presidents and arts and sciences deans to facilitate a better understanding of the UTeach model and to introduce some flexibility into some of the facets of the project. In early December 2011, an MOU was finally signed by all parties and went into immediate effect. The Request for Proposals, which elicits the proposal of up to two eligible Maryland universities was sent to all the deans of colleges of sciences, education and liberal arts in Maryland and was posted on the NMSI and UTeach Websites. As evidence of the progress and detail of that progress, the website is listed below:

<http://uteach-institute.org/news/detail/funding-opportunity-announced-for-uteach-replication-in-maryland/>

Here is a direct link to download the zip file containing the RFP and all supporting materials:

<http://www.uteach-institute.org/files/uploads/MDrfp111207.zip>

Hallmarks of the UTeach project that indicate the quality of work anticipated include:

- Collaboration between Colleges of Sciences, Education, and Liberal Arts
- Active recruitment of science and mathematics majors to take the two initial one-hour UTeach courses (STEP 1 and 2) free of charge
- Early, intensive, and continued field experiences that begin with STEP 1 and 2
- Compact degree plans that allow students to graduate with both a science or math degree and teacher certification in four years
- A focus on developing deep understanding of the discipline subject material while incorporating effective pedagogical approaches and use of technology in teaching
- Guidance and inspiration provided by faculty and highly experienced public school teachers who serve as master teachers in the program
- Courses taught by faculty who are actively engaged in research in mathematics and science or the teaching and learning of mathematics and science
- Integrated professional development courses that focus on teaching both mathematics and science and are based on recent research in science and mathematics teaching and learning
- An array of student benefits, such as paid internships that offer opportunities for community outreach and additional field experiences in education

Further indication of the quality of this work can be found in the history of UTeach: from modest beginnings as a Natural Sciences pilot program of 28 students in the fall of 1997, UTeach has grown to an enrollment of approximately 600 students, graduating 70 to 90 certified mathematics, science, and computer science teachers a year. Since 2001, over 675 students have graduated from the UTeach program. More than 80% of UTeach graduates who enter the teaching profession are still teaching five years after graduating, and almost half of the graduates teach in high need schools. Maryland intends to reap the same kind of benefits.

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Maryland Universities are asked to submit a letter of intent by January 13, 2012, after which four conference calls conducted by UTeach will provide technical assistance, in addition to that provided by MSDE. Full proposals will be due March 2, 2012, with awards made on or about April 13. UTeach expects to have the first students in Step 1 classes in Fall 2012. The number of students expected to graduate from Maryland UTeach programs is still expected to be 160. Given that candidates could be recruited at the freshman or sophomore levels, the anticipated time of program completion will vary. However, MSDE anticipates that the first cohort of students (those beginning Step 1 in Fall 2012) could complete, graduate and receive certification by Spring 2015. (This timetable, one that exceeds the length of time of the RTTT funding, is the single most important reason why all stakeholders so carefully crafted the MOU.)

PROJECT 37/54 International Partnerships to Recruit Teachers in Critical Needs Areas

In year one, LEA sub-grant applications for the recruiting and hiring of international teachers in critical needs content areas were disseminated to LEAs. The Maryland State Board of Education designated the following certification areas as critical shortage areas: Family and Consumer Science, Technology Education, Computer Science, ESOL, Chinese, Spanish, Mathematics, Chemistry, Earth/Space Science, Physical Science, Physics, and Special Education. The applications specified that funding could reimburse for J-2 visa fees only. No LEA year one proposals were received. MSDE was aware of budgetary constraints caused by the economic downturn resulted in fewer teaching position vacancies statewide. Many LEAs cut positions and programs for fiscal year 2012. The two Executive Sponsors and the project manager requested input from LEA instruction and human resource leadership regarding the expenses that present barriers to the hiring of international teachers. LEAs cited the need to assist international teachers in transitioning into the American culture, the legal fees, filing fees, and fees associated with extending the initial visa, as well as recruiting/interviewing costs.

MSDE compiled feedback from LEAs and revised the year two application, removing the requirement to fund visa fees only. The resulting year two application has no funding limitations; thereby, allowing more flexibility in project design. For example, LEAs could propose to work with embassies or international exchange organizations that have expertise and experience in the recruitment, hiring, and placement of visiting teachers, provide legal and visa services, and have established support networks for teachers and host schools. It is anticipated that LEAs will consider recruiting and hiring effective international teachers that serve as cultural ambassadors, support global awareness, and open the eyes of students, educators, and communities to international perspectives.

Following is the description provided in the sub-grant application which is due to MSDE on January 9, 2012. It has been shared with LEA world language supervisors, HR directors, and assistant superintendents for instruction:

***Race to the Top Supplemental Funding Application
International Partnerships to Recruit Teachers in Critical Needs Areas***

DESCRIPTION: *This project is funded by the Race to the Top grant and will last through the 2013-2014 school year. Each year, MSDE will issue sub-grants to LEAs or consortia of LEAs to provide funding for expenses involved with the recruiting, hiring, and support of international teachers, including J-1 visa fees.*

Project 38/53: Incentives for Teachers Who Obtain ESOL Certification

This project provides \$2500 incentives to teachers who become certified to teach ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). Content teachers who take coursework on second language acquisition and ESOL methodology are better prepared to work with the increasing number of ELLs in Maryland as they strive to improve their content knowledge while progressing toward English proficiency.

In year one, 19 LEAs submitted project applications which were reviewed and approved; grant award notices were disseminated in April 2011. (See Table 1 below.) Each teacher was required to take a course in second language acquisition; the second course must be either teaching reading and writing to ELLs, ESOL methodology, or cross-cultural communication. Of the 120 teachers who are taking required coursework, only five teachers have passed the Praxis II and received the incentive payment. As elaborated below, the only option for teachers to take the required coursework was during the summer of 2011; therefore, the original grant award notices were amended to enable the remaining 115 teachers to meet all requirements by September 30, 2012.

Year two project applications were approved for 16 LEAs. (See Table 2 below.) Grant award notices were prepared in November 2011 and will be disseminated in December to provide funding for incentives for an additional 120 teachers statewide. These teachers are also required to meet all requirements by September 30, 2012.

Year one presented a challenge for MSDE to establish guidelines and approve LEA subgrant applications allowing LEAs to notify teachers and approve coursework by September 30, 2011. Likewise, the majority of teachers were not able to take all required courses and the Praxis II during the summer of 2011. For year one only, sub-grants were amended to provide additional time for teachers to meet the requirements. The schedule for Project 53 is on schedule for years two through four.

Quality control for project implementation is assured first by LEA approval of required courses, followed by MSDE coursework approval. Additionally, all teacher applicants must meet the state assessment requirement (Praxis II) for ESOL certification. MSDE approves the payment of the teacher incentive upon receipt of an invoice and proof of Praxis II score from the LEA.

(D)(5) Projects

Project 39/25 – Teacher Induction Academies

In July 2011 the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the New Teacher Center (NTC) reviewed deliverables of the request for proposals (RFP) to develop outcomes for the teacher induction academy training and support. Outcomes are as follows:

- Increase or stabilize new teacher retention
- Identify correlation between mentoring support and new teacher evaluation ratings of effective
- Ensure all LEAs participate in summer training, program leader meetings, on-line professional development sessions offered twice each year; and,
- Increase capacity of program leaders to sustain LEA programs; advocate for program needs; collect and provide data of implementation and effectiveness.

On August 2-4, 2011, the Teacher Induction Academy, trained 224 program leaders and new teacher mentors from across the state. The Academy was aligned with the Maryland Teacher Professional Development Standards and the outcomes identified above. New teacher mentors focused on instructional mentoring, including analyzing student work. Participants were introduced to the formative assessment systems or FAS tools developed by NTC to use in mentor conversations. These tools include, the classroom profile, the collaborative assessment log (CAL), selective scripting, analyzing student work and the lesson plan. Program leaders studied NTC's Program Theory of Action and were introduced to NTC's Induction Program Standards and the FAS tools. Additionally, program leaders participated in the content pieces developed for mentors, but through a program leader lens. Seventy percent of participants that attended the Academy rated the professional learning sessions excellent and twenty-six percent rated them good. Further, eighty-eight percent agreed the session would increase professional effectiveness and ninety percent noted the sessions provided valuable tools and strategies. Participation at the summer Academy was high, with only one LEA that had attendance concerns. NTC and MSDE met with that Induction Coordinator to address this challenge by evaluating the selection criteria used to determine attendance, as well as the line of communication for that LEA. Evaluation data of these events indicates high levels of satisfaction from participants. Based on Teacher Induction Coordinator and participant feedback, the 2012 Teacher Induction Academy is scheduled for June 26-28, 2012. Once again, it will train program leaders and new teacher mentors from across the state. The location has been determined to be the Crowne Plaza of Baltimore and the contract has been signed.

In addition to the summer Academy, NTC and MSDE have led quarterly LEA Teacher Induction Coordinator meetings. The first meeting was held on October 3, 2011 and outcomes included, creating a scope and sequence for mentor professional learning, assessing their current program against a NTC developed program continuum along with developing goals for program improvement. In addition, leaders learned of expectations for on-line professional development session held in November. The second quarterly meeting was held on November 30, 2011 and outcomes included, reviewing results of the first on-line professional development session, reviewing program action planning and sharing of best practices with data from across the state. Feedback from these meetings has been very positive

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because it is a forum for continuous learning and revisiting collaborative assessment logs (CAL), Program Continuums, and Action Plans. In addition, this was the opportunity to address obstacles and challenges and develop solutions. Based on feedback, we are currently working on creating an MSDE website on Teacher Induction to support this work. We are in the process of listing the topics, determining the links, and selecting the tools/resources to include. This is a direct result of comments and discussions at our Quarterly Meetings.

The Fall Online Follow-ups have been completed. All of the 24 Coordinators logged on and set up their accounts. A total of 135 people pre-registered for the Webinars (some registered teams so the actual number is more like 175). Overall the technology piece went extremely well - there were virtually no issues. A challenge was communication between the Coordinators and the participants, so at the November 30th meeting we discussed their role with the Induction Coordinators to clarify expectations. In addition, we collaborated to determine an optimal time for the Spring Online Follow-up, because some said the timing of the Fall Online Follow-up was an obstacle. Similarly, plans for grouping, differentiation, and content were discussed and re-defined to better meet the needs of the Induction Coordinators and their participants.

Filming the video footage to include Maryland teachers and mentors has been a challenge. The first filming took place in St. Mary's County and we determined that more preliminary work was needed to ensure that the mentors selected were using the tools that we needed modeled in the video clips. Therefore, for our second filming in Prince George's County, we determined that NTC and MSDE will meet with the mentors prior to the filming to discuss the tools and model the examples we are planning to capture for the video clips. In addition, NTC and MSDE plan to work side-by-side with the film crew and mentors to ensure that the tools are used correctly and modeled appropriately. This filming is scheduled to begin in January 2012.

December 2-7, 2011, the project manager attended the Learning Forward Annual Conference on Teacher Effectiveness. She gained resources on RtI, leadership, professional learning, and school improvement. In addition, she attended strands on advocacy, impact, teaching quality, technology, and teacher induction. She plans to incorporate this new learning in the content of our next Teacher Induction Coordinator Quarterly Meeting on February 22, 2012.

Evidence of the quality of the implementation of Project 39 is found in the evaluations and feedback from participants. Comments have included:

-“I gained ideas on how to use tools for evaluating implementation.”

-“Now I have a plan for extending the program.”

-“I plan to use the CAL to identify development opportunities for both teachers and mentors.”

-“I can use the CAL for professional development and to encourage mentors to gather data.”

-“I value the opportunity to draw ideas from the data collection models shared by my colleagues.”

-“I am excited to use the Program Development Plan to encourage my county to do Action Research for new teachers!”

Project 40/15: Professional Development for Executive Officers

The intent of this project is to provide professional development to executive officers so that they are effective in evaluating principals using the new principal evaluation system and can successfully train and coach principals themselves in using the teacher evaluation system. However, the project is dependent on the completion of the design of the educator evaluation system. A coordinator has been hired to oversee the project.

Since July 2011, there have been several accomplishments. Technical support has been provided to the seven (7) pilot LEAs. The coordinator has met with each of the districts individually. We have assisted in the planning and attended the monthly Cohort Pilot LEA group meetings. The coordinator has worked with the USDE Technical Assistance consultant to gather information, dialogue with the pilot districts, and provide insight and clarification so that a report could be crafted for the Educator Effectiveness Council meeting on December 15, 2011. Visits to the remaining 17 non-pilot LEAs are almost completed. To date, there are only three visits left. Professional development was designed and delivered to executive officers at the October Executive Officers Network meeting and to principals at the Principal Advisory Council meeting, providing an overview of the project and ascertaining future needs. A presentation was made to the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) at their quarterly leadership meeting. Information on the project and its impact on aspiring principals was presented at MSAPP’s Maryland Assistant Principals Conference. We have participated in the MSDE internal oversight meetings, strategy meetings, and planning meetings. Recently, MS-22 job descriptions were written for two regional trainers. Working with Human Resources, the hiring process is now underway.

Information gleaned from visits to pilot LEAs was shared with MSDE internal groups, as appropriate, to inform and prioritize needs. In this way, we are able to build collective cohort capacity knowledge, consider potential resources, and establish next steps in the pilot process. A network for the remaining 17 non-pilot LEAs has been established with identified points of contact for each system so that they may share and receive information based on this year’s work. Executive Officers and Principals’ Advisory groups have been provided current information regarding the development of the educator evaluation system for principals and teachers. Work is beginning at MSDE to identify components of a State Default Model and general guidelines for acceptance of LEA educator evaluation systems.

Until the Educator Effectiveness Council makes final recommendations regarding the evaluation tools, the specific professional development for executive officers regarding the components of the State Default Model cannot be designed. In anticipation, the project work will need to focus on what can be accomplished. This will include providing support to the LEAs as they continue to design and refine their systems. As two additional trainers are hired a needs assessment of all LEAs will be conducted so that a more customized support system can be designed. The smaller districts, given their limited human capital, do not have the same capacity to coach their principals as compared to the large LEAs. A differentiated approach to professional development must be in place to provide maximum support to all districts, based on their specific needs. In the meantime, the coordinator will work with all LEAs, as

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requested, sharing ideas, facilitating cohort meetings, and assisting in securing resources and technical assistance when possible.

Due to the nature of this project and its political implications, it is essential to establish strong working relationships with all 24 LEAs as they craft their educator evaluation systems. This requires providing as much support, resources, opportunities for collaboration, as requested, in a manner that differentiates and accounts for their individual needs. The coordinator has certainly accomplished that. Internally, the ability to be flexible and provide assistance to Core Team in their requests to support the numerous projects related to educator effectiveness has been our greatest implementation success.

Project 41/24 – Educator Effectiveness Academies

We successfully conducted 11 regional academies serving 6000 educators in Maryland. The academies focused on the following outcomes for participants: *develop knowledge of the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Standards and Framework; develop an understanding of the relationship between Maryland's vision of STEM and the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Framework; provide feedback, modifications, and additions to curriculum work completed in 2010-2011; analyze the Academy content presented to identify prerequisite skills needed and appropriate strategies for scaffolding instruction; create a one-year study plan that will guide school staff in delivering the Academy content.*

Evaluation results indicated that 96% of participants felt that the academy outcomes were achieved. We determined this by emailing a survey to all participants at the conclusion of the academy. The high level of satisfaction mirrored the comments shared by participants throughout the three day academy with everyone from master teachers to MSDE curriculum coordinators, directors, and assistant superintendents. We were pleased that representatives from the USDE Race to the Top staff were able to visit one academy site for one day to personally experience this high quality professional development.

Acknowledging that high quality professional development is not a one shot experience, MSDE planned follow-up sessions for the fall and spring. Our Professional Development staff recently recorded and posted the first follow-up webinar module regarding school transition plans in November. The creation of a one-year study, “transition” plan to guide school staff in sharing academy content is seen as the centerpiece of the academy outcomes. This webinar allowed us to share the experience of six “model” schools regarding implementation of their transition plan and then provide our schools with a tool (a force field analysis) to aid in implementation planning. The webinar ended by sharing the top ten ideas (judged by MSDE staff) included in the sample transition plans provided by the 24 LEAs.

MSDE will record and post three additional webinar modules for STEM, Mathematics, and RELA in December. Each webinar will build on the content shared during the academy and respond to issues and concerns emanating from the field as a result of interactions during September and October.

Though a significant amount of work was required to close out the summer, 2011 academies (mostly related to financial and accounting issues), we have already begun planning for next summer. We have

selected dates and sites for 2012 academies and developed an agenda for those academies. The outcomes for the summer, 2012 academies are:

- 1) *Review final version of English/Language Arts and Mathematics Frameworks, identify changes, and introduce content literacy frameworks.*
- 2) *Learn STEM standards, practices, processes and skills.*
- 3) *Develop knowledge of the format, lessons, and media resources in the English/Language Arts, Mathematics and STEM curriculum toolkits.*
- 4) *Practice navigating curriculum toolkits and develop applications based on curriculum toolkit models.*
- 5) *Update participants on PARCC assessment development, design and timeline (and if possible, engage in activities related to innovative item types).*
- 6) *Create a school plan that will guide school staff in delivering content and curriculum toolkit.*

We will use the same basic agenda as last summer. However, some notable exceptions will be:

- Principals will spend time in ‘principal-alike’ sessions where master teachers will summarize curriculum content.
- Teacher-participants will spend half of one day applying academy content. These applications can then be shared and critiqued by others.
- LEAs will be encouraged to customize the final half day of the academy to merge seamlessly with local school improvement initiatives.

As with last year, master teachers identified as ‘stars’ from the LEAs will deliver the academy content.

Evaluation results from the academies were extremely positive. In addition to the 96% of participants who indicated that the academy outcomes were achieved, approximately 85% of participants responded that sessions in mathematics, RELA, and STEM developed participant’s knowledge effectively. These results mirror the positive feedback received by MSDE staff during and after the academies. In particular, the 24 assistant superintendents for curriculum indicated at their first meeting of the year unanimous satisfaction with the results of the summer academies in laying the groundwork for effective transition to the new Maryland Common Core State Curriculum.

Anecdotal reports from principals and teachers around Maryland indicate that academy materials and activities are playing a significant role in school-based professional development. These reports are supported by the inspection of 100 school transition plans from around the state that show the use of academy materials for school-based professional development. Academy materials from the three content areas are posted on Maryland’s www.mdk12.org website under the Educator Effectiveness Academy tab. Different schools seem to be tapping different resources posted at that site as indicated from the inspection of school transition plans.

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The 145 master teachers from the 2011 academies indicate that they are being utilized as a valuable resource in district level curriculum planning and professional development planning activities.

Maryland's evaluation partner, CAIRE, is also evaluating academy outcomes. They are independently collecting a random 10% sample of transition plans from schools in Maryland, and then applying the same rubric schools were provided to assist in constructing those plans to gauge their acceptability. (That rubric is posted at www.mdk12.org) In addition, CAIRE researchers will also conduct focus groups around the state. The results of these evaluation activities will be shared with MSDE staff in early 2012 to assist in planning for the 2012 academies.

Recently, one professional development specialist decided to pursue another opportunity closer to home. The hiring process moves slowly and we will be forced to operate one person short for approximately 3 months. This specialist worked with the RELA team and also led the development of the master teacher selection process. We have selected another individual whom we hope will start work in early 2012. This individual has a strong background in RELA, has been an elementary school principal for many years, and should complement our team well.

Teachers and principals around the state are asking for any and all information regarding the PARCC assessments. We share that information with LEAs as soon as it is received.

We believe the quality of our implementation has been very excellent as evidenced by participant evaluations shared with MSDE, the feedback from master teachers who actually delivered the academy content to the participants, reports from major stakeholders, and conversations with educators around the state. We look forward to supplementing this information with the formal evaluation results to be shared in early 2012 from CAIRE.

We are fortunate in Maryland to work with only 24 school districts throughout the state. Our small size and this fairly centralized organizational structure enable us to remain in close, open contact with educators. Superintendents meet monthly with the Interim State Superintendent. The LEA Assistant Superintendents for Instruction meet monthly with the Assistant State Superintendent for Instruction. Executive officers with evaluation responsibility for school principals meet periodically with the Assistant Superintendent for Academic Reform and Innovation. Curriculum Directors meet with MSDE curriculum coordinators three times per year. Each of these groups has met this fall, and dialogue regarding the Educator Effectiveness Academies has been a major agenda item. Added to these meetings are meetings between the Director of Professional Development and the leadership of the Maryland State Educators Association that have focused on the academies. At every turn, the feedback from these diverse and varied groups has been positive. Satisfaction with the content and structure of the summer academies is uniform and positive. All groups indicate success at achieving academy outcomes.

If there has been one piece of formative feedback, it relates to the need to expand the reach of the academies to more educators. During academy registration, MSDE staff could have easily expanded the size of school teams from 4 to 8, adding representatives of other curricular areas, special educators, and teachers of English Language Learners. Budgetary limitations preclude this, but the need reinforces the

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need for academy participants to be “curriculum ambassadors” at every school. To turn this need on its head, we feel quite fortunate to use the resources provided by our Race to the Top grant to personally touch 6000 educators, four per school, in all 1500 schools in Maryland regarding our curriculum reform efforts. We are off to a tremendous start.

Project 42/17: Expand Maryland’s Principals’ Academy to Target Principals of Low Achieving Schools (Priority Schools Academy)

The Priority Schools Academy is on target to provide professional development to principals of the lowest achieving schools in Maryland. We have determined the content for the academy, which will be based on the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Practice Guide: *Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools*. Their work includes evidence-based recommendations for use by educators to quickly and dramatically improve student achievement in their low-performing schools. This is especially important since persistently failing schools need guidance on what will work quickly to improve student achievement. One key aspect of their report is the need for dramatic change. Therefore, an important aspect of the academy content will focus on the principals’ ability to lead complex change.

We have made logistical decisions regarding the two-year project timeline. Year one will focus on 62 schools from 8 districts. A key decision was made to include the executive officers, those who supervise principals, as academy participants, totaling 89. Additional participants will include principal facilitators who are regarded by their districts as making progress in leading challenging, high-poverty, high-minority schools. The remaining schools will be serviced the following year.

We have arranged for Sam Redding, a recognized national leader in school turnaround, to meet with us on January 4, 2012 to discuss additional content and resources to consider. In October 2011, we informed the executive officers from these districts of the academy. In November 2011, we sent a letter to the superintendents of the 8 districts to announce the dates, location, and the schools whose principals and executive officers will be participating so that each district would be aware of their commitment to this project (MOU). In December 2011, a contract was awarded to an individual to work with us to develop and design the content and activities for the academy.

One of the recommendations from the IES publication is the need to build committed staff at these schools. This may include releasing, replacing, or redeploying staff members who are not fully committed to turning around student performance and bringing in new staff who are committed. One of the roadblocks to achieving this, as verified by our Maryland Breakthrough Center work, is the recognition that principals need systemic support. We can overcome that challenge by including executive officers as participants in the academy. They will be involved throughout the academy and develop a keen awareness of all the recommendations, including the need to make decisions on a district level that will support the recommendations.

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The academy planning team meets monthly to plan all aspects of the project, working in conjunction with individuals involved with the Breakthrough Center to ensure that the academy will be relevant, meaningful, and meet the identified needs of the principals of the lowest achieving schools.

Project 43/21 – Develop Online PD on Educator Instructional Improvement Content

The project is not funded until years 3 and 4. There were no activities scheduled in year 1. This project extends the work of the Educator Effectiveness Academies by making them sustainable beyond 2014 through the development of 12 online courses, accessible to educators across the state, related to the Common Core Curriculum, assessments, and the effective use of the Instructional Improvement System. It is anticipated that development will occur by either buying existing course content and adapting it to Maryland's needs or hiring a consultant to develop courses as part of a procurement contract. The courses will be updated yearly by existing staff in the Division of Instruction. Once the courses are developed, tuition paid by future course takers will fund ongoing development and expenses.

Some preliminary work has begun. The project manager provided support for the recorded follow-up sessions for the 2011 Educator Effectiveness Academies (EEA). This included consultation on editing recordings of Fall 2011 EEA follow-up web conferences that were conducted using the Blackboard/Collaborate product; identification and acquisition of needed software from Blackboard/Collaborate to enable downloading recordings for editing before distribution statewide; and discussion of viable options for editing. These included locating and using editing software available at MSDE and acquiring software. In addition, the project manager met with the executive sponsor and Division of Instruction staff to select the best mode for online delivery of the 2014 Educator Effectiveness Academies. This meeting resulted in the decision to offer self-paced, non-facilitated online professional development modules that will include assessments providing instant feedback to teachers. It was also decided that the modules will have the technical capacity to generate a certificate upon satisfactory completion. These modules will also be designed so they may be used as part of hybrid professional development activities at the schoolhouse or district level. The subsequent meeting with the executive sponsor and program director focused on the importance of continuing to offer the quality online professional development program that MSDE has been expanding for the last four years while ensuring that Race to the Top activities for Project 21 move forward.

The revisions to the project schedule for years 2, 3, and 4 will enable the module features to be incorporated in a timely fashion. Revisions include deletion of some unnecessary steps in year 2 (e.g. development of a scaffolding tool) and the addition of review of new online professional development standards from INACOL (International Council for Online Learning). This will ensure that standards used in the review of online modules being considered for purchase will be current; current standards must also guide the development of modules to be created.

At this time, the development of an online model to deliver the teacher academies has been achieved. The purchase and/or creation of the PD modules will occur in the near future.

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?

As is evidenced in the reports for the (D)(3) and (D)(5) projects, we are making significant progress toward meeting our short-range and long-range goals and objectives for these projects.

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?

Maryland is 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 projects with specific activities planned for year two. Project managers review their respective project schedules with their program director weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly to ensure that project activities, issues, risks, and concerns are discussed. Project managers are responsible for maintaining up-to-date project schedules as they relate to percentage of activities completed and changes in the duration for completing tasks. Monthly reports are also submitted by each project manager delineating accomplishments, program, and/or budget issues. Feedback we have received from our partners and our "customers" has been extremely positive to date. 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, verbal and electronic, occurs on a regular basis between MSDE and its various vendors (e.g., MBRT, MPT).

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

The overall quality of implementation for D(3) and (D)(5) has been excellent. Key staff and processes are in place. Organizational structures are in place and working extremely well. Project managers have created and are maintaining detailed project schedules which are reviewed and updated monthly. Regular variance reports are reviewed. Risks and obstacles have been identified immediately and addressed in a timely and proactive manner by project managers. There is a high level of communication between and among project managers, program directors, executive sponsors, and the Core Team enabling modifications and adjustments to be made so that short-term and long-term goals and objectives are met. Based on evaluation results from participants in various programs, oral feedback, anecdotal reports from teachers and principals, reports from major stakeholders, and conversations with educators throughout the state the quality of implementation for these projects has been outstanding.

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?

As evidenced by the reports from project managers for (D)(3) and (D)(5) projects, we are on track to meet our goals because of the actions taken by project managers, program directors, executive sponsors, and the Core Team to address obstacles and modify project schedules through the amendment process. When necessary, outside expertise has been readily sought to ensure the success of projects. Project managers have been diligent in their efforts to file amendments and we are on track to meet our goals because of the actions taken by project managers, program directors, and executive sponsors to proactively address obstacles and modify project schedules through the amendment process.

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?

Timely approval of the project amendments submitted to USDE.

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)³

³ 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.

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.