

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:

- Project 1/78 - (Office of Academic Reform and Innovation) As of May 31, 2012, all LEA site visits have been conducted. Summary reports are being written
- Project 2/1 - (Program Evaluation) CAIRE completed an analysis of LEA monthly reports and the Transitional Plan Survey.
- Project 7/5- (World Languages Pipeline) STEM modules for kindergarten and grade 1 were translated into Chinese and Spanish and were posted to the MSDE website.
- Project 40/15- (PD for Executive Officers) Newly hired regional trainer for the new evaluation system began on May 29, 2012
- Project 41/24- (Educator Effective Academies) Trained master teachers to present at 2012 Educator Effectiveness Academies
- Project 36/75- (UTeach) The National Math and Science Initiative announced that the Dell Foundation would fund the UTeach project at Towson University.
- The Maryland Teacher and Principal Evaluation Guidebook was completed and distributed to LEA superintendents.
- SLO training began on May 29, 2012 for MSDE personnel.
- Project 2 – (Formative Assessments) RFP in review process. Team developing new content for AFL system
- Project 11 – (Infrastructure) Mass storage installed. Help desk system developed using existing portal. SOP plan in development. Security plan 80% done. Second VM dev/test cluster scheduled for installation. First order for production equipment placed and scheduled for July installation.
- Project 27 – (Dashboards) Requirements complete for all year 2 dashboards. Seven of nine dashboards being schedule for UAT testing.

- Project 28 – (Multimedia) RFI returned for LEA LDS coaching services. Sole source being development for approval for fall 2012 implementation. Multi-media OBIEE training modules in progress for all year 1 dashboards and 5 of year two dashboards.
- Project 29 – (LEA Grants) LEA technology grants awarded for \$4.3 million dollars for WI and school network infrastructure projects
- Projects 32-35 – (Adaptive Testing & Item Bank) RFRs in review for procurement release. Estimated date of release is July 2012 - Project 34 is on hold pending RFP release for 32 and 33.
- Project 46- (MSA Vertical Alignment) Reopened to do simulations on data for teacher effectiveness student growth computations.
- Projects 47- (Growth Model) Enhancing data repository for student MSA growth data for teacher effectiveness project 48. Project dependent upon project 48 additional data requirements for student growth data
- Project 60– (Data Exchange) Master file transfer software procurement completed and software being installed. Project should be closed in July or August 2012
- Project 61- (P20) data glossary completed, schema nearing completion, map and gap of data questions completed and distributed to stakeholders for review. Dashboards for questions 1-4 in design. New user interface design completed
Higher education data warehouse schema design completed and data being loaded from old system testing out ETL. Four dashboards to test out the new database being designed for new data marts
- Project 54/79 –(Statewide Transcript) 17 of 24 of the LEAs are in implementation planning
- Project 22/6 – (Develop Online Instructional Intervention Modules) RFP was approved by DoIT and posted for vendor response. A pre-proposal meeting was held with four vendors.
- Project 26/43 – (Implement a System to Support E-Learning for Instructional Intervention, Enhancement, and Enrichment) and 24/56 – (Develop and Implement Course Registration System) Recommendation for award was submitted to MSDE procurement. A short-term contract will be implemented to initiate technical planning activities in parallel to MSDE submitting a recommendation to the Board of Public Works for approval.

- Project 23/55 – (Develop Framework for Teacher Toolkit Portal) – Conducted a pilot of the new protocol using the existing database of CPD courses taught in Maryland

Challenges:

- Project 1/78 (Office of Academic Reform and Innovation) – Continue to seek candidates for the RTTT accountant position
 - Project 14/31 – (Develop and Implement a State Curriculum System) RFQ for the Oracle configuration position did not yield any suitable candidates that met the financial and technical thresholds. The project team has reissued the solicitation as an RFR with a due date of 5/18/2012. In parallel, the team is receiving development support from the DAADs team to develop a portal that will serve content during the Educator Effectiveness Academy scheduled to start June 9.
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?
- Project 3/2 – (Formative Assessments) Project may be delayed due to slowness in RFP review process
 - Project 17/32 – (Implement a Test Item Bank System) Timeline for this project now dependent upon review by Maryland State Department of Information Technology – If RFP not reviewed in a timely manner senior executives will address the delays
 - Project 18/33 – (Implement a Computer-Adaptive Test Delivery System) Timeline for this project now dependent upon review by Maryland State Department of Information Technology - If RFP not reviewed in a timely manner senior executives will address the delays
 - Project 34 – (Item Load and Integration Setup for Test Item Bank System) RFP being written. Issue dependent upon Projects 32 and 33
3. How can the Department help the State meet its goals?

At this time, no additional help is needed from USDE.

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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 (C)(3)

STATE's goals for this sub-criterion:

- Develop and implement a high-quality Instructional Improvement System

Relevant projects:

- 25/10 MSDE-IHE Teacher Preparation Workgroup
- 14/31 Develop and Implement a State Curriculum System
- 15/07 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 Item Load and Integration Setup for Test Item Bank System
- 20/35 Adaptive Testing Units for High Schools
- 21/42 Implement a Statewide System to Support Student Instructional Intervention
- 22/6 Develop Online Instructional Intervention Modules
- 23/55 Develop Framework for Teacher Toolkit Portal
- 24/56 Develop and Implement Course Registration System
- 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

The state is on target for meeting its goal of providing a series of workshops for higher education faculty. These workshops are designed to address the implications for teacher preparation faculty of the new Common Core curriculum, including new summative and formative assessment tools (especially the PARCC assessment), and the effective use of the Instructional Improvement System.

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.

There have been five meetings held in different geographic areas of the state designed to introduce institutions of higher education (IHE) faculty to the topic of *Transitioning to the Common Core*. In addition, presentations were made to other higher education groups, such as the network of Maryland Alternative Approved Preparation Programs (MAAPP) and the representatives of IHE administrator preparation programs. The model of multiple presentations in varying geographic areas of the same material will be utilized in the upcoming years. The IHE presentations will have to occur in the fall of each year, following the Educator Effectiveness summer workshops for P-12 educators. There are two recent developments which will strengthen the project in the future. 1) The power points and other materials used in the summer of 2011 P-12 Educator Effectiveness summer workshops will now be available on line to IHE faculty. 2) A small group of IHE faculty will be invited to attend the 2012 P-12 Educator Effectiveness workshops, allowing development of a nucleus of trained IHE faculty who can assist their colleagues with the changes that will be required in teacher preparation programs. More workshops have been held than were required in order to address the widest possible IHE audience.

Project 14/31 Develop and Implement a State Curriculum System

A prototype of the Curriculum Management System (CMS), intended to deliver sample content and frameworks at this summer's Educator Effectiveness Academies (EEAs), received development signoff from Divisional staff. EEA curriculum resources in Math, English Language Arts, and STEM were updated and organized for entry into the CMS. Over 60 teachers from nearly half of Maryland LEAs were recruited and trained to assist with the testing of the CMS prototype. In parallel with the prototype development, the project team began interviewing consultants to develop full system capabilities for the CMS application using in-house Oracle technology.

The CMS project is to be completed by September 30, 2012 with full capability as dictated in the requirements. The project is currently hiring three to four developers to develop full system capability for the CMS application. The project team has used multiple procurement mechanisms to ensure a sufficient number of quality, short-term consultant resources are identified to mitigate human-capital constraints.

Project 15/07 Expand Instructional Toolkit

The Expand Instructional Toolkit project underwent a successful CAIRE evaluation. Planning for the next phase has started for MPT deliverable 1-- Tech Correlations/Articulation of Thinkport Resources. Additionally, MSDE approved content for a website being developed for MPT deliverable 2-- New Instructional Resources for AL, STEM, and Algebra II. MSDE also reviewed Algebra PD course delivery and have assessed that the quality of the deliverable has significantly improved since the corrective action plan was implemented. The project team also completed an RFP for procuring technical services for a toolkit vendor. The RFP has been submitted to the OAG and DoIT for review.

The Expand Instructional Toolkit project scope of work is progressing according to schedule for the first three MPT deliverables. The toolkit vendor acquisition is now slated for late summer and steps will be taken to accelerate the vendor's work once they are brought onboard.

Project 16/20 STEM Instructional and Career Support

MBRT held a focus group to determine the content and focus for the Specialists in the Classroom for the Algebra component. MBRT has scheduled additional meetings with LEA superintendents to promote the Specialists in the Classroom program. MBRT also held a marketing strategy planning session to promote STEMnet to teachers, administrators, parents, and students across the State of Maryland. Additional planning sessions are being scheduled to occur within the next six weeks.

The State is on track to meet the goals of this project. In recent months MBRT recruited additional volunteers in Biology and Algebra for the Specialist in the Classroom program. While MBRT has had difficulty getting these volunteers into the LEAs, MBRT continues to seek alternative strategies to increase LEA participation so as to effectuate the goals of the Specialist in the Classroom program. They are currently employing outreach strategies that include video marketing, which ultimately will be made accessible to teachers and administrators to increase awareness and participation.

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

The RFP was finally issued and a pre-proposal conference was held to facilitate vendor questions. An addendum (response to vendor questions) was completed and posted. Vendor responses are due the week of May 28th following which a panel of reviewers will coordinate an oral presentation and product selection.

We are on track to meet the goals and timelines associated with the scope of work; however, if we receive any major delays in gaining approval to procure the solution once a vendor has been selected, we will have difficulty meeting the committed implementation timeline. As with other projects, large state procurements are subject to review and approval by an external approval agency (The Board of Public Works) for which this procurement is also subject.

Project 22/6 Develop Online Instructional Intervention Modules

An RFP was approved by DoIT and posted for vendor response. A pre-proposal meeting was held with four vendors on April 16, 2012 and an addendum with response to vendor questions was completed and posted. Two responses are being reviewed: the first from Pearson and the second from INFO World Tech. The evaluation team is meeting on Friday June, 1, 2012 to select the vendor.

We are on track to meet the goals and timelines associated with the scope of work; however, if the RFP for year three requires the same amount of time as was required for year two, we will have difficulty meeting the timeline. This is because we will not have the RFP ready three months in advance as we did in year two. The RFP for years three and four replicate the RFP issued in year two. The team anticipates a significant reduction in time to for the State's Department of Information Technology to review and approve the same; thereby, reducing the risk of delay.

Project 23/55 Develop Framework for Teacher Toolkit Portal

A major accomplishment in April-May has been securing final feedback from major stakeholder groups regarding professional development in Maryland. In particular, Professional Development Coordinators and Title II, Part A liaisons from each of the 24 LEAs indicated that the review protocols that we have developed are excellent. In addition, they anxiously await the opportunity to use the Tool-kit Portal—delivered through the Learning Management System—as a one stop shop for professional development in resources in Maryland.

Maryland is now on-track to meet the goals and timelines associated with activities outlined in the approved scope of work as a result of the work of Race to the Top PD specialists. We have an approved, quality-control protocol for evaluating Professional Development Resources. Over the

next months, we will create an on-line vehicle for submitting requests for the approval of new PD resources submitted for inclusion in the portal in the future.

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

Project 24/56 Develop and Implement Course Registration System

A focus group was held with LEAs to allow for members to offer direct input into the selection of the Learning Management System. The feedback received from the LEAs served as input to the evaluation process strengthened by their collective recommendation. Based on this input, along with evaluation of the final pricing submitted from the three vendors, the evaluation team recommended an LMS vendor. The recommendation is being processed by MSDE for discussion and final approval by the Board of Public Works.

We are on track to meet the goals and timelines associated with the scope of work; however, if there are any additional delays in receiving procurement approval we will have difficulty meeting the timeline. In order to mitigate scheduling delays and to expedite infrastructural related activities, a small procurement agreement with the recommended vendor has been initiated in order to facilitate analysis and technical planning related to ideal configuration, capacity sizing, and other execution related activities.

Project 17/32 Implement a Test Item Bank System

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

Project 19/34 Item Load and Integration Setup for Test Item Bank System

RFRs in review for procurement release. Estimated date of release is July 2012. Project 34 is on hold pending RFP release for 32 and 33

Project 20/35 Adaptive Testing Units for High Schools

A year 4 project.

Project 27/46 Equating of MSA for Use on Growth Model

Reopened to do simulations on data for teacher effectiveness student growth computations

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?

We utilize 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 years two, three, and four. The project managers review their project schedules with their program director monthly to ensure that project activities, issues, risks, and concerns are resolved. 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 the project manager.

The RTTT Leadership Team meets weekly to discuss progress and address any risks that have arisen. Working with the Office of Budget, we have also developed a process for monthly reviews of project budgets involving our finance manager, program directors, and project managers. Project managers meet with program directors bi-weekly or monthly to discuss progress, identify risks and discuss strategies that have been or will be taken to address obstacles, review budgets, and identify actions that will be taken to move the project forward. The Core Team also meets bi-weekly to discuss progress and address risks by deciding upon actions that need to be taken to resolve any concerns or issues. LEAs submit monthly progress reports to the LEA liaisons. Any needs or issues that arise are addressed immediately by the LEA liaisons. Site visits to 22 LEAs occurred between April 30, 2012, and May 31, 2012.

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.

The project manager for Project 2/1, Program Evaluation, meets monthly with the CAIRE Leadership Team to discuss progress and address any risks/obstacles that may endanger progress. On as needed basis, the CAIRE Leadership Team and the RTTT Leadership Team meet to develop future plans and address any issues. We receive a monthly deliverables report from CAIRE that delineates the status of deliverables, other completed tasks, and work to be completed

the next month. We have a list of proposed project deliverables through November 2012. That list will be updated as we approach the next fiscal year. If the need arises, issues are elevated to the Core Team for resolution.

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

Excellent - Projects are on track

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 State is on track to meet the goals and timelines; however, major delays in approving procurements or RFPs could result in not meeting timelines. However, there has been a significant reduction in the amount of time require by DoIT to review and approve RFPs and a procurement agreement with recommended vendors has been initiated to facilitate analysis and technical planning related to ideal configuration , capacity sizing, and other execution related activities.

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?

Obstacles and risks are identified on a continual basis and addressed (e.g. hiring of additional staff with needed expertise, slowness of the review and procurement process). To date, we have not identified any obstacles or risks that cannot be overcome enabling us to meet goals and performance measures in this sub-criterion.

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 – substantially off-track and/or has significant quality concerns; urgent and decisive action is required; Orange –off-track and/or there are quality concerns; many aspects require significant attention; Yellow –generally on-track and of high or good quality; only a few aspects require additional attention; Green – on-track with high quality.

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