

## **Race to the Top**

### **Progress Update – June 2012 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 Reform and Innovation) – All LEA site visits and summary reports have been completed.
- Project 2/1 (Program Evaluation) – As of 6/20/12, CAIRE has completed 24 process evaluations. They are on track to complete all 54 projects by 9/30/12.
- Project 7/5 (World Languages Pipeline) - Curriculum development is ahead of schedule. Sixteen curriculum writers have been selected from responses to the RFQ and contracts are pending. Five STEM modules for grades 2 and 3 will be created in English and to be translated in Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish.
- Project 39/25 (Teacher Induction Academies) - The Teacher Induction Website is live and we have received very positive feedback from our Teacher Induction Coordinators about the content and layout.
- Project 44/41 (Breakthrough Center) - The Executive Director of the Breakthrough Center and the Director for School Improvement initiatives met with the Maria Navarro, Executive Assistant to the Baltimore City CAO, to discuss increasing the level of job-embedded reading and mathematics professional development for teachers in the turnaround schools. Dr. Navarro proposed that the City would hire additional education content specialists that would work under the direction on the Breakthrough Center. Pending approval from the CAO, additional specialists will be hired during the summer of 2012.
- Educator Evaluation System – SLO regional training began in June. LEAs identified teams to be trained. In addition, specific LEAs (e.g. Kent, Anne Arundel) have requested training for specified groups.

- Project 3/2 (Formative Assessment) – RFP in process; development of new higher education, LEA, and MSDE collaboration group to implement digital portfolios and assessment rubrics
- Project 11/29 (Infrastructure) – test and development environments live; production system architecture and procurement in progress; security system implementation for LEAs integration initiated
- Project 10/28 (MultiMedia Training) – RFP created and in review by procurement for LEA LDS Coaching Academy
- Projects 32-35 (Test Bank System) – RFP in final review stages before being issued
- Project 12/60 (Expansion to LDS for Data Exchange) – Master file transfer system test system installed; project nearing closure
- Project 21/42 (Implement a Statewide System to Support Student Instructional Intervention) - Received proposals for the Student Instructional Intervention System. Vendor presentations are being scheduled.
- Project 22/6 (Develop Online Instructional Intervention Modules)- Held vendor oral presentation and selected vendor for the project
- Project 4/3 (Curriculum and Formative Assessment Development) - Received proposals for cybersecurity and environmental science online STEM high school courses.
- Project 14/31(Develop and Implement State Curriculum Management System)- Acquired three Oracle consultants to develop full capability of the CMS.

Challenges:

- Project 1/78 (Office of Reform and Innovation) – offer accepted for RTTT accountant
- Project 21/42 (Implement a Statewide System to Support Student Instructional Intervention) - Getting final recommendation presented to Board of Public Works in a timely manner to move forward with implementation
- Project 14/31 (Develop and Implement State Curriculum Management System) - Onboarding of two Oracle consultants will be staggered given availability of consultants.
- Slowness and complexity of procurement process involving DoIT and Department of Management and Budget regarding hardware purchases.

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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?

Yes, the State is on track to meet the goals and timelines in its approved scope of work.

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)).<sup>1</sup> All responses in this section should be tailored to the goals and projects associated with this sub-criterion.*

Application sub-criterion:<sup>2</sup> B2 and B3

STATE's goals for this sub-criterion:

- Develop and implement a set of high-quality assessments aligned with the Common Core Standards
- Create curricular documents in parallel format for all curricular areas

Relevant projects:

Project 3/2	Formative Assessments
Project 4/3	Curriculum and Formative Assessment Development
Project 5/4	Curriculum and Assessment Development for ITEEA
Project 6/76	Curriculum and Assessment development CTE-SREB
Project 7/5	World Languages Pipeline

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 3/2      Formative Assessments*

This project was originally designed to create interim benchmark tests and system. However, this goal would have duplicated the PARCC initiative and Projects 32-35 that focused on implementing a computer adaptive test system and an item bank for Maryland's LEAs. As a result, the project was modified to focus on developing and implementing assessment for learning training, methods, and exercises that would build out the formative assessment tool kit being implemented in the LEAs. In summary, this project is focusing on; (a) implementing a digital portfolio system and rubric assessment techniques and exercises that leverages technology to document evidence of learning to be used as part of the assessment for learning method, (b) developing practical classroom digital teaching methods, curriculum exercises, and assessments to teach students 21st century skills and measure skill acquisition, (c) developing classroom curriculums that teach 21st technology skills in both teachers and students, and (d) developing and piloting a 21st century higher education digital teaching techniques training course for practicing teachers and student interns.

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

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

Accomplishments to date include;

- Expanding the collaboration team to include pilot LEAs, digital portfolio vendor, and higher education
- Developing assessment-for-learning content,
- Issuing an RFP that is in final stages of the review process,
- Planning a pilot of a digital portfolio system with rubrics that will allow for formative assessments to be made on project based work and document the student learning process.
- Planning the development of a higher education student teacher course on how to use technology and digital portfolios to teach 21st century skills, and assess student progress.
- Initiating development of the Digital Teaching Portal (renamed from AFL)

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of this project is the collaboration with teachers in the developing pilot projects where we get to see teachers create new teaching modules and exercises for students using technology, and being able to digitally store student work for process and work product evaluation that supplements the two-dimensional paper and pencil tests.

The project had a late start with some delays due to the RFP processing. Some modification of the year three timeline is forecasted for specific tasks, but there will be no impact on the overall project timeline. The major pending obstacle is if there is a delay in processing the RFP and various memorandums of understanding for services and for content development.

#### *Project 4/3 Curriculum and Formative Assessment Development*

A focal point for curriculum development has been preparation for the Educator Effectiveness Academies (EEAs). ELA, Math, STEM, and Literacy units, lesson plans, lesson seeds, and related resources were completed and loaded into the Curriculum Management System (project 31). An RFP for cybersecurity and environmental science online high school STEM courses was issued and a second RFP for two more courses in gaming design and development and forensic science are at DoIT for review. Two modules for the student online government course were completed and tested. Planning has commenced with the formative assessment team (Project 2). The last of the five planned literacy specialists was hired and began work.

The Curriculum Development and Formative Assessment project scope of work is progressing according to schedule. While the first online STEM course procurement is behind schedule, the second procurement is on target and the third procurement has been initiated ahead of schedule. All online STEM courses are slated to be hosted on the State's new learning management system.

*Project 5/4 Curriculum and Assessment Development for ITEEA*

Teachers administered the post-assessment and design challenge for the Foundations of Technology course. All post-assessment and design challenge data have been compiled into a series of comprehensive reports, which were communicated to teachers and school system supervisors. School systems have been using the data to inform local curriculum development and professional development. Data from the assessments and feedback from teachers were collected and organized for Master Teachers to revise curriculum and develop instructional resources. Staff from three local school systems is scheduled to participate in a face-to-face professional development from June 25 – 28, 2012 on the updated Foundations of Technology course. Additional professional development will take place the week of July 30 – August 2, 2012 and August 6 – 10, 2012.

This project has been ahead of schedule since its first year. LEA participation has been strong and this project is on schedule to meet its goals.

*Project 6/76 Curriculum and Assessment Development CTE-SREB*

The primary emphasis during the first 15 months of the project was the development of Career Technology Education (CTE) curricula in Construction Management and Design. This project was initiated in collaboration with the Southern Regional Education Board's (SREB) multistate consortium and with Maryland industry partners represented by the Maryland Center for Construction Education and Innovation (MCCEI). To ensure alignment of the academic and technical standards required for student success and progression into college-level programs, the CTE Construction Design and Management (CDM) Design Team includes representatives from business and industry, higher education, non-profit organizations, secondary education, and professional organizations. Despite some initial setbacks, considerable progress was made in the first 15 months, including:

- The establishment and convening of a state-wide CDM Design Team;
- Identification of the technical standards and requirements for the program;

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- Recommendations for the four-course sequence with specific project-based units to be completed in each course;
- Distributed project units from Course I and II to pilot sites for feedback; and
- Partnered with the (MCCEI) to provide professional development for CDM teachers throughout the state (12 teachers).

Three schools have been using the materials developed in the first year of the project (sample projects and AutoCAD tools and assessments). These pilot sites provide feedback to the design team and participate in on-going professional development.

Since January 2012, the project has moved forward according to the project outline. The CDM Design Team met in February 2012 to review feedback from the pilot sites regarding units in Course I and Course II and to re-evaluate the technical standards for Course III and Course IV. No major changes were recommended at that time, although the Design Team emphasized the importance of aligning course content to current college-level programs (within Maryland and outside of Maryland). Major accomplishments in the past six months include:

- Convening the Design Team in February 2012 to review Course III and Course IV technical standards and overall alignment to earlier courses and college-level program expectations;
- Expanded distribution of Course I and Course II projects and professional development materials;
- Establishing a contractual agreement with Towson University to provide curriculum writers, professional development, and access to an on-line Learning Management System;
- Meeting with the CDM Writing Team to work with the CDM Design Team to develop each course syllabi, pacing guide and recommended assessment activities; and
- Planning and inviting pilot sites to a training session (scheduled for July 10-11) on Course I and Course II resources (12 - 20 teachers)

Year two activities are on schedule, with on-going implementation of projects from Course I and Course II. Based on feedback from pilot sites regarding Course I and Course II modules, the materials for Course III and Course IV will be further developed as planned. There is a slight delay in the distribution of Pilot Projects from Course II and Course IV. The projects and

assessment materials for Course III and Course IV will be shared with the existing pilot sites/teachers in September 2012 (not June 2012 as first planned).

*Project 7/5 World Languages Pipeline*

The purpose of this project is to collaborate with LEAs to plan and implement new STEM-focused world language programs in elementary schools.

The greatest challenge faced by this project continues to be the hiring and retention of qualified candidates for the three world language specialist positions. Two of the positions are currently vacant because of resignations. While recruitment and review of applications is ongoing, the energy of the MSDE project manager and the sole RTTT world language specialist has been directed to moving the project forward. As a result, all project activities have been completed on schedule. In fact, by utilizing the Maryland Marketplace bid board to recruit consultants/translators as well as the MOU partnership with the National Foreign Language Center (NFLC), activities have been assigned to national experts and local consultants with knowledge, expertise, and skills matched to specific tasks.

Accomplishments since January 2012:

- STEM curriculum modules for grades K and 1 developed by Maryland teachers during the summer of 2011 underwent extensive review and revisions by the MSDE/NFLC staff because the quality of the drafts was very uneven. In many cases, it was necessary to re-write the entire module. An additional issue that emerged was the standardization of quality and content across each module for all languages. It became apparent that there was a need to develop the English version as the anchor upon which all language-specific versions could be developed. The team quickly adjusted its approach and was able to develop English, Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish versions of the modules. They have been disseminated to all Maryland LEAs and are posted on the MSDE website.
- The new online continuing professional development course for teachers, “Engaging Young Learners in the Language Classroom,” was designed and taught by two renowned national experts through the MOU with the NFLC. Response to the course was very positive; participants included teachers in project schools as well as other world language teachers who were interested in acquiring additional pedagogical knowledge and skills to teach or support teachers in elementary world language programs.



- The curriculum writing teams have been selected and the July 2012 workshop to develop STEM curriculum modules for grades 2 and 3 has been planned. The same experts that taught the online course will lead the workshop.
  - The second continuing professional development course has been written, approved by MSDE, and will be offered this summer.
  - The MSDE project manager and RTTT world language specialist have provided technical assistance and fiscal monitoring to the four LEA world language programs that were awarded funding through site visits and ongoing communication. Two of the programs were implemented in 2011-12 and two proposals called for planning in 2011-12 and start-up with students in 2012-13.
  - Four LEA proposals were approved for funding for 2012-13: Anne Arundel County, Chinese after school and summer camp program; Howard County, Chinese and Spanish science pilot program; Howard County, Spanish dual immersion after school program; Prince George's County, Spanish dual immersion STEM program
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.

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

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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)<sup>3</sup>

#### 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](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov) and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0011.

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<sup>3</sup> 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.