

Race to the Top (RTTT) Progress Update – June 2013 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:

To further the State’s goal of supporting participating Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in the implementation of their reform plans and holding LEAs accountable for their progress and performance, Penelope Thornton Talley, Chief Performance Officer, Steve Brooks, Chief Financial Officer, and Mary Gable, Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of Academic Policy and Innovation, have been reviewing the process for monitoring LEAs’ RTTT implementation efforts. The outcomes of this review will inform any possible revisions to the LEA monitoring process going forward. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will also use this information to create an RTTTStat program at the LEA level. These efforts will assist the State in identifying promising practices and evaluating program effectiveness at the local level, as well as holding participating LEAs accountable for their progress and performance.

Progress has been made on the development of a number of resources to support the State’s transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments. A variety of curriculum tools were uploaded to Blackboard, including model units and lessons for English/language arts (ELA) and mathematics, as well as literacy resources for social studies, science, technical subjects, and fine arts (project 4/3). Additionally, the Foundations of Technology (FoT) post assessment was administered and updates to the FoT curriculum have been made. Teacher performance and demographic reports for the FoT course have also been released, reporting on the gains in student content knowledge by unit, lesson, and standard addressed, as well as student population data (project 5/4).

To advance the State’s effort to use data systems to support instruction and make that data accessible to stakeholders, a Longitudinal Data System (LDS) Subject Matter Expert has been selected to lead the LDS “Train the Trainer” program, which will provide training for LEA data coaches on all

aspects of the LDS (project 10/28). Additional accomplishments for projects related to the use of data to support instruction are detailed in Part B of this document.

A number of noteworthy accomplishments have been made towards the State's effort to develop and support great teachers and leaders. Significant strides have been made in the development and implementation of an educator evaluation system. Over 8,600 effectiveness ratings for teachers and principals were submitted from the 22 RTTT LEAs, based on outcomes of the Field Test experience. These ratings will be critical to facilitate standard setting for effectiveness ratings in the State evaluation models. The Project Manager also received and vetted teacher and principal evaluation plans for the 22 participating LEAs to use in the upcoming 2013-2014 school year. To date, 21 of the 22 submitted LEA evaluation plans have been approved and the final plan is currently awaiting only final signatures (project 29/48). One way in which the State is demonstrating its continued commitment to providing effective support to teachers and principals is through its thorough preparation for the summer 2013 Educator Effectiveness Academies. Over the past month, Academy content and logistics have been reviewed and coordinated, three Master Teacher trainings have been conducted to prepare those who will be leading the 2013 Academy professional development sessions, and Academy content has been uploaded onto the Learning Management System (LMS), which will be made available to all Master Teachers as well as the principals and teachers attending the Academies (project 41/24).

To ensure that the lowest-achieving schools in Maryland receive the proper support and resources they need to improve, Maryland is committed to working closely with LEAs to determine exactly what is needed and the best ways to provide those supports to facilitate successful school turnaround. Staff from MSDE's Breakthrough Center collaborated with Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) and Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) to determine the services to be delivered to the State's Priority Schools and their feeder schools in 2013-2014. To assess the progress of professional development and determine next steps for school year 2013-2014, Breakthrough Center staff conducted instructional walkthroughs of ELA and mathematics classes at a number of these low-achieving schools in BCPS and PGCPS (project 44/41). To ensure that the lowest-achieving schools have the coordinated student services necessary to improve attendance, promotion, and graduation rates, pre assessments have been completed in nearly all BCPS and PGCPS School Improvement Grant (SIG) I and II schools. These pre assessments will help to determine the demands and requirements for student services in each school and inform professional development for student

service teams. Reports on the BCPS findings have been shared with BCPS staff and planning for the next steps to address reported issues will occur during summer 2013 (project 47/45).

Challenges:

Maryland is committed to providing strong leadership and dedicated teams to implement its education reform plans; however an ongoing concern will be filling vacant RTTT positions in Year 4 of the project. One vacancy that has been filled by a current MSDE staff member is that of Interim Project Manager for CAIRE's program evaluation. Danielle Susskind of MSDE's Division of Academic Policy and Innovation assumed this role and is working to advance the project without delay. A review of CAIRE's work moving forward has been conducted and they have agreed to refocus their efforts on identifying those outcomes that will be most helpful to MSDE in achieving its reform goals and making mid-course corrections to ensure projects are fully on track toward their goals. CAIRE is providing a revised project plan and budget for RTTT year four, which, when approved by MSDE, will ensure that this project is fully on target by November 2013 (project 2/1). MSDE also remains concerned about being able to effectively communicate and articulate comprehensively how the RTTT projects are positively affecting students, teachers, schools, and communities. MSDE can identify some of this information by individual project but is working to view the overall impact of RTTT. A part of this challenge is the need to develop quality measures and outcomes that will identify the successes. CAIRE is to be instrumental in developing these metrics and working with MSDE staff to enhance this overall picture with strong evidence of impact.

In its effort to implement high-quality formative assessments, the State has faced several ongoing challenges, but is working to move forward despite obstacles such as timeline delays, staffing shortages, and the need to submit approvable U.S. Department of Education (USDE) amendments. In the past month, MSDE has completed the procurement for online learning modules to provide professional development to teachers on effective instructional practices to support formative assessments in the classroom. It is anticipated that these modules will be procured by September/October 2013. Despite significant delays in item and performance task development, project managers hope to have teacher-developed and vendor-procured items on track by fall 2013 (project 3/2).

Maryland is working to develop an overall technology infrastructure to support the State's RTTT initiatives. However the project is behind schedule due to contractual issues that have impacted the

project in obtaining several resources necessary to ensure the security of the technology infrastructure under development. To mitigate these challenges, MSDE is taking steps to determine exactly what can be delivered by this project by September 30, 2013 and how to make sure that the project makes progress toward those goals. An amendment has also been submitted to USDE to further this effort (project 8/11). Additional challenges for projects related to the use of data to support instruction are detailed in Part B of this document.

One area of Maryland's work to support and turn around the lowest-achieving schools that is facing challenges is the State's effort to extend student learning and improve school culture, climate, and support. As of now, the school culture and climate team has not been assembled, although the team is anticipated to be in place by fall 2013. To mitigate this issue until the team has been procured and is in position, support to schools will be provided by current MSDE staff.

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?

Overall, Maryland is on track to meet the goals and timelines associated with the activities outlined in its approved scope of work. While several projects have some serious challenges, many of those challenges relate to issues of hiring/procurement of new staff or to the anticipation of amendment approval from USDE. While these challenges have caused some projects to fall behind, every effort is being made to get them back on track and the utilization of existing resources (specifically, current MSDE staff) when possible. Additionally, MSDE's new RTTTStat program is another tool the State will utilize to move projects forward, provide support and guidance to those projects that are falling behind, and keep Maryland's RTTT on track to successful completion by 2014. Finally, MSDE has taken immediate action to address the use of indirect costs in its RTTT budgets. MSDE staff are working diligently to amend and revise individual project budgets to correct any outstanding issues. Additional cleaned up amendments will be submitted in September to address Year 3 to Year 4 budgets.

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

USDE conducted its annual onsite visit with Maryland in May 2013 and provided valuable insight and support at that time. Currently, the need for action resides within MSDE and actions have been and continue to be taken to move the State's RTTT projects forward successfully. MSDE anticipates

to continue to need USDE's guidance and shared insight from other states as Maryland continues to work through and minimize the challenges. Specifically, once MSDE staff have outcomes suggested and developed in consultation with CAIRE, MSDE would welcome USDE's review and input for sufficiency and quality. Finally, MSDE may need immediate interim budget approval of some projects in order to retain resources as of July 1. MSDE appreciates the continued support from USDE.

Race to the Top Progress Update – June 2013 Monthly Call

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:

14/31, 15/7, 16/20, 17/32, 18/33, 19/34, 20/35, 21/42, 22/6, 23/55, 24/56, 25/10, 26/43, and 27/46

1) What is MSDE's vision for how these technology systems will change instructional practice?

MSDE's vision centers on providing a gateway to a variety of systems that will enable educators to employ a variety of new instructional resources (both content and systems) to improve teaching and learning. These new systems and resources will provide enhanced capabilities for the delivery of instruction, allowing educators to leverage new enrichment and intervention modules and online courses to help students develop mastery of the curriculum. Additionally, educators will be able to provide instruction using newly developed curriculum resources that are aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and other content standards. Educators will be able to access an up-to-date catalog of and registration system for professional development courses (face-to-face, blended, and online) that will provide experiences and resources that enhance their instructional skills and further enable them to improve pedagogical techniques. With these new capabilities, MSDE believes that educators will improve instructional practices leading to improve educator effectiveness and student performance.

a. How is that vision being communicated to the field?

This vision has been communicated through meetings with a number of stakeholder groups and the message has been tailored depending on the intended audience. For example, when meeting monthly with local Assistant State Superintendents of Instruction, the focus has been on new curriculum resources, CCSS content and professional development. When meeting with professional development liaisons and regional trainers, the focus has been on knowledge transfer and skills development, since LEAs are

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.

responsible to coordinate end user training with their principals and teachers. When meeting with technical groups such as the Chief Information Officer (CIO) community and other administrative groups, the message has focused on technology enablement, system configuration, and application readiness. Furthermore, Change Management meetings have occurred in each LEA and follow-up correspondence and visits have been employed as requested.

14/31: Develop and Implement a Statewide Curriculum System

1) How will you look at usage data on a regular basis to determine if the system is meeting the needs of its stakeholders?

As it relates to the curriculum repository that now resides on the Learning Management System (LMS), MSDE will analyze usage data on a monthly basis to determine how many visitors to the public domain have been accessing the system. MSDE will also poll end users through survey tools to collect feedback on whether the system is meeting their needs and to identify areas where additional help is needed.

2) Do parents have access to the system? How does that work?

Yes, parents will have access to the system since the curriculum repository resides in the public domain of the LMS. Once users, including teachers and parents, access the provided URL, they will have access to content for elementary, middle, and high school at each grade level. Content for STEM and Disciplinary Literacy is also currently available.

3) Is the LMS an opt-in system?

Yes. While the curriculum repository that resides in the LMS is the State's system of record for CCSS aligned curriculum content, LEAs may choose to continue using their own learning management systems to allow teachers to access professional development content offered by their LEA.

Have any LEAs expressed interest in opting in?

Yes, Three LEAs have expressed an interest in reserving space within the LMS in order to present their users a LEA customized environment.

a. What about sustainability of the system? What happens in future years?

The State will review the system's use over a 5-year timeframe, after which the State will pursue competitive procurement that may result either in the reissuance of a new contract to the current vendor or a procurement and migration to a newer platform. Future technology standards along with the State's technology requirements will moderate this discussion and decision.

4) The Progress Update states that the quality of implementation has been good. What evidence do you have to support this statement?

The LEAs and MSDE curriculum teams have been utilizing the LMS for the past several months, and will continue through August with the Educators Effectiveness Academies (EEA). The EEAs began on June 17 with over 7000 educators utilizing the system to review new curriculum resources that have been aligned to the CCSS. MSDE also used the system for training master teachers in May for the EEAs. Users have expressed appreciation for the updated look-and-feel of the LMS application, especially when compared to the previously developed Oracle based Curriculum Management System (CMS) application that was previewed in November 2012.

5) What evidence do you have that the training has been successful?

MSDE feels that the number of users that are using the system thus far is a good indication of successful training. This number continues to trend upwards. Currently over 30,000 user accounts have been created, of which almost 1996 users are actively enrolled in 117 courses. The number of instructors also continues to increase, signaling increased adoption of the LMS. Currently, 238 instructors are actively using the LMS.

a. Why is the State pleased with the degree of integration of the systems?

Previously, the CMS and the LMS were conceived as two separate systems. Combining the CMS within the LMS allowed the State to provide ONE solution to end users in which all the relevant content is housed.

b. The Progress Update states that a quality review of content was supposed to occur in May. Was this completed?

Yes, a quality review was completed on May 25th, 2013.

c. Are the materials ready?

Yes. Materials are ready for the EEAs and beyond. Curriculum supervisors for ELA, Math, and STEM collaborated with the LMS system administrator to load the content into the curriculum repository within the LMS.

6) The Progress Update states that “curriculum teams were trained on how to utilize local file staging repositories as a precursor for loading content into the CMS production environment.” What does this mean?

Given the number of writers working on the curriculum content, the project team created a central repository in order for curriculum supervisors to publish CCSS content. Once supervisors completed their review, the LMS system administrator would then retrieve these files, which ran into the hundreds, and loaded the same into the LMS curriculum repository.

Are these MSDE or LEA curriculum teams?

This is the MSDE curriculum writing team.

15/7: Expand Instructional Toolkit

1) The Progress Updates states that “all identified resources that are unrelated to the spring 2013 release of the C3 Social Studies framework or Next Generation Science Standards have been meta-tagged.” What resources is this referring to?

This is related to student modules and professional development courses that are being created by Maryland Public Television (MPT).

a. What content is included in the resources?

MS-Adolescent Literacy

- Agribusiness in Kenya
- Arguing for Change
- Explore Ancient River Valley Civilizations
- Overcoming Challenges
- Saving Smith Island
- Websmarts
- What Affects The Choices We Make?

- Wind Farms and Maryland

HS-Adolescent Literacy

- Case Study: McCarthyism and the Cold War
- How Can Nitrogen Affect My Business?
- Searching For Identity
- The Electoral College
- Websmarts
- Where Has All The SAV Gone?

Meta tagging has also been completed for student modules containing short adolescent literacy lessons.

Professional development courses have been or are being developed. The Government Course and the Biology course include both the Social Studies framework and Next Generation Science Standards. These courses will also follow the same metatagging schema as the student modules.

Professional Development Courses

- Algebra I – piloted in Spring 2013 and will go live Fall 2013
- English Grade 10 – pilot scheduled for October 2013 and will run live Spring 2014
- Government and Biology are in the script phase and will be ready for piloting in September 2014

b. Were these two items released in Spring 2013?

Next Generation Science Standards have been released and will be presented to the State Board for approval on 6/25/13. MSDE has no definitive information regarding the C3 Social Studies Framework.

2) The budget narrative also states that contractual funds were allotted to ensure that all items are aligned to the State curriculum. What was done to meet this objective?

All modules and courses that are being developed by MPT through contractual funds were aligned to the Maryland CCSS. MSDE's content specialists and coordinators then performed a quality review for completeness.

3) What are the implications of the delay in securing a toolkit vendor to identify and create a repository of CCSS resources?

Project staff will be requesting consideration of a no cost extension to offset the adjusted schedule created as a result of procurement complications.

a. When will these be available?

September 30, 2014.

b. How will this impact teachers?

Twenty-first Century learning and teaching must include digital resources that support Universal Design for Learning (UDL), personalized learning, and encourage blended learning environments. This repository will provide teachers with meta tagged and vetted resources from which they can pull to plan classroom instruction that meets the needs of individuals as well as groups of students. Content will be aggregated from content that is currently available and vetted by MSDE content specialists.

c. How is this content related to the content being developed in 4/3?

Project 4/3 involves the creation of online credit bearing STEM student **courses** along with the development of CCSS aligned curriculum resources. These are independent of project 15/7 development of STEM student **modules** that will be created as independent lessons in a similar way to the Adolescent Literacy modules.

d. What additional value does this have?

These digital resources will be culled from stable and credible sources to provide additional instructional support for CCSS state standards and digital literacy related instruction. Copyright licensing will also be purchased as required to maintain on-going access to high quality resources. All resources will be metatagged and organized in a way that provides alignment with existing instructional documents.

16/20: STEM Instructional and Career Support

- 1) As stated in the budget narrative, the goals of this project are twofold – “The first supports teachers and principals by establishing a STEM support hub that links industry experts and the resources of their workplace to STEM instructional objectives. This support hub allows**

teachers to easily identify experts who can advise them on best practices, visit classes to share their authentic work, and potentially open up their workplace for student visits. The second goal promotes student engagement in STEM careers through the creation of an on-line system that allows students to communicate with STEM experts directly, and to view STEM workplace experience opportunities.”

a. What is your progress towards each of these?

The first component of the *Teacher Hub* – STEM Specialists in the Classroom – has successfully undergone the proof of concept phase in Biology and Algebra at 12 targeted schools. Sixty STEM professionals have been trained to work with classroom teachers to support instruction in Biology and Algebra. A needs assessment has been conducted with Chemistry and Physics teachers and a report on findings is being completed for submission on June 28. MSDE has received great feedback and enthusiasm from 250 Chemistry and Physics teachers who met in focus groups and also participated via online survey. STEM Specialists in the Classroom is being expanded to two schools in 15 LEAs in fall 2013. The program will be expanded to all 24 LEAs in spring 2014. Workplace STEM specialists in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Algebra (150) are being recruited and trained for deployment in schools this fall.

The first component of the *Student Hub* – STEM Career Exploration – is up and running for students across the state to view online profiles of STEM professionals in a variety of career fields to explore what these careers entail, qualifications, salary ranges, etc. A total of 23 new STEM career profiles were added in Year 2. Because of privacy/security concerns, students are not allowed to communicate directly with professionals; however, students are allowed to submit their questions online, which are answered by professionals through the Maryland Business Round Table (MBRT). (Students do have direct interaction with STEM professionals in the classroom through STEM Specialists in the Classroom.) Workplace experience opportunities are part of the third component of the Student Hub, which will be piloted in fall 2013.

2) What is the STEM Resource Clearinghouse?

The STEM Resource Clearinghouse is an online repository of lessons, tools, videos, and other resources that teachers can access to support instruction.

a. Is this a different portal than all of the others (LMS, CMS, toolkit, etc.)?

Yes, the STEM Resource Clearinghouse is a different portal from MSDE's portal, and is developed by the MBRT.

b. How do teachers access it?

Teachers create an account on www.thestemnet.com to gain access. It is currently in the review phase with early adopter teachers.

c. Is this the available to all 24 LEAs?

In fall 2013, the STEM Resource Clearinghouse will be marketed to teachers in 48 super-user schools (2 in each LEA), but will be accessible to all teachers in Maryland.

Resources will be added continually, and teachers will rate the effectiveness of resources.

3) What about the STEM asset inventories?

STEM asset inventories are everything we have installed on the STEM Resource Clearinghouse.

4) What about providing easy access to STEM resources for LEAs and low-performing schools?

STEM resources can be easily accessed by LEAs and low-performing schools beginning in fall 2013 through www.thestemnet.com.

5) What feedback have you received on the resources in Biology and Math?

A total of 25 early adopter teachers (from 6 LEAs) are reviewing Biology and Math resources and providing feedback this summer.

a. Do you have usage data?

Not at this time.

6) The Progress Update states that students are using them. What data do you have? Have you received any feedback?

Over 340 students from 9 Baltimore County high schools completed the initial Challenge sets.

Student feedback indicated a high level of interest in online activities in challenge form. Teacher

feedback indicated a high level of interest from their students, but a need for an adjustment in time to complete. While teachers found Challenges useful to supplement their instruction, they had difficulty fitting them into a specific week-long timeframe. Teachers suggested promoting the Challenges in the summer and allowing implementation throughout the school year.

7) The Progress Update described a contest from the Student Hub. How does this fit into your larger theory of action for this project?

STEM Challenges were released to students in the form of brief time-limited contests. This design was intended to gauge interest and fit into discrete periods where teachers sought STEM-related activities. Long-term contests will continue to be a part of the mix of STEM Challenge formats. However, Challenges will also be released as ongoing activities without set periods in order to encourage more completion by a wider student audience.

8) When will the workforce experience components be complete and rolled out? The budget narrative indicates this was set to be complete in Year 3.

STEM Workplace Exposure Opportunities in development will be piloted with students in fall 2013 consistent with the planned approach to initiate this work in Year 3 and continue into Year 4 per the budget narrative.

9) What activities have been completed related to teacher and principal professional development?

MSDE conducts STEMnet orientation sessions with educators and administrators. STEM Specialists in the Classroom, STEM Resource Clearinghouse, and STEM Challenges will be introduced through the EEAs this summer.

10) How do you know that these resources are meeting the needs of stakeholders?

Every element of STEMnet is designed with direct input from teachers and includes an evaluation component to assess effectiveness. In addition to the information received from teachers in focus groups and online surveys, MBRT hires teachers contractually each summer to help develop programs and content. Tools to collect teacher and student feedback are incorporated into all programs and resources.

17/32, 18/33, 19/34 and 20/35 – Computer Adaptive Testing Systems (CATs)

1) When will this project be rolled out and available to LEAs?

The set of projects, 17|32, 18|33, and 19|34 have been approved by the State's Board of Public Works (BPW), June 12th 2013, to award a contract to MSDE's recommended vendor. MSDE is currently aligning the funding to execute and issue a purchase order (PO) to the vendor. 17|32 (TIBS) will roll out and be available beginning in fall 2013 with 18|33 (CAT) following winter 2013/14. 19|34 (Items Content) will be available with each rollout. 20|35 will be available for use in testing to coincide with 18|33 rollout and testing winter 2013/14. For this work to complete as stated, amendments to move and align money must first be approved by USDE.

a. What are the implications of this delay?

The implication is that the tools will be available to educators later than originally planned.

b. When will teachers actually be able to use the technology in their classrooms?

These systems, 17|32 (TIBS) and 18|33 (CAT), with 19|34 (Items), will be available for teachers during pilot testing and production fall 2013 and winter 2013/14 respectively. 20|35 will coincide with 18|33 (CAT) and be available to teachers during pilot testing and production in winter 2013/14.

2) How have stakeholders been involved in the design, development, and implementation of these projects? The Progress Update states that stakeholder feedback is extremely important in how to measure the progress and success of these projects.

Stakeholder feedback is very important to the project and MSDE to ensure all MD LEAs have access to this tool. During RFP development MSDE sent the requirements (Technical and Functional) to all 24 LEAs for review. No LEA reported back to MSDE noting gaps related to LEA business requirements. Additionally, MSDE regularly communicates and presents project progress with LEAs at Local Accountability Coordinator (LAC) and CIO meetings. MSDE also communicates internally, across projects, to ensure alignment of those projects that intersect with this set, e.g. Formative Assessment and Teacher Toolkit Portal. Additionally, each information technology project now has an internal programmatic partner (e.g. content or assessment staff).

a. How did MSDE identify the needs of its stakeholders?

Through direct action and communication with LEAs and MSDE's historical knowledge of LEAs and LEAs' systems

3) What process will be used to ensure the items are high-quality?

With respect to 17|32 (TIBS), formative items from 03|02 are used; there is a review process in place to ensure items are CCSS aligned. With respect to 18|33 (CAT) items are calibrated by a CAT expert to ensure alignment of those items.

a. To clarify, this system is only for formative and interim assessments. Is that accurate?

Formative and interim assessments are just two key components of the system capability. There can also be other test designs that could include forms such as summative tests, practice tests, and quizzes. Tests are teacher designed, based on their assessment or instructional needs.

4) What is the status of the needs-assessment to determine LEA technology needs?

MSDE has developed a questionnaire to ascertain LEA needs. The questionnaire has passed the internal review stage and will be reviewed by LEA CIOs. The questionnaire will be formally distributed the week of 6/23/13 for presentation to LEAs to capture the necessary feedback needed to prepare an amendment for Project 20/35.

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

1) How will MSDE monitor implementation to ensure that LEAs are:

a. Doing what they said they would do?

The LEAs will have to submit quarterly status reports detailing the progress they have made relative to procuring new, expanding current, or integrating existing student instructional intervention systems with other LEA applications. MSDE will also schedule bi-weekly conference calls with LEAs to provide implementation assistance where necessary, and to share knowledge and experience for the benefit of all LEAs.

b. Using new systems to meet the outlined commitments?

MSDE will require that LEAs report the number of students that are being impacted by the newly procured, expanded or integrated systems. MSDE will also request that LEAs describe how processes have changed as a result.

23/55: Framework for Teacher Toolkit Portal

1) What resources have been collected from MSDE, LEAs, and Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs)?

- A database of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) approved programs was collected from MSDE's Division of Certification and Accreditation (DOCA) and IHEs, along with program approval information on IHE approved courses for CPD credit. This information will be added to the LMS.
- LEAs have provided course catalog information and examples of quality review protocols. In order to review the LEA CPD process from the LEA perspective, interviews were held with LEA stakeholders in the Professional Development (PD) and Information Technology (IT) departments of Baltimore County and Montgomery County, two of the largest LEAs in the state. Feedback was provided by LEA PD Coordinators at state-held meetings regarding LEA PD needs, and how the LMS will be used to satisfy the same.
- Maryland Standards for Professional Development were updated and a crosswalk was created between the MSDE PD Standards and the national Learning Forward professional learning standards. These standards will inform professional learning that will be offered on the LMS.
- The CPD application process was obtained from the MSDE DOCA. The paper process was used to create a protocol for an online approval process that mirrors the former paper process.

2) What is the quality control review? What are you looking for as part of the check?

MSDE, partnering with LEAs and IHEs, has developed a quality review protocol to evaluate the quality of professional development programs and activities offered by colleges and universities, Maryland Public Television, the Maryland Business Roundtable STEM Innovation Network, LEAs, and MSDE. These tools were developed during the 2011–12

school year. Only the professional development that meets agreed-upon standards will be posted in the LMS.

The Quality Review protocol enhances the existing process for CPD course approval by requiring that new proposals for professional development included on the portal specifically target outcomes and indicators of the offering toward Maryland's reform effort. In addition, the protocol establishes a new committee comprised of both LEA and MSDE representatives to review and evaluate proposals for professional development to be included on the portal. Working virtually with electronic files, this group will gauge and measure the quality of the professional development experience. Finally, evaluative feedback can be used to refine course content and ensure that professional development accessed through the portal will always be of the highest quality.

The protocol also enhances the existing process for CPD course approval by requiring additional information regarding offerings that will be delivered online or as part of a hybrid online/face-to-face instructional delivery model. Anticipating that these delivery models will continue to expand over time, the need to ensure that online professional development meets quality standards is critical.

The review process for CPD consists of an LEA CPD Liaison initial review, a checklist to allow for a final review by the LEA, an evaluation of all standards and infusion of the CCSS by MSDE within the Program Approval Division prior to an application being approved.

3) What feedback did you receive from LEAs after the January meeting?

The January meeting reviewed the LMS, EIS, and CMS structure and plans. Feedback was positive. LEAs were grateful to have the opportunity to learn about the plans for the three LEAs. The meeting clarified misconceptions and gave LEAs the opportunity to ask questions. They were excited to have information on the plans, purpose, and progress of the IT projects. The main feedback was obtained through questions raised during the Q&A portion of the presentation. Many were concerned about being required to provide non-credit bearing LEA PD offerings to MSDE to post on the LMS. They also asked about the ability to export LEA CPD earned credits to MSDE digitally and asked about the expectation of MSDE regarding the sharing of LEA resources for posting on the LMS.

a. How did that feedback inform implementation?

LEA questions and concerns were taken back to the Core Team and vetted. As a result of the LEA concerns, the requirement for non-credit bearing LEA offerings to be posted in the LMS was dropped. All feedback which fits within the scope of the project will be incorporated and inform implementation.

b. How is this project related to the EIS?

Project 23|55 is related to the EIS in that the protocol developed for CPD courses will inform how CPD credits are accounted for, since these credits will be stored as part of the educator's profile that will be housed within the EIS system.

4) What does it mean for this project to be complete?

The project will officially be completed once we have implemented the CPD application workflow within the EIS SharePoint portal. MSDE will continue to make enhancements as needed even after project closure.

5) Has MSDE provided training on the new systems?

No. Training for LEAs on the new CPD process will be implemented once the electronic workflow approval process is implemented within the EIS portal.

a. Do LEAs know that the system is available?

The LMS is already being used in the LEAs. It has been used for LEA submission of High School Assessment Bridge Projects and Educator Effectiveness Academy training and content offerings, among others.

6) Are they accessing the professional development content? Usage data?

LEAs are currently using professional development content during the Educator Effectiveness Academies, especially for Day One school site content. With respect to usage data please see statistics as of June 24, 2013 below:

The Overall Summary of Usage as of today is as follows:		
117	Active Courses	
1996	Active Users	
238	Instructors	
7915	Average page views per day	
9	Active Organizations	
33359	Users	
7915	Page Views on Most Active Date	
Average Users Per Month		
Educator Users	Student Users	Instructors
33359	4803	238

7) What is the purpose of the online application?

The purpose of the CPD application is to:

- Omit the paper based process of the LEA having to type, write out by hand and mail the application to MSDE;
- Create a user friendly, easy to use application which can be completed and submitted online;
- Allow for feedback mechanisms between MSDE and the LEA on the status of their CPD application; and
- Provide a robust workflow process that will allow for increased productivity for processing applications and allow applications to be approved virtually.

a. What is the review process? How do you know what you need?

The first stage of the review process is on the LEA level. The LEA review process includes an initial review by the CPD liaison, followed by the completion of a checklist for a final review, which includes an evaluation of all standards and the infusion of the CCSS.

The second stage is completed by MSDE staff within the Division of Certification and Accreditation, who complete a quality check review using a checklist to make sure all components, standards, and alignment of the CCSS are included in the CPD course, prior to an application being approved. The Division of Certification and Accreditation determines the requirements of the CPD course application. The online process mirrors

their current requirements and processes.

b. Does all PD have to go through this process or did MSDE find existing resources?

The PD involved in the CPD process is for credit bearing courses only. All PD offerings that are credit bearing, whether internal, LEA, or IHE must go through this process.

25/10: MSDE-IHE Teacher Preparation Workgroup

1) Have these workgroups resulted in any changes in teacher preparation programs?

Teacher preparation program representatives have reported that changes in their elementary education programs to include the CCSS are currently underway.

a. Examples?

As an example, in May, the Peabody Conservatory of Music had a review of its teacher preparation program. At that time, based on meetings with their partner school systems, they had already produced course syllabi for their Methods courses that have been updated to include the CCSS. This kind of information is the evidence that changes are being made in the teacher preparation programs and will be the expectation for all IHEs.

b. How do you know?

Currently, IHEs are at the stage of assuring infusion of the CCSS into their curricula. Eventually, their success with this effort will be evaluated through the State Program Approval standards as each IHE cycles through the process. One of the critical standards that must be met requires that IHEs must demonstrate that their programs are aligned with Pk-12 priorities. The Maryland CCSS Curriculum will replace the Maryland Curriculum as one of these priorities.

26/43: Implement a System to Support E-Learning for Instructional Intervention Enhancement and Enrichments and 24/56: Develop and Implement a Course Registration System

1) According to the budget narrative, the following activities should have been competed in Year 2 and Year 3. Please provide an update on each of them.

a. Initiate course conversion project for Desire2Learn courses (Year 2)

The course conversion project was completed on schedule. A total of 55 courses were converted from the State's legacy LMS platform (Desire 2 Learn).

- b. Evaluate data on module’s frequency of use, student impressions of value, teacher impressions of value, and evidence that modules, when used as part of the instructional intervention, support educational improvement. Make a “retain-or-replace” decision. (Year 2)**

This activity was also completed. Input was based on initial feedback from students and teachers who utilized the system during the pilot period. Moving forward, additional reports will be customized for users that login to the system to drill down on specific areas of interest, such as average concurrent logins, length of logins, and others metrics that will be determined as the system is adopted.

- c. Complete course registration and ecommerce configurations (project #24/56 requirement)**

The course registration configuration is complete. MSDE will update courses as part of its standard operations & maintenance process. With regard to the ecommerce configuration, the vendor (NIC) has completed testing activities related to payment processing and gateway configuration. MSDE’s Business Services team is providing specific accounting and financial routing details to complete the automated routing of financial information to the appropriate internal teams within the Division of Instruction. Once this information is received and inputted, payments will be automatically processed and routed.

- d. Provide multi-media instructions for teachers on the application’s use, along with policies to successfully use modules to improve instructional outcomes. (Note this is part of the multi-media training project).**

The Multimedia Training Project assisted in the development of 17 training videos for instructor, student, and general navigational use within the LMS. Videos were tailored to MSDE user environment, user roles, and culture. A total of 6 regional training sessions were conducted and 72 LEA appointed training leads received training. LEAs are responsible to schedule and conduct end user training with their respective user communities consistent with expectations set in regional train-the-trainer sessions.

e. Pilot the application with select early adopter LEAs.

This was completed in May with approximately 40 students from the Anne Arundel County Public Schools System for a Linear Algebra Course. Additionally, approximately 30 teachers also piloted an Algebra 1 course within the LMS.

f. Train school curriculum teams on how to effectively use the application.

This was completed in May. MSDE provided train-the-trainer training on the Blackboard Essentials 101 training course. This course is intended for Instructors and Facilitators who would train or support teachers and students in the use of Blackboard within each LEA.

g. Rollout to all LEAs.

The rollout to all LEAs is in progress. While LEAs have now received training, and have begun using the application on a limited basis, MSDE is coordinating the full rollout of this and all LEA facing systems to avoid change saturation to the LEAs. This will ensure that LEA users and groups are introduced to RTTT systems at the most efficient time so as to foster adoption of RTTT systems.

h. Perform end user satisfaction web-survey.

The end user satisfaction web survey has not started. This will be done later this summer after the application has been fully released for adoption. Meanwhile, MSDE has administered a feedback survey after the student pilot and teacher pilot in May and has collected preliminary information.

i. Evaluate data on module's frequency of use, student impressions of value, teacher impressions of value, and evidence that modules, when used as part of the instructional intervention, support educational improvement. Make a "retain-or-replace" decision.

Completed per previous answer in question 1b above.

2) **The Progress Update states that “the project has been utilizing a coordinated change management strategy for the last six months and has realized measure progress.” What does this mean?**

The purpose of the change management strategy was to involve and prepare internal and external stakeholders for new technology systems, business processes, CCSS curriculum, and other content related changes schedule for release to the LEAs. The approach entailed providing LEAs with consistent, accurate, and frequent communications, so as to enable effective design, professional development, delivery, and implementation across the State. An example of a communication tool is the ‘Get Onboard with Blackboard’ document that was shared with CIOs, technology groups, and LEA Assistant Superintendent on the LMS application. The goals of this outreach approach were to build:

- a. **Awareness:** Provide consistent, accurate, and frequent communications to keep stakeholders aware of RTTT
- b. **Ownership:** Garner stakeholder participation in vendor selection and development of tools that will be implemented
- c. **Acceptance:** Garner stakeholder participation in User Acceptance Testing (UAT) or Pilot activities
- d. **Understanding:** Garner stakeholder participation in Training or System Demonstrations
- e. **Desire & Commitment:** Meet with LEAs, and leverage existing meeting forums such as Master Teacher Training sessions, CIO meetings, and Coordinators meetings, to socialize and sell the respective project benefits of RTTT projects
- f. **Please provide an example.**

As an example, MSDE adopted a 5-step approach to foster end user adoption. This approach was developed by PROSCI under the acronym ADKAR.

- i. **Step 1 (A):** Create **Awareness** among stakeholders of the need for change
 - (Ex: MSDE sent out communication about “what’s changing,” “what’s new,” etc)
- ii. **Step 2 (D):** Foster the **Desire** to participate and support the change
 - (Ex: MSDE motivated LEAs by meeting with a number of stakeholder groups and communicating the selling points of each of the new applications)

- iii. **Step 3 (K):** Impart **Knowledge** to end users on how to change, and seek knowledge from stakeholders through appreciative inquiry of their business processes
 - (Ex: While meeting with LEAs, MSDE provided additional information on what's changing and provided the opportunity for members to discuss anticipated business process changes and enhancements.)
- iv. **Step 4 (A):** Ensure Stakeholder **Ability** to implement required skills and behaviors
 - (Ex: MSDE provided training, system demonstrations, coaching, and hands-on practice. MSDE also conducted a pilot for LEAs users to interface with the application)
- v. **Step 5 (R): Reinforce** the change
 - (Ex: This is the stage that follows full adoption. MSDE will collect and analyze feedback, manage resistance, implement corrective where necessary, and celebrate success as users continue to use the system)

3) What do you mean by professional learning communities in this project?

These are on-line portals within the application to allow teachers, CIOs, Assistant Superintendents, and other homogeneous groups to share similar information, lessons learned, and collaborate on best practices related to mutual interests such as implementing CCSS within their schools.

4) Have LEAs accessed the training modules?

Yes. LEAs have accessed the training modules during the training sessions provided. The system is fully available and training modules are conveniently located on the front page of the LMS for quick retrieval.

5) How have stakeholders been directly involved in developing this system?

Stakeholders were involved in initial selection of the system. They have also been involved with on-going meetings to make suggestions on how the system can be implemented and used within the LEAs. For example, a select number of LEA CIOs have expressed an interest in helping to configure Active Directory Federated Services (ADFS) in order to enable automated user provisioning.

6) Does this system live in the LMS?

Both Projects 26/43 and 24/56 make up the LMS which is Blackboard.