

Sample School District

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

(D)(1) High Quality Pathways

Sample School District will support MSDE's efforts regarding alternative pathways for teachers and principals.

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance:

Sample School District will embrace the State definition of student growth once it is adopted by the State Board of Education.

While student growth gains will comprise 50 percent of the teacher and principal evaluation frameworks, 30 percent of the evaluation will be based on the final approved regulation of the Maryland State Board of Education anticipated in early 2011. For the remaining 20 percent of student growth, we are committed to working with our teachers' and principals' bargaining units to arrive at mutually agreeable measures of student growth linked to our local goals and priorities.

For the remaining 50 percent of the teacher evaluation framework, we will work with our bargaining unit to determine the weight, format, and means for evaluation. The elements for this 50% will include planning and preparation; classroom environment; instruction; professional responsibilities; and additional agreed upon domains. For principals, half of the 50 percent will be based on the eight outcomes in the Maryland Instruction Leadership Framework, and we will work out the percentages for all 8 outcomes with our principals' bargaining unit. In addition, we will arrive at other mutually agreed upon domains for the remaining 25 percent with our principals' bargaining unit based on our local goals and priorities. In the event that we cannot reach agreement on an evaluation framework with either our teachers' or principals' bargaining unit, we will use the State default model.

Sample School District will also work with its bargaining units to agree on a process for implementing annual evaluations of teachers and principals that includes timely and constructive feedback, using the individual teacher's student growth metric as the underlying basis for those conversations.

Beginning in the summer of 2011, Sample School District will participate in the State's Teacher Induction Academies by sending our Teacher Induction Program Coordinator and as many mentors as the State budget will cover. By July 2011, Sample School District will revise our induction program for new teachers based on COMAR 13A.07.01, which will result in revisions to our mentor program, orientation, and new teacher seminar series. Currently our district is using a combination of part-time and full-time mentors to support new teachers. Beginning in

the 2011-2012 school year, we will hire three teachers rated satisfactory on our current evaluation system and highly regarded by their principals and peers to serve as additional full-time mentors (making a total of seven mentors) for approximately 100 new teachers. Once the new evaluation system is in place, we will hire mentors who are rated Highly Effective. Two of the positions will be funded with general funds and one with Race to the Top funds. We will find ways to fund all positions with general funds starting in the 2014-2015 school year. Our Professional Development Department will provide monthly training for mentors focusing on subject matter content, effective instructional strategies, and appropriate mentoring techniques. Successful fulfillment will be measured by utilizing the novice teacher's evaluation results (including student growth), administrative input, documentation of support provided, and a survey completed by the novice teacher. The administration from the novice teacher's school and personnel from the Central Office will use information from the evaluation to provide professional development targeted to the needs of the novice teachers both in the seminar and through their individual mentors. We will comply with all the requirements of COMAR 13A.07.01 regulation as we revise our mentor program.

Once the new evaluation system is in place, Sample School District will also use a similar mentoring approach to support any teacher who is rated Ineffective for two years in a row and who have been put on a second-class certificate. Since we do not have a mentor program for principals, we are interested in participating in the principal mentor-certificating program proposed in MSDE's plan in its Race to the Top application.

Sample School District will develop in collaboration with our bargaining units a new compensation model that provides differentiated compensation to Effective or Highly Effective teachers and principals who agree to teach in our lowest-achieving schools based on the recommendations of the Performance Compensation Workgroup. We will also work with our teacher bargaining unit to look at special incentives for attracting and retaining STEM, Special Education, and ESOL teachers to these low-achieving schools.

Finally, teacher and principal evaluations will be used to make tenure decisions as well as to inform placement, individual professional development plans, promotion, and removal decisions, once those rated Ineffective have had ample support and opportunity for improvement. The process for making these decisions will be mutually agreed to with our bargaining units.

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals:

Once the new evaluation system is in place, we plan to use it to improve how we assign principals and teachers to schools. Sample School District understands that key to improving our 6 lowest-achieving schools is having Effective principals and teachers serve those students. As a result, we are committed to placing only those principals and teachers who have been rated Satisfactory in these 5 schools, using our current evaluation instruments. Once the new

evaluation system is in place, we will ensure that only teachers and principals who have been rated as Effective or Highly Effective will be placed in these schools. The only exception will be the most promising new teachers –they will be considered for these positions.

We also recognize that building capacity in our district is critical to our future in our lowest-achieving schools. Therefore, once the new evaluation system is in place, we will pilot a program in one of our lowest-achieving schools to attract Highly Effective teachers, develop future leaders, and increase the effectiveness of the teaching staff. A team consisting of a Highly Effective assistant principal, Highly Effective literacy and mathematics facilitator, and up to five Highly Effective classroom teachers will be transferred to one of our struggling schools. Central office staff will provide monthly professional development sessions focused on building instructional leadership skills and aligned to the content of the Educator Instructional Improvement Academies for the team members who are selected to work in the school. This process will increase their effectiveness to assume either teacher leader or administrative positions and align the school-level professional development with the State and LEA goals. As an incentive for working in the school, the members of the team will be placed on a priority path for promotion. The school will benefit as these future leaders will serve as members of the instructional leadership team and help to build the capacity of the staff. We will also work with our teacher bargaining unit to look at special incentives for attracting and retaining STEM teachers to these low-achieving schools.

(D)(4) Improving the Effectiveness of Teacher and Principal Preparation Programs

Sample School District will support MSDE's efforts at improving teacher and principal preparation programs.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals:

Sample School District will participate in the Educator Instructional Improvement Academies and the Induction Program Academies. We will also send principals from our 6 lowest-achieving schools to MSDE's Priority Schools Academy. We will continue to send our newest principals to the Maryland Principals' Academy, and we will participate in the Aspiring Leaders Academy sponsored by MSDE. Additionally, our Executive Officers will participate in the regional professional development opportunities through the Executive Officers Network.

Sample School District's professional development plan focuses on increasing rigor in the classroom. Based on an analysis of student data and teacher observation, we selected the lowest achieving elementary and middle schools that need more intensive support. In order to supplement the district-wide professional development for these low-achieving schools, central office language arts and mathematics staff will facilitate the collaborative planning process (lesson planning, lesson implementation, debriefing/analysis of student work) on a weekly basis

in each school. Grades three through eight language arts and mathematics teachers, teachers of English Language Learners if applicable, special education teachers, and the school's principal will participate. The intended outcomes of this additional support are as follows:

- To increase the rigor of the classroom instruction
- To build the capacity of the school leadership teams to provide job-embedded professional development to increase student achievement

This effort will be aligned explicitly to the content of the Educator Instructional Improvement Academies. Central office content specialists will conduct informal classroom observations with the school administrators once per quarter to evaluate the teachers' implementation of the professional development. Until the State provides an item bank of formative assessments, our district benchmarks will serve as a means to evaluate student achievement. Data from the observations and assessments will be used to evaluate the professional development initiative and to target areas needing further professional development

Finally, Sample School District will participate in MSDE's evaluation of professional development as part of its Race to the Top application.