

Teacher Principal Evaluation Grant Distribution

Description and Rationale

Background

Race to the Top (RTTT) Projects 28/47 (Student Growth) and 29/48 (Educator Effectiveness) have evolved beyond their original scope as was detailed in the RTTT grant application. Maryland settled on a measurement model developed in collaboration with the National Psychometrics Council. Also, under advisement of Local Education Agencies (LEAs), the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) abandoned plans to build or buy an effectiveness calculation system, instead deploying project dollars to support LEA needs. The newly proposed categories of services offered to LEAs are described elsewhere.

Challenge: making the dollars consequential

The Teacher/Principal Evaluation (TPE) Team Leader will have the discretion to repurpose monies to support TPE efforts. Of these funds, a portion will be reserved to MSDE to allow it to meet its responsibilities pursuant to the project. Stipends will be awarded to Anne Arundel County, Calvert County, and Somerset County to support their test of the State default TPE Model. MSDE is will also reserve a portion to fund specific activities of general application to LEAs.

Maryland's 24 LEAs are amazingly diverse: in size, from 2,183 pupils to 144,023 pupils; in wealth, from \$272,517 per pupil to \$1,371,358 per pupil; in demographics, from largely all non-minority to almost entirely minority; and in achievement. A flat tranche of grant dollars would have a very different effect in different LEAs. For example, in a large urban system with an annual operational budget in excess of \$1.3B, a modest grant will not alter the infrastructure or capacity of that LEA. Maryland's largest LEAs already maintain extensive information technology networks, research and development offices, independent professional development units, and generous support staff. In the small LEAs, one person may wear many hats, and technical resources are thin. For such LEAs, modest grants would be transformative.

The present distribution model brings together per-pupil wealth, achievement, and proportional size to sort the LEAs into bands, allowing them to receive a differential tranche of the TPE grant dollars.

Model description

The LEA's pupils in membership are converted to a proportion of the state's entire enrollment. At the low end, Kent and Somerset Counties represent 0.3% of enrollment, each. At the high end, Montgomery County accounts for 16.9% of Maryland pupils.¹ Next the ratio of State Foundation Aid Per Pupil to Local Wealth Per Pupil, FY'11 is calculated. This ratio is multiplied by the School Progress Index (SPI), newly released to LEAs in December 2012. The SPI is a nuanced summary statistic that is composed of multiple variables, each allowed to operate independently and each anchored to local targets. The resulting statistic gives a measure of Fiscal Ability/Academic Need. This intermediary

¹ All statistics are derived from the 2010-2011 Fact Book.

statistic is divided by the LEA's size as a proportion of the state population. This yields values from 0.11 for Montgomery County to a high of 23.24 for Somerset County. LEAs are arrayed on this statistic, and then sorted into bands (approximate quintiles in the present form, 5 LEAs for each of the 4 highest, and 4 in the lowest category).

The grant award is then determined by this formula: band value (quintile) * amount of grant dedicated to LEA awards /100.