

Teacher and Principal Evaluation

"Influencing Transformation"

Communication #26

July 2014

Sphere Five Outcomes

By the end of Sphere 5 leadership personnel should know and be able to combine evaluation components into a single effectiveness rating. They should also be able to use annual data to develop and align their school improvement plan with the evaluation process to generate professional development that will drive increased levels of student and educator performance in the next school year.

Year Four Data Submission Deadline JULY 15, 2014.

End of Year Pulse Checks...have you...

...affirmed the local attribution of students from this year's testing?

...completed end-of-year conferences?

...rated teacher and principals' SLOs?

...gathered artifacts to be used as evidence in the ratings?

...carried forward MSA/HSA % for use in determining the Student Growth score?

...reviewed Professional Development Focus and identified needs in order to set new professional development goals for teachers?

...are you aligning the goals within your school improvement plans with teacher and principal professional development plans to support the district, school, and student improvement needs?

Quality Control

Dave Volrath

dvolrath@msde.state.md.us

ESEA Waiver Extension Update

Pieces of the ESEA Waiver Extension related RTTT/TPE Amendments are gradually being approved by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). Most significantly, funding and programmatic approval has been given to proceed with the Principal Pipeline Project, to maintain support for Executive Officers, and to continue the collective work of Teacher and Principal Evaluation for Year 5. The Principal Pipeline Project includes both the Governor's Academy for Promising Principals and the Spheres of Influence structure for the delivery of professional development and technical assistance during Year Five. We will keep you apprised as subsequent parts of the ESEA Waiver Extension and RTTT/TPE Amendments are approved, adjusted, or denied.

Reauthorization of CoMAR Regulations

The original CoMAR regulations associated with TPE and Educator Effectiveness are to sunset in September, 2014. Over the course of the past two months, regional stakeholder meetings were conducted with local board members, Local Education Agency (LEA) leadership, and union representatives across the State. These meetings were designed to gather information and hear considerations regarding the renewal of these regulations. Dr. Jack Smith, Chief Academic Officer at MSDE, briefed the Maryland State Board of Education on May 20, advised Superintendents on June 6, and presented Draft Regulations to the MSBE on June 27, 2014. MSDE's intent is to have the new Regulations reauthorized prior to October. The proposed regulations are currently open to public comment and can be viewed at the MSDE webpage, MarylandPublicSchools.org.

Principal Pipeline & Governor's Academy

Work is rapidly progressing on the two initial elements of the Principal Pipeline Project: 1) The Governor's Promising Principal Academy and 2) The Spheres 6-8 Professional Development plan. Forty-eight nominees were received from the 24 LEAs to participate in the Academy; with orientation meetings conducted in June. The program structure and the scope and sequence content for the year are progressing with the details of the summer convening being finalized. The Pipeline is the State's initial attempt to build the leadership capacity of current and promising principals.

Memorandum of Understanding

An historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Maryland State Board of Education, the Maryland State Department of Education, the Maryland State Education Association, the Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland, the Maryland Association of Boards of Education, the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals, the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals, and the Baltimore Teachers Union; committing all parties to fully embrace the use of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) as a means of capturing student growth in teacher and principal evaluations. This agreement assumes greater significance in the absence of statewide reading and math growth measures during the first two years of the administration of the PARCC Assessments. An MOU insures that this partnership will reflect common messaging, shared resources, and a unified approach to the efforts of teachers and principals to incorporate Student Learning Objectives into their school and individual professional development plans as a means of continually improving instruction and leadership.

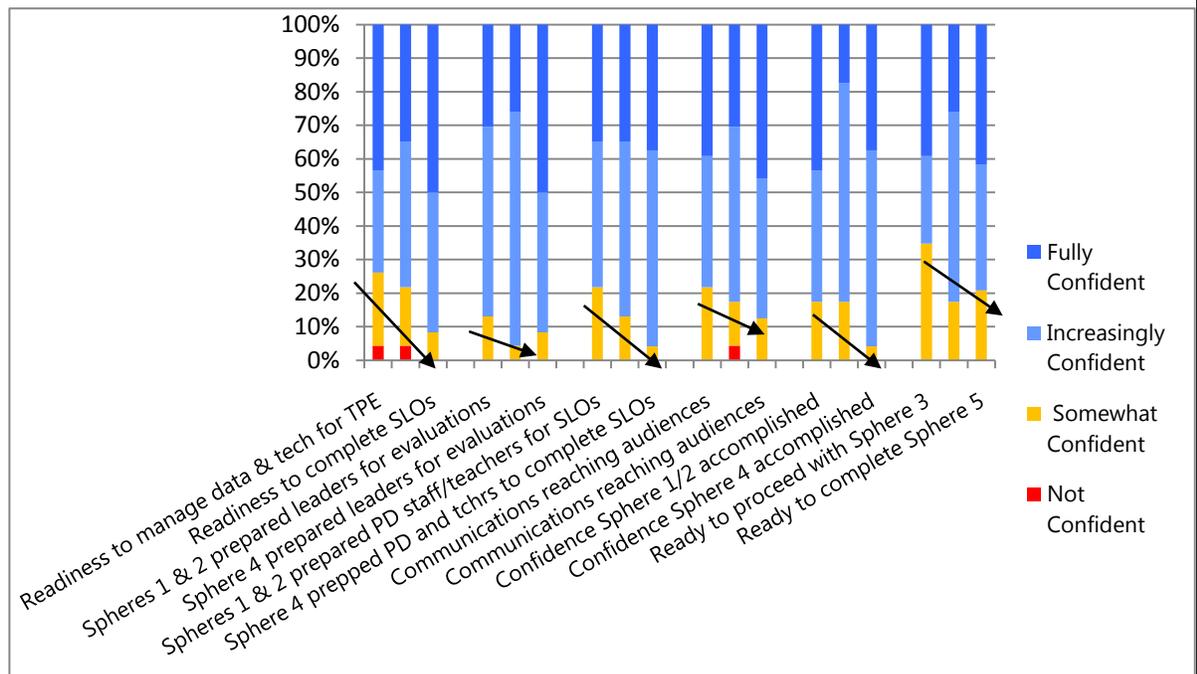
Student Learning Objectives Memorandum of Understanding

This memorandum of Understanding codifies the commitments and partnership between the Maryland State Board of Education, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), the Maryland State Education Association (MSEA), the Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland (PSSAM), the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP), the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP) and the Baltimore Teachers Union in the advancement of professional development, common language, streamlined communication and implementation strategies for Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) statewide and in each of the Local School Systems (LSSs). The parties agree to the following statements:

1. The primary goal of evaluating teaching should be to improve effectiveness in the classroom, which will lead to student growth. The SLO process is an important component of effective instruction. When collaboratively developed and implemented appropriately, the use of rigorous objectives coupled with multiple strategies, measured by multiple assessments, leads to academic success and growth on the part of students.
2. The parties shall coordinate resources and strategies to assist educators in the development of rigorous and measurable, but obtainable SLOs.
3. The parties shall effectively assist teachers and principals in fully understanding, utilizing, and embracing SLOs, by focusing on professional development that, minimally:
 - a) Identifies the key elements of a rigorous SLO, utilizing common definitions and content to develop consistency across LSSs;
 - b) Assists in setting measurable and obtainable benchmarks;
 - c) Recognizes progress/growth and effective strategies for achieving SLOs.
4. The parties shall identify and develop a diverse group of leaders from around the state to deliver professional development programs and activities on SLOs. This should be done in collaboration with local teacher and principal affiliates and LSSs for the purpose of building the capacity in local affiliates and LSSs.
5. The parties shall coordinate and commit to provide professional development in support of LSSs', educators' and principals' needs and interests utilizing common definitions and content.
6. The parties shall work towards establishing a network for collaborating, monitoring, and analyzing the progress of the LSSs in the development of SLOs.
7. The parties recognize the importance of local flexibility in SLO implementation, but shall strive for consistency and common language across LSSs and within each district.
8. Through their collaboration, the parties will foster a spirit of collegial respect, transparency, and inclusion in their work around SLOs.
9. The parties, in working with LSSs, commit to ensure fidelity and shall, therefore, hold constituent groups accountable for accuracy and endorsement of the content of SLOs, the process of employing SLOs, and the commitment to using SLOs.
10. The parties shall jointly initiate a study and issue a report in August 2016 regarding the implementation of SLOs; the effective use of professional development to implement this initiative; and the impact of SLOs on student growth.
11. This MOU may be executed in counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original but all of which taken together shall constitute one and the same agreement. This MOU may be executed by facsimile signature or electronic exchanges of documents bearing a scanned signature, and a facsimile or copy of a signature is valid as an original.
12. This MOU may be extended beyond August 26, 2016 by agreement of the parties.

Additional review of reoccurring themes from October to May indicated increasing confidence level trends throughout the year. (see Fig. 2) LEA Teams expressed full confidence in their ability to produce the annual deliverables on the agreed upon timeline.

Fig. 2: October 2013 – May 2014 Confidence Trends



Year Four Stocktake

A full stocktake of Year Four will commence following the submission of teacher evaluation data on July 15, 2014. This annual stocktake will be the focus of TPE Communication Bulletin 27 in August. It should be noted that the upcoming data submissions represent a sizeable number of data points (500K+) which will require careful compilation and methodical analysis. This will be accomplished in partnership with the TPE Team, MACC@WestED, and research personnel at MSDE. This is sensitive work that must be executed in precise fashion to insure the fidelity of the process and the integrity of the findings. The State hopes to have the analysis of the ratings available in October and the analysis of the component measures by mid-December.

Teacher Equity

The relationship between teacher performance and student needs has been of interest to USDE since the inception of TPE. At the same time that States are struggling with educator effectiveness, advocacy groups believed that USDE was allowing states to sweep teacher quality gaps under the rug. USDE is asking states to create plans ensuring that all students have access to effective teachers and it will publish a list this fall of states where children from minority and low-income families aren't getting their fair share of these teachers. In addition to flagging states where effective teachers aren't reaching at-risk children, the agency's "Educator Equity" profiles to be published this fall will note schools and districts excelling in equalizing effective teacher access. Education Secretary Arne Duncan is writing to state education chiefs asking them to revisit plans first created in 2006, required by Title I of NCLB. States will have to submit new plans by April 2015, using data and discussions with educators and parents to come up with local solutions. The U.S. Department of Education will spend more than \$4 million on a technical assistance network to help states develop and implement their solutions.

Technical Assistance

Ben Feldman

bfeldman@msde.state.md.us

Implementation Grants

LEAs are reminded that funds from this year's TPE Implementation Grants are to be expended by September 1, 2014. Please keep Ben Feldman apprised of your progress at bfeldman@msde.state.md.us or call 410 767 0142.

Sustainability Grants

As part of MSDE's Year Five No Cost Extension, TPE is providing assistance in the form of Sustainability Grants to participating RTTT LEAs. Information, including award amounts, was distributed to LEA Points of Contact in mid-June. Given the intended USDE timeline for the closure of RTTT, these grants will have to be fully expended by June 30, 2015. Official Notification of Grant Awards (NOGAs) will be issued to eligible LEAs as soon as the C-125s and Narratives are returned to Ben Feldman. Questions about the Sustainability Grants should be referred to Ben Feldman, bfeldman@msde.state.md.us or at 410 767 0142.

Data Collection

The Data Collection Manual was finalized and shared with the LEA technical assistance and data leads in June. The manual was developed collaboratively and has been subjected to extensive comment. It provides layouts for teacher data, due to MSDE July 15, 2014, and for principal data, due to MSDE September 1, 2014. Any questions about the Manual should be referred to Ben Feldman, bfeldman@msde.state.md.us or at 410 767 0142.

Leadership Development

Ilene Swirnow

iswirnow@msde.state.md.us

Joe Freed

jfreed@msde.state.md.us

Frank Stetson

fstetson@msde.state.md.us

Tom DeHart

tdehart@msde.state.md.us

Liz Neal

eneal@msde.state.md.us

Sphere 6-8 Professional Development

Sphere 6 Professional Development is planned for the week of September 15 and will be targeted towards instruction with a focus on the construction of high quality and rigorous Student Learning Objectives. Initial details for the Year Five Spheres of Influence were developed during the TPE Team's planning retreat in mid-June and will be forwarded to LEA TPE Points of Contact by August. Most significant will be the formation of LEA SLO Implementation Teams to attend the September convening and construct local strategies for assuring high-quality and rigorous SLOs in 2014-2015. This work will be planned in partnership with MSDE, MACC@WestEd, and signatories to the recent Memorandum of Understanding. This coordination will help to insure a common language among educators, a common communication of information, and a similar implementation of strategies and timelines for Student Learning Objectives. Similar coordination will occur with work related to Sphere 7: Communications and Stakeholder Capacity (December) and Sphere 8: Using Systems Thinking to Sustain TPE (March).

Crafting Professional Development Plans in Response to Evaluation

Each year provides a step in the progression of TPE – 2012-2013 was about workable models; 2013-2014 was about full implementation; and 2014-2015 is about response to evaluation. For the first time we can put into practice the crafting of professional development for teachers and principals in response to evaluation as a means of improving teacher practice and principal leadership. With this in mind, it is essential that Principals and Executive Officers use the process to demonstrate an intentional connection between information within the evaluation and the design of the teacher's or principal's professional development plan. Within a school, it is of further importance to demonstrate an alignment between individual and collective professional development plans to support the greater School Improvement Plan. The alignment of Professional Development Plans and School Improvement Plans has the greatest potential for addressing the priority learning needs of students and for elevating the performance measures of student populations within schools and a cross districts. Principals and Executive Officers must give strategic thought to this process during the summer and in advance of teacher pre-conferences.

ABC News/ITN SLO Video

Maryland was recently highlighted as part of an education industry news video on Student Learning Objectives. The video provides a four minute tutorial on the use of SLOs and their potential for measuring student growth, elevating student performance, and influencing classroom instruction and school leadership through effective teacher and principal evaluation. To view the video go to: <http://itnproductions.wistia.com/medias/q39i5e545m>.

Research and SLOs

From time to time we are asked questions about the research that supports the use of SLOs in evaluation and recently MSEA queried MSDE for an update. MACC@WestEd and the Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) serve Maryland as both critical friends and experts on the use of SLOs and provided this information.

Research on SLOs: Denver

- ✚ High quality objectives were shown, in a four-year comprehensive study, to correlate to higher student performance on both the teachers' own measures and on independent measures of student achievement. Students whose teachers had high quality SLOs outperformed their peers at elementary, middle and high school levels.
- ✚ Increased numbers of Denver teachers were able, over time, to craft higher quality objectives.
- ✚ Teachers and principals observed that the SLOs led to greater focus on what was important.
- ✚ Work with SLOs contributed to increased teamwork and collaboration.

Research on SLOs: Charlotte-Mecklenburg

- ✚ There was a substantial difference in growth rates between students of teachers with SLOs and students of comparison school teachers without SLOs.
- ✚ There was a significant relationship between the quality of SLOs and student achievement.
- ✚ SLOs provide a measure of student growth and a measure of teacher practice.

Findings: Classroom, School and Systemic Advantages of SLOs

- ✚ Motivates the entire school system to be more critical and scientific consumers of multiple measures of student learning.
- ✚ Capitalizes on and respects the professionalism of teachers by formalizing their craft knowledge.
- ✚ Strengthens the relationship between the principal and teacher.
- ✚ Includes teachers in the process, overcoming some of the negative associations with evaluating teachers, in part, on student results.

Using MSAs to Inform Student Learning Objectives in 2014-2015

Recently, MSDE provided guidance on how State test data might be used to inform Student Learning Objectives. Recall that this application is a requirement within the State's ESEA Flexibility Waiver Extension. The following guidance was framed in the form of Frequently Asked Questions and Situational Scenarios.

Frequently Asked Questions

“Provide a three year period (2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016) for refining the application of and increasing confidence in SLOs as a measure of student growth in the evaluation process”

1. *What is the current status of the student growth component in the Teacher/Principal Evaluation System and how do Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) fit into the system?*

The pending Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver Extension request that was submitted to the United States Department of Education (USDE) in March 2014 allows Maryland to use SLOs that are informed by state assessment data to measure student growth in the evaluation process until the end of the 2015-2016 school year. The Maryland State Department of Education will notify local school systems when the request is approved.

2. *Why is Maryland requesting permission from USDE to focus on SLOs informed by student assessment data?*

The Maryland Teacher/Principal Evaluation Model requires the use of state assessment data. The requirement originated with the *Race to the Top* Grant Program and was bolstered by the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act Flexibility Waiver*, which further obligated the state to use growth measures based on state assessment data in evaluations. During the 2013-2014 school year, Maryland received a waiver for ESEA that requires Maryland school systems to calculate and analyze the use of growth measures but not apply them in evaluation for any type of personnel consequence. During the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, state assessment measures will not be available as Maryland transitions to the PARCC Assessment. The use of state assessment data to inform SLOs allows school systems to use available data to continue to do this work and replaces the 20% application of state assessment data on evaluations during this interim.

3. *Is this a permanent replacement of the 20% MSA student growth component for teachers and principals?*

It provides an interim solution as the MSA is phased out and multiple PARCC data points become available. The use of state assessment data as a direct component of evaluation will become possible again in the 2016-2017 school year.

4. *To whom does this interim use of assessment data to inform SLOs apply?*

The interim allowance for using state assessment data to inform SLOs applies to principals and to only those elementary, middle and high school teachers who teach in state assessed areas.

5. *What is the requirement for HSA Government and Biology teachers?*

Since the ESEA Waiver Request extends the present condition, High School Assessments are given under the same requirements they were in 2013-2014. Each teacher must have an SLO with a data point based on an HSA.

6. *What is the minimum number of SLOs that must be included for each eligible teacher and/or principal that are based on state assessment data?*

One

7. *What is meant by "inform"?*

Local school districts have much flexibility in determining how to use state assessment data to inform SLOs. For example, state assessment data may identify needs with regards to a particular subgroup, content area, or standard within a content area. Specific examples of how SLOs might be informed are below.

8. *If state test data must be used to inform the SLO, will state test data also be used as the measure of the target for the SLO?*

No, local school districts will use locally approved assessments and measures for the target.

9. *How many years will this transition phase be in place?*

This transition will be in effect for the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years. During this transition from MSA/HSA to PARCC, the Maryland State Department of Education will work closely with school systems and other stakeholders to continue to examine the components of the model and to study component performance by using data simulations. This effort will allow Maryland to refine its evaluation components and process.

10. *Will the State Principal and/or Teacher Evaluation Models change as result of what is learned during the next two years?*

This plan is designed to move Maryland through this transition; however, as indicated in the response to question 9, a great deal of study and analysis will be done during the next two years. What is learned during these two years will inform improvements to the model prior to state assessment data being factored into the model in 2016-2017.

11. *Will local school systems need to modify their teacher and principal evaluation models as a result of this transition?*

At least one SLO that is informed by the MSA/HSA in 2014-2015 and PARCC in 2015-2016 that is valued at 20% must be included for principals and tested area teachers. If a school system already has this component in place, no change is necessary.

12. *Will local school systems need to submit changes to their evaluation models to MSDE for approval?*

Yes—a process of submission will be communicated once approval of the extension has been granted.

13. *What tools and resources are available for local school systems to implement this change?*

Maintaining the work of SLOs requires three conditions; a means to informing the SLO with state assessment data, a means to constructing rigorous SLOs, and a commitment by stakeholders to do the work well. During the summer of 2014, MSDE will provide sample methodologies and tools for locating the data that can be used to inform the SLO. In September and October, extensive professional development will be rolled out to LEA professional development coordinators, LEA leadership, MSDE staff, principals, and teachers to demonstrate how rigor can be incorporated into an SLO. Finally, a joint Memorandum of Understanding will be signed by MSDE, MSEA, PSSAM, MABE, MASSP, and MAESP committing all six groups to collaborate in the training, implementation, analysis, and communication of a combined effort around SLOs.

Four Situational Scenarios

Number One

The principal and instructional leadership team at Blue Elementary School have been busy reviewing state assessment scores and data from the spring of 2014. The team was not surprised to find that the students at Blue Elementary continued to score at high levels. In fact, over half of the students in the building scored at the advanced level in reading. Even though the trend line for Blue Elementary school is quite good, the staff always spends a great deal of time looking for ways to improve. Reviewing the reading data from the MSA Administration of 2014, the staff found that while the overall percentage of students in the advanced category increased, the percentage of Hispanic students at the advanced level decreased. Another interesting factor the staff noted was that the percentage of Hispanic students in the school increased by 20% over the previous year. After reviewing all of the assessment data, the staff and the principal decided to focus on moving more Hispanic students to higher levels of achievement in reading using the SLO process. They will determine if they should write grade level or building wide SLOs as they dig deeper into other building and system data beyond what the state assessment results can provide

Number Two

The principal and instructional leadership team at Red Middle School have been busy reviewing state assessment scores and data from the spring of 2014. The team was not surprised to find that the students at Red Middle continued to lag behind the other middle schools in their county and in the state in mathematics achievement. In fact, 40% of the students in the building scored at the basic level. As the team looked more closely at the results, they found that two of the six areas in the math assessment were causing them the most problems:

- Standard 6.0 Knowledge of Number Relationships and Computation/Arithmetic
- Geometry and Measurement

After reviewing all of the assessment data, the staff and the principal decided to focus on work around Standard 6: Knowledge of Number Relationships and Computation/Arithmetic because in the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards there is a focus in grades six and seven on two topics identified Number Relationships and Computation/Arithmetic: ratios and proportional relationships and fractions. The staff believes that if they are going to increase student achievement and prepare their students for Algebra I, they must ensure that the students have a solid understanding of fractions and ratios and proportional relationships. Staff will mold their instruction based on what they learn and then use the SLO process to determine if progress is being made. The staff will determine if they should write grade level SLOs or SLOs that are specific to each math course as they dig deeper into other building and system data beyond what the state assessment results can provide

Number Three

The staff and administrators at Green Elementary School have spent time since June looking at and thinking about the State Assessment data from the spring 2014 Administration. In the area of math, staff members theorize, based on a review of data and other school-based data and information, that 4th graders may have missed some of the critical content they needed this year because of the shift from the old curriculum to the new curriculum the school system created based on the Maryland Career and College-Ready Standards. After reviewing the assessment results and other information and data available at the school level, the staff members plan to write SLOs for 5th grade math that ensure that students complete elementary mathematics with all of the necessary skills and understandings. They used the PARCC Model Content Frameworks to identify the major clusters on which to focus

Number Four

At Orange Middle School, staff members have spent summer school improvement process time examining the results from the administration of the 2014 state reading assessment. The principal spent much of July analyzing the disaggregated data in reading. What she found was that of the student populations served in the school, the student groups based on race/ethnicity are all more than 5 points above the state average and each disaggregated group has more than 90% of the students in the proficient/advanced range. This has been the trend at Orange Middle for the past several years. When looking at the students who are economically disadvantaged however, the picture is quite different at all three grade levels. There is a considerable gap in performance for these students. The administration and staff have decided to write SLOs based on their analysis of the state assessment data that focus on improving reading comprehension, particularly in the area of informational text, for economically disadvantaged students. The staff will decide if they should use the same SLO for each grade level or customize it for each grade level as they dig deeper into other building and system data beyond what the state assessment results can provide.

Sustainability: Teacher and Principal Preparation Programs

As RTTT begins to wind down, increasing focus must be directed to sustaining the work that has occurred. In the area of Leadership development, a large part of the responsibility for content and practice will shift to Institutes of Higher Education. This is particularly true if teachers and principals are to know and be able to do the work of evaluation processes, professional practice, and SLOs. As the next Professional Development Spheres of Influence are constructed, greater strategic attention will be given to delivering the information to institutes that are charged with the preparation of teachers and principals. The TPE Team is exploring best methods for maintaining this dialogue with the professionals responsible for training our next generation of educators.

Communications

Laura Motel
lmotel@msde.state.md.us

Gmail @ MSDE

Gmail is coming! The Governor's Office has mandated that all State Agencies implement Gmail as the official State email service. About half the State Agencies have already converted to Gmail and MSDE is well on its way. Early adopters of Gmail within MSDE (at least two individuals in each Department) have already made the switch to the new email system – they are receiving training and becoming familiar with the system so that they can support the rest of the staff in their Department/Division/Unit when the entire Agency moves to Gmail on August 11, 2014. We are excited at new ways of com that that Google Apps will enable all of us to communicate and collaborate better. Some of the great benefits of the Maryland.gov email platform (Gmail) are:

- **Access Maryland.gov Mail anywhere, anytime:** Get your email, calendar, contacts and documents from any computer with an internet connection.
- **Lots of storage:** You'll get a full 30GB of online storage for your email, so you may never need to delete a message again.
- **Real-time collaboration:** Create documents, spreadsheets and presentations with your team all at the same time.
- **Integrated chat:** Communicate instantly with your coworkers or colleagues from our sister agencies right from your email interface. In addition, all chats are automatically saved in your Maryland.gov mail account for convenient retrieval of important information.
- **Easy-to-build team web sites:** With Maryland.gov Mail, your team has the ability to quickly publish a robust internal web site on which to house shared information such as documents, spreadsheets, presentations, files and videos. You can even embed calendars and gadgets on your site for enhanced functionality.

New MarylandPublicSchools.org Home Page

In late May, MSDE launched its new MarylandPublicSchools.org home page. The design of the new home page is based on the current template developed by the Governor's Office and aims to be more user-friendly and easier to navigate. MSDE staff also provided feedback on an earlier mock-up of the home page and those suggestions informed the final version that is now live.

This is a massive process and MSDE's webmaster, Joshua Walley, has done terrific work to prepare and update the new home page. We need both your assistance and your patience as we work to provide the public with the best information about Maryland public schools in the most user-friendly manner. Send your thoughts to: employeefeedback@msde.state.md.us.

MSDE's Communication Hub

Design work has commenced on MSDE's Communication Hub. An MSDE Team visited several educational and private sector facilities to experience the potential for such technologies. This improvement will greatly enhance efficiencies; simultaneously reducing travel while allowing for timely and effective video-conferencing across the State. The expectation is that the Hub will be operational on January 1, 2015. While the design system should be compatible with LEA technologies, MSDE will be creating and distributing a general set of specifications to LEAs so they know what capabilities they will need to fully participate in Communication Hub meetings. This information will be supplied in August to complement the TPE Sustainability Grant assurances and timeline. Local Superintendents have been apprised of this initiative and the need to position their systems and in advance of January.

New TPE Structure, Communication Bulletin, and 2014-2015 Plan

As the work of TPE evolves each year, our operational structures and plans similarly change based on what we learn and how we respond to the next chapter of the work. Our current structure will change in response to the expanding needs of the Principal Pipeline, the increased focus on SLOs, and the ability of educators to refine their execution of the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards, PARCC, and TPE. In August, Communication Bulletin 27 will represent the annual stocktake of last year's work and set the direction for TPE in the final year of RTTT. The Bulletin will also assume a pattern and format that models this next chapter of the work and demonstrates the plan for 2014-2015.

Sustainability of TPE Beyond RTTT

As MSDE approaches the finish line of Race to the Top, it becomes necessary to consider how to determine the success of TPE, how to identify elements of value, and how to create sustainability for those elements of value beyond June 2015. Determining implementation success will continue to be a process of obtaining feedback from teachers, principals and LEAs. However, determining the degree to which evaluation has used the resultant professional development plans to improve the instructional craft of teachers and the leadership skills of principals will require longitudinal data for several years. Over time, a comprehensive study of effectiveness ratings and the relationship of the component measures contributing to the ratings will provide valuable information and, when related to student performance measures, an indication of whether the continuous professional development plans of teachers and principals has contributed to student growth. The strategic alignment of district, school, and educator improvement plans will be essential to shepherding the simultaneous and intentional elevation of teacher, principal, and student performance. A combination of resource-focused strategies will need to be employed to sustain these proven elements of value. The re-organization of existing resources at MSDE and the identification of additional resources to support TPE will be a part of this strategy. Partnerships, including MSDE participation in third-party grant opportunities, will further supplement sustainability. Plans are already underway for partnerships that will increase teacher capacity with SLOs, intensify SLO services to select LEAs, nurture a critical friend relationship with Connecticut, and use Maryland as a model for regional and national TPE.

Special Thanks to Dr. Burgee

For the past two years, Linda Burgee has added her expertise and credibility to the TPE Project and more specifically to the development of SLOs in evaluation. Her leadership with SLOs as a student growth measure directly contributed to its emergence as a significant evaluation component in both the teacher and principal evaluation models. As a pioneer in this work, Dr. Burgee brought great credit to MSDE and the TPE Team and nurtured the relationships that brought national resources to our door and recognition to our State. The TPE Project is grateful for the talent and friendship that Dr. Burgee brought to our team and wishes her well in retirement.

Coming soon...Year 5 RTTT...TPE...Align, Streamline, & Pipeline