

## Office of Teacher and Principal Evaluation

**Dave Volrath:** *Planning and Development*

**Tom DeHart:** *Aspiring & Promising Principals*

**Liz Neal:** *Institutes of Higher Education*

**Ilene Swirnow:** *Professional Development; Executive Officers and Principals*

**Joe Freed:** *Professional Development; Teachers and Principals*

**Frank Stetson:** *Professional Development; Teachers and Principals*

**Ben Feldman:** *Technical Assistance*

**Laura Motel:** *Communications*

**Teri Windley:** *Administrative Assistance*

## Highlights: SLO Progress Survey Results, Communications Convening, ESEA

*Bulletin #30 was delayed to include information timely to the March 24 Maryland State Board of Education meeting*

*The integration of  
Teacher and  
Principal Evaluation  
with MSDE  
organizational and  
technology  
structures*

### **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA): Renewal or Reauthorization?**

Recall that when ESEA was originally authorized, all states and LEAs were expected to comply with the 100% proficiency expectation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) by 2014. While not reauthorized, an ESEA Flexibility Waiver for 2012-2014, supported by competitive Race to the Top funds and a Waiver Extension for 2014-2015, allowed states to maintain progress outside of the NCLB 100% proficiency mandate. Principle 3 within the Waiver speaks specifically to the implementation of new evaluation systems. As Maryland's ESEA Flexibility Waiver and Extension prepare to expire in June 2015, the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) has offered a three-year renewal of the Flexibility Waiver with continued focus on the four principles; including Principle 3. Dr. Jack Smith, MSDE Chief Academic Officer, is currently leading stakeholders through a process to construct Maryland's ESEA Renewal Application. Dr. Smith presented this information to the Maryland State Board of Education (MSBE) on February 24, 2015. Final approval from the MSBE will be sought on March 24 after a period of public comment. The Renewal application can be accessed at [http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/esea\\_flex/](http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/esea_flex/) along with answers submitted to MSDE during the public comment period, through Survey Monkey, and posed by the committee overseeing the application process.

Concurrent to Dr. Smith's work, Congress is making progress towards a possible Reauthorization of ESEA. Bills are being marked up; meaning that debate could commence, amendments be offered, and a bill put to a vote and forwarded to the President yet this spring. While Reauthorization would reset the table, Dr. Smith's work assures that Maryland will have a solution should the Waiver expire before Reauthorization is enacted or if Reauthorization fails to be passed. Similarly, the Renewal work will be of equal value in helping Maryland respond should Reauthorization occur.

### **March 3 & 4 TPE Convening**

The final convening of TPE LEA Teams for 2014-2015 focused on sustainability and reflected on the culmination of five years of work around Teacher and Principal Evaluation. Teams were again comprised of the same two teachers (MSEA/BTU endorsed), the same two principals (LEA Principal Advisory members) and the same two Executive Officers who have represented the district throughout this year. Given the nature of this convening, we also included each LEA's TPE Point of Contact and invited superintendents. The combined voices of teachers, principals, supervisors of principals, superintendents, and the district TPE leader has the greatest potential for determining what we have learned about TPE and where we might go as a state. The Office of Teacher and Principal Evaluation (OTPE) wishes to thank those superintendents who found time in their busy schedules to join their teams. Findings from the convening will be reported in Communication Bulletin #31.

### **TPE Sustainability Grants**

Supplemental grant funds were recently provided to LEAs to sustain their work with Teacher and Principal Evaluation. The OTPE is awaiting the budget office's final processing of the LEAs' Notification of Grant Awards (NOGAs) and hopes to get these additional funds in the hands of LEAs imminently. MSDE and the OTPE are pleased to have provided nearly \$5M in grants for LEAs to use with local discretion in their implementation of TPE. The assurances associated with these funds have guaranteed that every principal has been provided with hand held portable technology to conduct the work of teacher evaluation, that every LEA has systems in place to manage the flow and reposing of evaluative information, and that LEAs have the technical capacity to seamlessly transfer local TPE data to State repositories. These assurances not only assist principals with evaluation efficiencies but are also critical to the LEAs' and the State's ability to understand the long-term impact of TPE ratings, evaluation model performance, evaluation component measure performance, and the alignment of school improvement plans with educator professional development resulting from evaluation. Sustainability Grants must be completed and submitted by April 1, 2015.

### **Annual TPE Data Gathering and Reporting**

From April 20-May 15, WestEd/CTAC will again be conducting a comprehensive annual report on Maryland's progress with TPE. It will involve surveys, interviews, focus groups, and case study LEAs. Details are being forwarded to superintendents and TPE Points of Contact.

## Evaluation Models Component Analysis

During the February 24 MSBE meeting, Dr. Dan Bugler of WestEd presented the initial findings on the performance correlations for the component measures in the LEAs' teacher evaluation models. A full review of this data will be conducted during March and will be reported out in Communication Bulletin #31. Dr. Bugler's PowerPoint presentation can be accessed at [http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/tpe/docs/Analysis-MD-LEA-TeacherRatings-MSBE-Presentation\\_2.24.15.pdf](http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/tpe/docs/Analysis-MD-LEA-TeacherRatings-MSBE-Presentation_2.24.15.pdf).

### 2014-2015 TPE Ratings Data Collection

Over winter and spring 2014, representatives from interested LEAs worked with Dave Volrath, Tim O'Quinn, Dan Bugler (WestEd), and Ben Feldman to develop the file submission specifications that were used to collect the teacher and principal evaluation ratings. These data were collected in early summer 2014 from all 22 RTTT LEAs. Last year, USDE required a full demonstration showing how TPE models would have performed if the state assessment had remained as a consequential component of the final rating. To comply, all LEAs ran their data with and without the MSA scores. This year there is no assessment data to collect, and unlike last year, USDE will not require Maryland to demonstrate the TPE models with and without a state assessment. This greatly streamlines the reporting task. However, as TPE has evolved, other variables have surfaced as important. For example, when the data were presented to the State Board in October 2014, there was a specific request to flag and track beginning teachers. To continue this collaboration, the TPE Team has invited interested data leads to confer again, so that the process reflects consensus and can be executed as efficiently as possible.

On March 3 and 4, 2015 the TPE and LEA teams convened at the Annapolis Sheraton Hotel. Many of the individuals who were part of the original Data Collection Work Group were already onsite. Moreover, Dan Bugler, who conducted the inferential analysis of the data, is part of the program and he was available to join the data collection conversation. Also, former Work Group members—and data contacts from all LEAs who are not participating in the convening, per se—were invited to attend a work session on either day, dedicated to revisiting the data collection procedures. During these sessions, the Work Group struck obsolete fields from the 2014 consensus layout and assembled the list of emerging variables. New variables will be subjected to the same analysis questions that informed last year's work: Will new variables compromise confidentiality? Will all LEAs be able to report new variables? What will be the best, consistent format to capture new variables? The outcome of this work will be the first draft layout for School Year 2014-15. This product will anchor the subsequent discussion which will lead to a consensus data submission process for use in summer 2015.

### Student Growth and Professional Practice

The renewal of the State's ESEA Waiver has concurrently renewed interest in the design of state and local evaluation models. The most immediate interest has focused on the 50% Student Growth and 50% Professional Practice balance. Recall that in the absence of conclusive research to indicate any particular percentages, Maryland chose a balanced application of percentages and subsequently a high standard relevant to student performance. With significant actual data now available, the State can construct situational demonstrations of how altering the metrics within the framework yields different rating outcomes. In a recent study of 20,672 comparable teachers and principal ratings, the State incrementally increased the value of Professional Practice and decreased the value of Student Growth in ten-percent intervals. At each interval, the percentages of teachers receiving Highly Effective ratings were significantly reduced with variable minimal impact on Ineffective Teachers. As the ESEA Renewal discussion unfolds the State recommends maintaining the 50% Student Growth and 50% Professional Practice balance for the following reasons:

- With only a single year's data in hand, it would be irresponsible to proceed in a direction that would potentially reduce the Effectiveness Ratings of 8,000+ of Maryland's best teachers and principals. "Do no harm" remains a prudent approach.
- Changing this greater metric, while LEAs are conducting research on their local model metrics, will make it impossible for districts to verify that changes in subsequent local data can be attributed to changes in their local models.
- Concurrent to doing no harm, it reaffirms Maryland's commitment to the prominence of student performance at a high level of standard.

Most significantly, it continues what the State and its LEAs agreed to do in the ESEA Waiver Extension of 2014-2015.

This information will be expanded further in Communication Bulletin #31, which will focus heavily on the analysis of Evaluation Component Measures.

## Sphere 7 LEA Team Convening December 9 & 10, 2014: Communications and Building Stakeholder Capacities

The winter TPE convening for LEA teams was held on December 9 and 10 in Annapolis and focused on the topic of building and executing effective communication strategies. On the first day of the convening, attendees heard from renowned communication strategist and former White House Press Secretary to President Bill Clinton, Mike McCurry; participated in a question and answer panel discussion led by MSDE Chief of Staff, John White, and featuring national and local communications experts, including Bob Farrace, Director of Public Relations for the National Association of Secondary School Principals; Kelsey Donohue, social media expert currently with the U.S. Department of State; Bill Reinhard, MSDE Media Relations Lead; and Mike McCurry; and worked in teams to strategize effective means for improving internal communications at the local level, specifically getting information to the classroom and creating messages that resonate with school-based staff.

Executive Officer Feedback: Aspen Report

On each day, the Aspen Institute Education & Society Program facilitated an off-the-record focus group with the LEAs' executive officers, or their delegates, to solicit feedback and suggestions for how MSDE could communicate better, with a particular focus on ensuring teachers get the information they need. Key findings from the focus groups and recommendations from executive officers are presented below. Maryland's perspectives and responses are also provided.

### *Emergent Themes*

- Executive officers shared that MSDE staff members worked hard to address their concerns and questions. They also expressed high regard for Dr. Lillian Lowery's leadership and engagement, especially her messaging during this year's PARCC meetings and after last year's dip in MSA scores. Participants provided several examples of MSDE staff members' commitment to providing quality service and support, including responding to inquiries while on vacation. While they appreciated this assistance and dedication, they observed that staff turnover and the elimination of some contractual positions funded through Race to the Top meant that MSDE was implementing complicated initiatives with less capacity and they lamented the loss of institutional memory this turnover represents.

*MSDE's Perspective: The Office of Teacher and Principal Evaluation (OTPE) is fortunate that its staff of professionals has remained somewhat constant over the last three years. This has enabled it to preserve historical recall and maintain an accurate and continuous record of the work. Despite this stability, the OTPE faces the same concern over the loss of staff and resources once supported by RTTT funds. This is of particular concern as it manifests itself in commitments made in Maryland's application for ESEA Renewal. The OTPE is collaborating with MSDE's Chief Academic, Chief Accountability, and Chief Operating Officers to determine the means and the method for sustaining evaluative services to LEAs, the Principal Pipeline, MSDE content experts, and offices of assessment. A comprehensive plan is being considered that would consolidate services and capitalize on existing resources to the mutual benefit of MSDE and LEAs.*

- Focus group participants wanted MSDE information for school leaders and classroom teachers to come through central office rather than MSDE contacting building staff directly. Executive officers shared their impression that direct communication with school-level personnel was a relatively recent change in MSDE's practice and the officers expressed a desire not to be left out of the chain of communication regarding educators in their districts. The officers suggested they can minimize confusion and maximize awareness/understanding when they deliver MSDE's messages and tailor them to the proper audience. Executive officers remarked that they are better positioned to share information with the right audiences, which is especially critical given email fatigue. Because teachers are usually more connected to people in their district than to state officials, it also could ensure that communication comes from someone teachers see as a trusted source and make it more likely the messages are prioritized. Several participants shared they sometimes felt that their credibility was undermined when principal supervisors and building principals would approach them with information that the executive officers had not yet received, and this same dynamic played out in schools when teachers would bring questions to principals before the principals had received the information. Some participants suggested the Friday memo from Dr. Lowery to LEA superintendents could be used to explicitly request certain messages be relayed to principals and teachers.

*MSDE's Perspective: The State continues to recognize and respect the role of the local superintendents to disseminate information within the district's communications structures and it will encourage LEAs to insure that information reaches Executive Officers in a timely manner. Superintendents already have the discretion to forward relevant parts of Dr. Lowery's Weekly Transmittal to members of their staff. The OTPE is sensitive to insuring that superintendents receive TPE information through their networks prior to releasing it to the public or to LEA staff and believes that this concern is best addressed through internal LEA investigation. Regardless, where protocols allow, the OTPE will look for ways to further engage Executive Officers in the communication process.*

- Executive officers saw an opportunity for MSDE to assert proactive leadership regarding PARCC messaging. They reported that without clear communication from MSDE on PARCC, every district is developing its own plan and often relying on information from PARCC's website. They thought it would be particularly helpful for MSDE to target messages to parents, as well as to county councils and executives on the value of new assessments before the first results are released. Several executive officers shared that they valued MSDE's messaging strategy on the drop in MSA scores during the 2013-14 school year, but thought that the delivery came too late to fully benefit their districts. They hoped that MSDE would start developing and releasing PARCC and opt-out messaging as soon as possible so it is in the field before spring testing begins. They also suggested that producing high-quality videos about PARCC and the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards would be helpful, especially for teachers. (Participants were not familiar with MSDE's online PARCC modules but were critical of webinar recordings generally as an effective means for broad dissemination.)

*MSDE's Perspective: While the execution of TPE interfaces with state tests, actual details of test administration reside in the Division of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. These concerns are addressed specifically in the recommendations section (below) and will be passed along to the Division of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.*

- On a related note, they viewed the release of TPE data as a learning opportunity for the system. Executive officers shared that the TPE data were released to them at the same time that they were released to the public, and they did not feel that they had adequate time to prepare for press inquiries. They did not think that MSDE provided sufficient messaging around the districts' different distributions of effectiveness ratings, which they attributed to differences in system design and implementation in addition to genuine differences in teaching quality. Executive officers would have preferred opportunities to preview MSDE's messages so they could suggest refinements and also prepare more effectively for their inquiries about their own data.

*MSDE's Perspective: The state agrees and made multiple offers to brief superintendents in advance of the release of the Ratings Data. The OTPE will continue to offer briefings and to provide advance information through existing LEA structures and PSSAM.*

- Executive officers noted that they often receive inconsistent answers from different MSDE offices over time. They cited the use of verbatim reading during testing, device (e.g., calculators) use and availability during testing, the use of practice tests, and opt-out policies as examples where MSDE's responses change depending on when the officers asked the question or which office they consulted. They said that they understood that circumstances and information can change, but asked that MSDE be more proactive in updating them and offering thought partnership on the implications of the changes. As one executive officer shared, "Give us the bad news—it's okay if you do, but we need to know. And then let's realistically plan the next steps together."

*MSDE's Perspective: The OTPE will convene an exploratory committee of interested executive officers to consider better ways to effectively engage executive officers in the formative stages of information and action. The Exploratory Committee and MSDE will make recommendations regarding the construction and execution of meetings for executive officers in SY 2015-2016. The Committee will review the effectiveness of their plan in spring of 2016 in preparation for SY 2016-2017.*

- Executive officers encouraged MSDE to reorganize resources to better support end users' needs. They shared that the Blackboard site used to host materials for executive officers was organized by meeting date, but they thought that grouping materials by subject would be more helpful. They also asked for an internal website where executive officers could share resources with each other. Many executive officers mentioned visiting Georgia's resource page or EngageNY, both of which they reported were very user-friendly. They found MSDE publications such as the "Top 10 Things Parents Need to Know about Testing in Maryland" flyer to be helpful resources as long as information is thoroughly vetted prior to publication to avoid reprints and having constituents referencing conflicting versions.

*MSDE's Perspective: The Exploratory Committee previously referenced will consider this information as they plan for SY 2015-2016.*

#### *Aspen Recommendations and Maryland Response*

- Make PARCC *the* priority, not *a* priority. Implementing PARCC is the executive officers' primary concern, and some wished that they could have spent the day strategizing on PARCC rather than learning about communications strategies that did not specifically focus on the test. As one executive officer put it, "Do less, better." One suggestion was to prepare a graphic organizer to explain for what purposes and on what timeline PARCC results would be used; executive officers do not think they all have the same understanding as each other or MSDE on these points.

*MSDE's Response: Maryland's executive officers' recommendations regarding PARCC communications were right in line with much of the work that MSDE's Office of Communications has been engaged in and working towards since the start of the 2014-15 school year. Increasing communication and strategic messaging around the State's new PARCC assessments has been a focal point of MSDE's communication efforts since fall 2014, kicking off the first school year that Maryland students will be taking the new tests. The State has been working to develop communication resources (including information sheets, FAQs, timelines, and more) that speak specifically to how PARCC is being implemented in Maryland and what our students can expect. Between mid-January 2015 and the start of testing in March, MSDE provided weekly "Prepare for PARCC" updates, with links to tips, tools, and resources to help inform parents, students, and other members of the school community about Maryland's new state assessments. These updates were emailed each week to local superintendents, assistant superintendents, and school principals, with instructions to share that information with their school staff and parent communities. MSDE also developed a new website, "[Prepare for PARCC: What Every Parent Should Know](#)," dedicated to providing parents with the resources that will be most helpful and informative to them, including new [PARCC videos](#) and information about upcoming webinars. In addition, MSDE has been and continues to communicate about PARCC through social media using the hashtags #PrepareForPARCC and #PARCCready. The State's PARCC communications campaign is still ongoing and, now that testing is well underway, will shift its focus to explaining what the new test scores will look like and how the scores will be used. The PARCC campaign will continue through the end of 2015 when test scores are released. [Sign up to receive PARCC email updates here](#).*

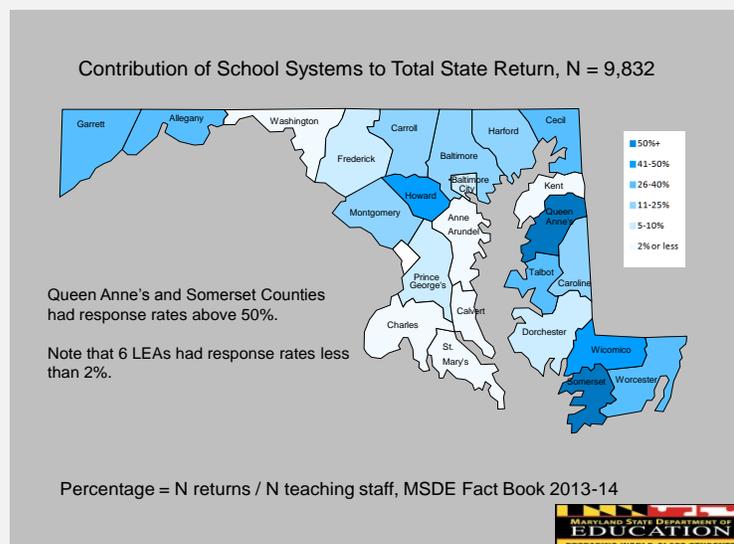
- Reconvene the Executive Officers' Network meetings. Executive officers reported that these meetings have been displaced by TPE meetings that serve a different function, and they reported deeply valuing the professional learning community that the Network meetings fostered. Executive officers asked for the opportunity to reconvene and focus the meetings on PARCC implementation.

*MSDE's Response: A calendar of Executive Officer Meetings will be developed in response to the findings of the Exploratory Committee. The Exploratory Committee will identify a process for information sharing, agenda development, and responding to executive officer interests. The OTPE would hope to be able to provide recommendations from the Exploratory Committee by mid-May. Concurrently, MSDE will explore a means for facilitating regular topical conversations with superintendents.*

## Communications Processes

Following the December 9-10 Communications Convening, MSDE conducted a three-week statewide survey of teachers and principals. The survey was constructed by representative members of the State's SLO MOU Team, with consultation from CTAC, and served the dual purpose of providing evidence of SLO progress and evidence of communication processes.

The following slide depicts the distribution of LEA response rates. The intent was to capture the breadth of the penetration of SLO work across the State and to illustrate statewide communications effectiveness. Participation was not mandated or leveraged and there are many factors that contribute to an LEA's ability to participate in a survey at any particular time. Deepening shades of "Blue" represent higher levels of response rate and may indicate districts where communication structures are moving information efficiently to schools and classrooms.



**Communication Structures** - It is clear that across the State information can and is making its way to teachers and administrators; as almost 10,000 educators responded during a short survey window. It was also clear that creating limited questions and using multiple avenues to reach educators may facilitate increased respondent participation. The State recommends that LEAs who could not participate in December execute the survey independently to insure that local communication structures are working and that educators in their LEAs are reporting similar results.

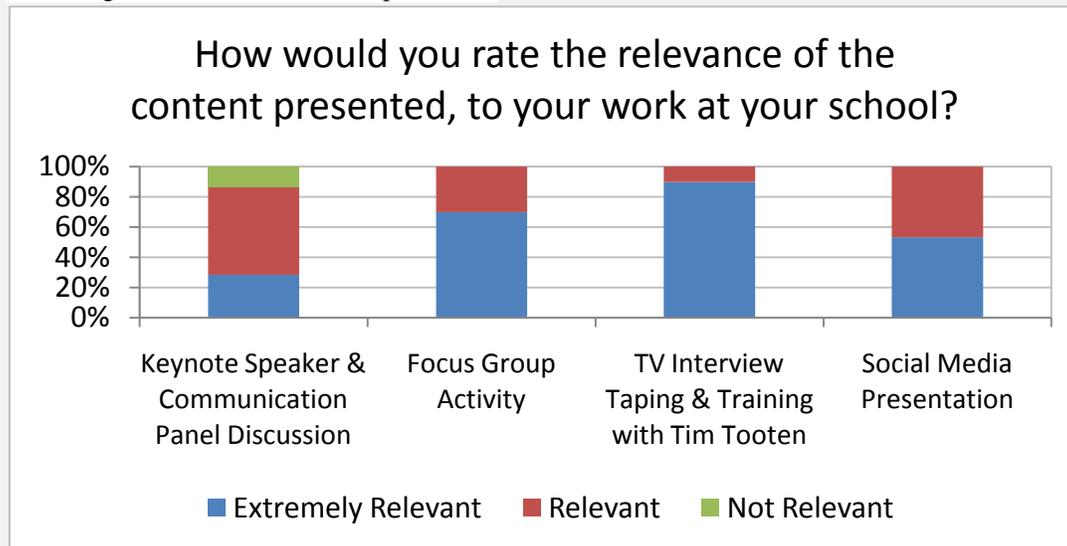
## Governor's Promising Principals Academy

The Governor's Promising Principals Academy was highlighted nationally in the January 21, 2015 edition of Ed Week. The story featured many of our State's assistant principals and can be found at the following link:

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2015/01/21/maryland-grooms-assistant-principals-to-take-schools.html>

This component of Maryland's Principal Pipeline has also gained the interest of the National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the Wallace Foundation. The Promising Principals Academy's potential as a model program for principal preparation was also referenced by the National Association of Secondary School Principals in testimony before congressional committee in January. The OTPE appreciates the support that superintendents have given to this forward-thinking initiative and looks forward to the future benefits that will be realized by LEAs and their participants.

In addition to fully participating in the convening agenda on communications (referenced above in the section describing the December LEA Team Convening), the Promising Principals Academy members participated in mock TV news interviews in which they were filmed responding to scenarios involving probable crisis situations in their school. These videos were critiqued during a media training session led by local TV education reporter, Tim Tooten of Baltimore's WBAL-TV. Their communications work was capped off with a presentation and training session about managing social media and best practices for using social media to engage with their school communities (parents, students, & teachers). Feedback received from participant about their experience during the Winter Communications Convening of the Promising Principals Academy was overwhelmingly positive, with 93 percent of respondents reporting that overall the convening met or exceeded their expectations.



*Feedback from Promising Principals Academy Participants on December Convening*

<http://msde.state.md.us/tpe/LEAConveningAgenda03030304.pdf>

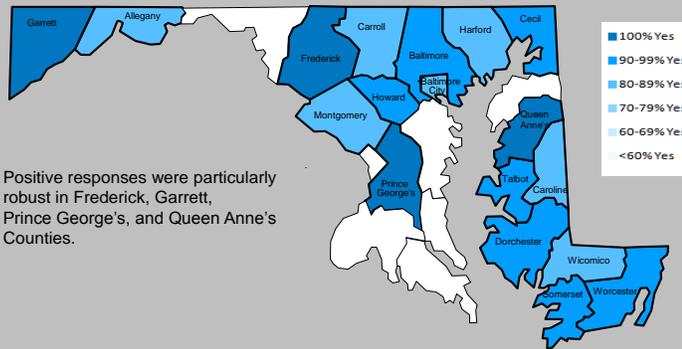
## Winter Principal Advisory Meeting

On February 5, 2015, the OTPE conducted its winter meeting of the Principals Advisory Council from 9:00 AM-1:30 PM at the Ascend One Building in Columbia, Md. This meeting is intended for the two principals currently identified by LEAs to serve on their district TPE Teams and will introduced them to the new rubric and scoring guide for principals' SLOs.

## SLO Progress Survey

The MOU Team was sensitive to the time demands placed on educators, collapsing the survey to seven key questions, and while LEA participation was not mandated, almost 10,000 teachers, principals, and assistant principals responded. The voluntary and interest-driven nature of the survey elevates the potential for the results to be an authentic reflection of teacher, assistant principal, and principal perspectives. The seven key questions were constructed by MSEA, MASSP, MAESP, MASSP, MSDE, and CTAC. Darker shades of blue indicate increased levels of positive response. It should be noted that in most charts, even the lighter shades of blue constitute 50-60% positive response rates. The following comments are reflective of the 18 LEAs with adequate response rates. The OTPE wishes to thank MSEA, BTU, MASSP, MAESP, and local superintendents for supporting the distribution of the survey.

Positive perceptions that there is a common SLO language are reported across all regions of the State.



Positive responses were particularly robust in Frederick, Garrett, Prince George's, and Queen Anne's Counties.

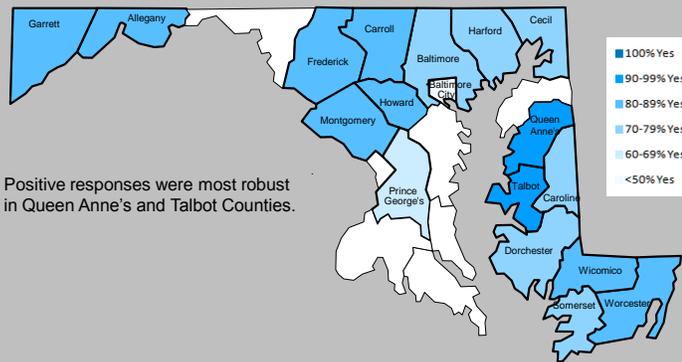
Question...Is there a common language being used in your district to describe the SLO process?



Question 1: Is there a common language being used in your district to describe the SLO process?

More than 70% of respondents across the State reported that there was a common language around SLOs occurring within their district. LEAs ranged from 60%+ to 90%+ in favor of supportive answers. While not representative of the quality of the language, these data clearly indicate that LEAs are working to accomplish some commonalities in content and expectations. Determining the fidelity of such communications will become part of our on-going work.

Broad positive perceptions reported across all regions of the State that school-based staff are being helped to recognize quality in an SLO.



Positive responses were most robust in Queen Anne's and Talbot Counties.

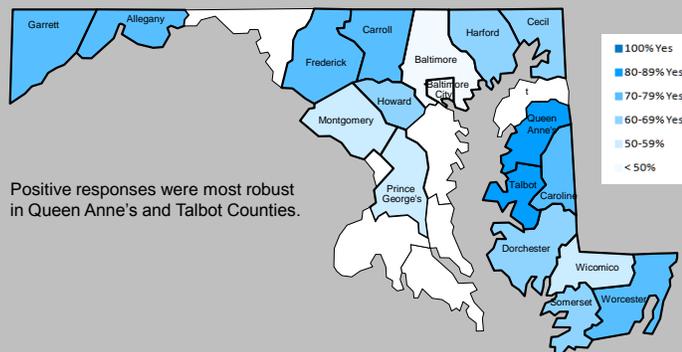
Question...Are you being helped to know what quality looks like in an SLO?



Question 2: Are you being helped to know what quality looks like in an SLO?

Two out of three responders indicated an understanding of what constitutes quality in an SLO. While variations probably exist across LEAs, the degree of the response would imply that the content and focus of the professional development that was delivered in September is penetrating LEAs. LEAs must take the next step to establish internal quality controls for assuring the high quality and rigor of SLOs and determining methodologies for demonstrating that high quality SLOs resulted in elevated student performance.

LEAs were more cautious to confirm that SLO-based meaningful conversations about instruction occur, most falling in the 60% range.



Positive responses were most robust in Queen Anne's and Talbot Counties.

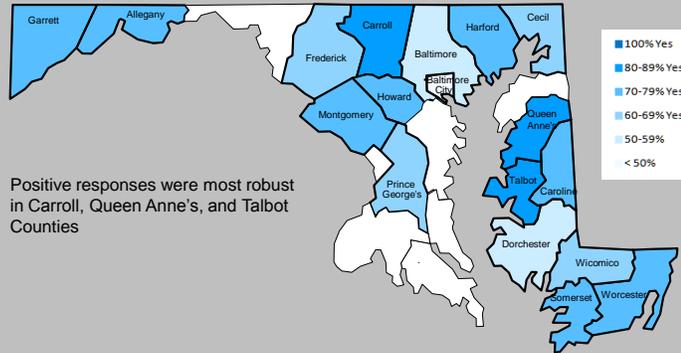
Question...Are you having meaningful conversations about instruction with your evaluator based on your SLOs?



Question 3: Are you having meaningful conversations about instruction with your evaluator based on your SLOs?

From the outset, conversations between educators and their evaluators, which resulted from the construction and execution of SLOs, were deemed as the most valuable factor in the application of SLOs to any evaluation process. While much work remains to be done, 60% or more reported that SLOs were leading to meaningful conversations about instruction – a strong indicator of their potential as a contributing performance measure.

Although LEAs give a positive sense that the SLO process is becoming more manageable, strong data is concentrated in few LEAs, most others responding in the 60% range



Positive responses were most robust in Carroll, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties

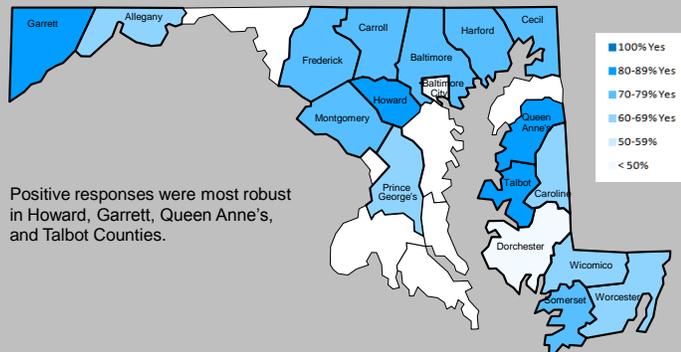
Question...Are you being helped to make the SLO process more manageable?



Question 4: Are you being helped to make the SLO process more manageable?

Almost 70% of responders said they are receiving help with manageability. This strong response is evidence that LEAs have put into place structures for incorporating SLOs processes into the design and delivery of instructional services to educators. It further indicates that system educators are committed to and are embracing the use of SLOs.

The preponderance of the LEAs responded positively, in the 60-79% range. No LEAs were in the 90-99% or in the 50-59% positive range.



Positive responses were most robust in Howard, Garrett, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties.

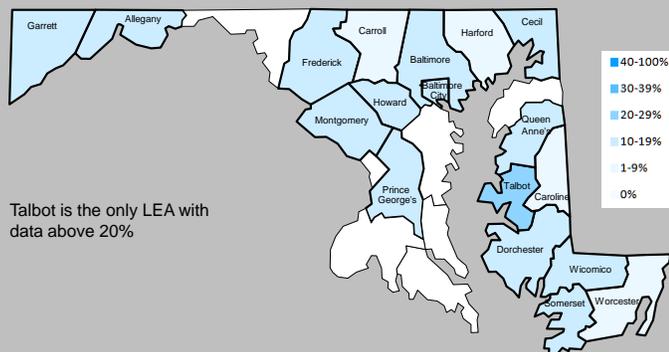
Question Do you know where to go for more help with the SLO process?



Question 5: Do you know where to go for more help with the SLO process?

Like Question 4, the 75% positive response rate for Question 5 implies that LEAs have systems in place to help teachers and principals understand SLO content and use the SLO process. It implies that communications and professional development are occurring in some form, and that systems thinking and systems are being aligned to accomplish the integration of SLOs into the educational fabric of instruction and evaluation.

15 LEAs reported positive responses about use of the Formative Assessment website between 10% and 14%.



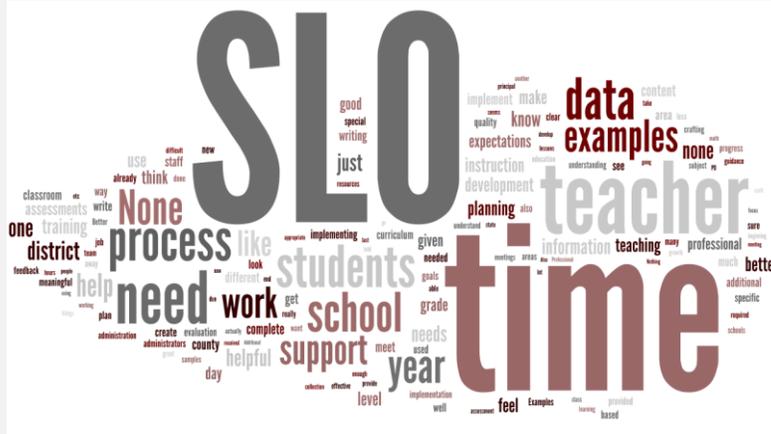
Talbot is the only LEA with data above 20%

Question...Have you accessed formative assessment website\* to help with your SLO?... msde-fame.blogspot.com



Question 6: Have you accessed the Formative Assessment Website to help with your SLO?

During the September Convening, LEAs were referred to the Formative Assessment website for resources to assist in the monitoring of SLOs during the evaluation cycle. While the website is still in pilot status, and many educators have since accessed the site, there remains a need to advertise and direct teachers and principals to this valuable resource. LEAs are encouraged to have educators visit the Formative Assessment website as part of their ongoing professional development around SLOs. <http://msde-fame.blogspot.com/>



Question 7: What support do you need from your district to be better at crafting and implementing your SLOs?

As would be predicted, concerns over time, support, data, and workload continue. Conversely, the central roles of the teacher, the students, and the school are apparent. Encouraging words such as “like”, “good”, “better”, “know expectations”, and “professional” bode well for the continuation of the work around SLOs as a viable and acceptable measure of Student Growth.

### Professional Development for Higher Education

A statewide SLO convening for Maryland’s teacher and principal preparation programs was held at Stevenson University February 11, 2015. All twenty-three institutions of higher education were invited to send a team. Participants examined a *SLO Quality Rating Rubric* to evaluate a sample SLO, and learned various approaches to setting growth targets. The teams also worked to develop a plan to align and document SLO elements in their preparation programs.

In April, professional development will be provided for Maryland’s Approved Alternative Preparation Programs. These programs, sponsored by local school systems, prepare candidates seeking a new career in teaching. Alternative preparation program elements must align with their local school system evaluation models.

On May 2, 2015, MSDE Teacher and Principal Evaluation staff will present *Frameworks for Aligning SLOs in Teacher Preparation Programs* at the Statewide Professional Development Schools (PDS) conference held at Bowie State University. Teacher candidates engage in all aspects of the SLO process during their 100 day PDS internship.