

Office of Teacher and Principal Evaluation

Dave Volrath: *Planning and Development*

Tom DeHart: *Aspiring & Promising Principals*

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

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Ben Feldman: *Technical Assistance*

Laura Motel: *Communications*

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Highlights: Component Measures Analysis, ESEA, Annual TPE Progress, & Data

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

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

Maryland's Waiver Renewal Application remains under review at USDE. USDE indicates that responses to States are forthcoming but are not being processed in any particular order or priority. Maryland hopes to get some direction regarding its application shortly. In the interim, ESEA Reauthorization lulls in congress as amendments are offered and the process grinds forward.

Annual TPE Progress Report: Data Gathering

WestEd completed its annual TPE information gathering on May 22. The Office of Teacher and Principal Evaluation appreciates the cooperation that LEA provided to seamlessly expedite this process. In addition to interviews and LEA case Studies, more than 18,000 teachers responded to the survey. Findings from the collection will be collated and reported to the MSBE and LEAs in early fall.

OTPE Retreat and Plans for SY 2015-2016

In mid-April, the OTPE conducted its annual program planning retreat for SY 2015-2016. Based on feedback from various stakeholder and participant audiences, OTPE will consider the following in developing next year's work plan

- Increasing LEA participation
- Reducing travel and costs for the LEAs
- Utilizing WebEx video conferencing technologies
- Providing opportunities for Executive Officers to meet for timely informational briefings
- Maintaining professional development focus on SLOs and increasing focus on professional practice and rater reliabilities
- Providing more "group alike" interaction sessions
- Providing timely statewide briefings and communications strategies for releasing annual ratings and end of year data

A full professional development delivery plan will be provided to Superintendents on June 5 and will be copied to TPE Points of Contact.

MSDE Technology Upgrade

MSDE has completed upgrades to its facilities to accommodate video conferencing via its WebEx platform. Recall that LEAs gave assurance to MSDE of their ability to engage in such conference delivery methods conditional to receiving local TPE RTTT grants. LEAs should give thought over the summer as to how they would like to conduct such meetings locally and designate local locations and supports in advance of the fall. Such thinking will benefit many as multiple groups at MSDE begin to take greater advantage of this meeting modality.

The Next Generation of Teacher and Principal Evaluation

From May 19-20, a team representing teacher, teacher leadership, superintendent, principal, and state interests joined teams from five other regional states in Atlanta, to re-engage in conversations about the next generation of work surrounding teacher and principal evaluation. The timing of these discussions complemented the expiration of Race to the Top, the Extension or Reauthorization of ESEA, the submission of the State's Equity Plan, and the imminent collection of year-two effectiveness ratings data.

Over the course of two days, with facilitation by the Southern Regional Education Board and guidance by experts from Ki-Thoughtbridge, Maryland's Team experienced simulations and utilized tools to understand how to effectively communicate and better negotiate with people of varying interests. Candid and rich conversations were conducted around the current state of teacher and principal evaluation in Maryland. Team members openly articulated their hopes, their fears, and their concerns for the future of education and recognized that their interests were more alike than different. With attention to the challenges, the needs, the stakeholders, and the vision; the team embraced discussions on moving forward. While much is yet to be learned and determined, there was absolute agreement and conviction to continue the work around teacher and principal evaluation in Maryland.

Of significance, was the Team's belief that evaluation needs to be merged into a greater vision of continuous improvement as we examine the performance of students, teachers, administrators, and educator preparation programs. The synergy generated by a focus on comprehensive growth, bolstered by relevant performance evaluation measures in each group, has the potential to vault public education to a new level of acceptance and accomplishment. To that end, the Team has proposed the following:

- That a multi-stakeholder cross- functional team of educators be convened in summer of 2015
 - to explore the potential of continuous improvement to support comprehensive educational growth
 - to consider the possible general tenets of such thinking
 - to investigate and reflect upon current evaluation models and identify practical outcomes
 - to demonstrate how existing evaluation models might integrate into such thinking
 - to communicate information and findings to constituent groups
- That planned professional development for LEAs in SY 2015-2016 be continued and include
 - ongoing attention to enriching and refining the SLO process and its contribution to student growth
 - efforts to improve the reliability and the inter-reliability of evaluators
 - a renewed commitment of effort around the elements of professional practice.

The Team believes that the proposal will re-engage stakeholders in a conversation that will guide evaluation practice and process and perceptions of practice and process towards one of a professional growth model.

Kudos to the Work in Maryland

Huffington Post recently referenced the work that Maryland is doing around Teacher and Principal Evaluation...

...the voices of teachers are often not heard sufficiently. As a teacher in a mid-Atlantic state [notes](#), "First, they should have introduced the new standards, then the new assessments, and only then used the standards and assessments for purposes of evaluation. They got the sequence wrong. We support the standards but haven't been prepared to do this work well." Again, we see the importance of balancing urgency with the need to build the skills of educators to implement new systems at a high level of quality. We must create common cause and take genuine responsibility for supporting our frontline educators in preparing students for the future.

There is a different way of conducting business. One promising example is the agreement in [Maryland](#) between the state department of education, the state teachers union and six other major associations that are working together to support teachers and principals to implement student learning objectives effectively. This approach to teacher and principal evaluation is based on strengthening instruction and improving student learning. Surmounting partisan differences over evaluation systems, leaders in Maryland are moving forward purposefully with a new kind of broad-based agreement that focuses on supporting frontline educators

The State remains firmly committed to the belief that evaluation is a means for identifying the professional development that will improve the instructional craft of teachers and the leadership skills of principals and that these improvements lead to ever increasing levels of achievement for students.

A full accounting of the Huffington post can be accessed at

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/william-slotnik/long-overdue-a-new-discou_b_7275982.html

Analysis of 2013-2014 Effectiveness Ratings and Component Evaluation Measures

2014-2015 TPE Ratings Data Collection

The final Draft of the TPE Data Submission was distributed to LEAs. Ben Feldman will review any last minute recommendations and complete the final version for distribution to LEAs by June 15. The file window for Effectiveness Ratings and Component Measures for Teachers opens June 23 and are due at MSDE by July 15, 2015. The file window for Principals opens August 11 and data are due at MSDE by September 1, 2015.

Changes To PARCC Assessments

Maryland students in grades 3-8 and high school will spend less time taking State assessments next year as a result of changes approved unanimously by the multi-state consortium governing the tests. The Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) voted to consolidate the PARCC assessment's two testing windows into one and cut total test time by about 90 minutes overall beginning in the 2015-16 school year. The changes were made in response to feedback from parents, students, and educators during the first year of testing and a careful review of test design.

The revisions to PARCC will:

- Combine the two English language arts and two math testing window to one 30-day window near the end of the semester or the school year.
- Reduce the number of test units that students will take from 8 or 9, depending upon the grade level, to 7 or 6.
- Cut the testing time for students by about 90 minutes overall depending on content and grade level.

The first full year of PARCC implementation in Maryland has gone smoothly for the most part, with more than 1.3 million tests administered and completed. The new assessments, aligned to Maryland's College and Career Ready Standards, replaced the Maryland School Assessment tests this year. This decision supports concerns expressed by principals and executive officers at our December and March Convenings and represents a change in response to those concerns.

Evaluation Models Component Analysis

When the scope of the Teacher Principal Evaluation RTTT project changed from a state-controlled system to a direct investment in LEA systems, USDE required MSDE to demonstrate that LEAs would be able to develop and implement these "quality" systems. This meant not only executing evaluation models, collecting data, and submitting it but also engaging a third party to provide an independent assessment of State and LEA efforts. This independent review, coupled with critical support, was provided under the umbrella of the MidAtlantic Comprehensive Center (MACC). The contract for the MACC is currently held by WestEd. Partnering with MACC at WestEd is CTAC, the group which has provided much of the training and materials supporting the implementation and developing of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs).

The lead researcher assigned to assist Maryland has been Dan Bugler. Dr. Bugler has been a partner in the work of identifying critical questions, supporting development of the data collection instruments and protocols, and reviewing of the performance of LEA models.

The MSDE Descriptive Analysis:

In October 2014, MSDE presented a descriptive analysis of 43,805 teacher and principal ratings to the Maryland State Board of Education. This description is presented in [Communication 29](#). In brief, most educators in Maryland are effective or highly effective. The percentage of ineffective teachers is approximately twice what it had been under former staff evaluation models. There are clear differences among LEAs by size, geographic location, and kind of school—elementary, middle or high. More compelling and concerning is the clear stratification of the data with federal flags for majority poverty and majority minority schools. Principal data tended to mirror teacher data, although teacher data stratified with the School Performance Index tiers more clearly than did principal data. MSA data, when it was included or excluded, was also examined and tended to benefit teachers when included in the teachers' total score.

The WestEd Inferential Analysis of Models:

The MSDE analysis was not intended to probe differences which might be operating within LEA models. All twenty-two LEAs ran approved local models, although there are strong similarities across all models. This task, to ascertain the internal coherence of the models, was left to the purview of WestEd. The [WestEd analysis](#) was presented to the State Board in February 2015.

To summarize the WestEd findings: the models are different, and the differences matter.

When sorting LEAs by the degree to which measures of Student Growth correlated to the overall rating, LEAs tended to cluster into two groups: those with weak correlations to Student Growth and those with strong correlations. Among these, some LEAs showed parallel correlation between Professional Practice and Student Growth. There was a small number of LEAs that fell into a "sweet spot" where the measures of Practice and Growth matched closely, suggesting that in these districts, value was equally given to both halves of their models. Carroll and Queen Anne's Counties are notable exemplars.

The four Professional Practice domains were, according to summary measures, largely flat across the state. Among Student Growth measures, the second SLO was a stronger contributor to the total accrued points.

The most dramatic of the WestEd exhibits sorted the LEAs by the correlation measure for Professional Responsibility.

Correlation of Professional Practice Components and SLOs to Total Rating

	SLO1	SLO2	Planning	Instruction	Environment	Professional
Talbot County (N=295)	0.92	0.92	0.20	0.19	0.22	0.11
Harford County (N=2316)	0.57	0.57	0.13	0.12	0.14	0.13
Charles County (N=1643)	0.71	0.73	0.22	0.23	0.23	0.22
Garrett County (N=294)	0.42	0.17	0.48	0.40	0.46	0.29
Caroline County (N=364)	0.55	0.65	0.20	0.32	0.21	0.29
Prince George's County (N=382)	0.01	0.74	0.65	0.40	0.64	0.32
Calvert County (N=999)	0.37	0.43	0.37	0.42	0.36	0.38
Cecil County (N=1090)	0.36	0.36	0.41	0.48	0.46	0.38
Allegany County (N=555)	0.36	0.39	0.48	0.54	0.53	0.44
Queen Anne's County (N=519)	0.32	0.38	0.44	0.52	0.57	0.49
Washington County (N=1370)	0.05	0.13	0.63	0.63	0.64	0.54
Baltimore County (N=2301)	0.75	0.76	0.61	0.60	0.63	0.59
Somerset County (N=207)	0.73	0.76	0.50	0.47	0.51	0.61
Anne Arundel County (N=5011)	0.23	0.24	0.69	0.71	0.67	0.63
Howard County (N=4230)	0.41	0.21	0.63	0.60	0.60	0.63
Carroll County (N=1641)	0.58	0.61	0.67	0.64	0.63	0.65
Saint Mary's County (N=1062)	0.60	0.60	0.68	0.75	0.69	0.71
Kent County (N=154)	0.34	0.34	0.79	0.80	0.79	0.80
Dorchester County (N=322)	0.32	0.39	0.84	0.84	0.85	0.85
Wicomico County (N=957)	0.33	0.38	0.86	0.84	0.87	0.86
Worcester County (N=640)	0.54	0.55	0.89	0.89	0.90	0.88
Baltimore City (N=5037)	0.18					

The correlation statistics for the other three Professional Practice domains and the two SLOs are also shown. At the top of the distribution, is an LEA where the SLOs correlated very high (92% percent of the observed variance in the total rating can be attributed to either of the SLOs) but the correlation to the Professional Practice domains is negligible, generally around 0.2. While it may be argued that a correlation around 0.5 suggests chance, the flip of a coin, a low correlation suggests that two elements are working contrary to one another.

At the bottom of the distribution, is an LEA where each of the Professional Practice domains correlates strongly to the total rating, generally around 0.89. The SLO ratings are weaker, 0.54-0.55 but they do contribute toward the total score. Carroll County again has all components operating within close tolerance with each other, but the correlations for Saint Mary's evidence similar balance. Notice that WestEd was required to dismiss some records prior to analysis for various reasons.

WestEd independently observed and confirmed a finding that MSDE shared in Communication Bulletin 29: that in some LEAs, the total score is not predictive of the final rating. There are LEAs where a discreet score makes an exact cross walk to a final rating. Examples of these would be Anne Arundel and Prince George's Counties. However, there are other LEAs some educators with high scores earn lower ratings and vice versa. In some cases this reflects local approaches such as entering Practice and Growth summative ratings into a decision matrix. In Bulletin 29, LEAs were urged to conduct independent analysis of these observations and make their own diagnoses why this may have occurred or what it implies for future model refinements.

Another salient finding in the WestEd analysis is that while elements in models may appear to be the same thing in the evaluation schema, the underlying performance can be very different. Examples given tend to illustrate elements which in one LEA may have a normal distribution (staff showing a variety of earned points) but in another may fall into unimodal or bimodal distributions, as though the component was treated as a yes/no variable. Slide 9 and 10 in the WestEd presentation illustrate four different components which, on paper, are comparable but in actual distribution are widely different.

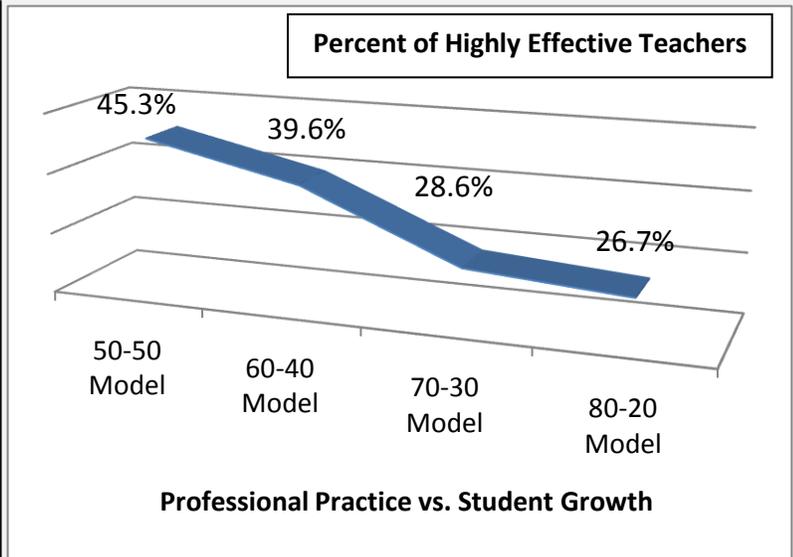
WestEd offered two recommendations. First, the work of rigor and consistency—already identified as an action area in prior reports and surveys—needs to continue. Second, LEAs must address the performance of internal factors which influence teacher ratings with their stakeholders. Attention to the first recommendation should mitigate concerns with the second recommendation.

Observation: Student Growth vs. Professional Practice

Despite differences in local evaluation models, 20,676 Teacher and Principal Evaluation ratings are available to conduct scenario driven analyses and comparative research across the state. These comparables constitute almost fifty percent of the teacher and principal population ratings collected in SY 2013-2014 and represent a viable cohort to explore evaluative relationships.

Teachers earn the highest percentage of Highly Effective Ratings when Student Growth is 50%

In an effort to better understand the evaluative relationship between Student Growth and Professional Practice, student growth percentages were incrementally decreased to observe the impact on effectiveness ratings. Statewide year-one data suggested that higher percentage values of Student Growth benefitted teacher effectiveness ratings. The State will revisit this phenomenon in year-two and explore potential root causes for this unexpected finding.



OTPE is presently studying the data and relationships behind Highly Effective educators and Ineffective educators to determine if there are trends that may define or predict successful performance. This will make for fascinating research as second year data becomes available.

ISLLC Standards

Debate continues over the construct of the refreshed ISLLC Standards and the interplay between principal standards and principal dispositions. The discussion focuses upon the degree to which principal dispositions should overlay fewer standards versus having more standards that are specific to principal dispositions. For instance, should equity be a disposition of principal performance that permeates all of the standards or should it and similar dispositions stand alone as separate standards? This determination results in vastly different designs: particularly in the number of standards and the values attributed to principal dispositions. Are ten standards too many or too few? Are dispositions towards ethical behavior more important than dispositions towards courage, innovation, or collaboration? These are difficult decisions that the committee is addressing in the final stages of this work.

Principal Supervisor Standards

While a proposed final draft of the Principal Supervisor Standards is moving forward, its final endorsement must coincide with the refreshed ISLLC Standards to insure appropriate alignments. Obviously, this work will need to be delayed as the ISLLC refresh is finalized.

IHE

Professional development for Maryland's approved principal preparation programs will be held June 18 at McDaniel College. Programs have been invited to send teams to the training and will receive resources and guidance for integrating the SLO process into program outcomes. OTPE's Strategic Plan will also be shared to demonstrate the State's methodology for keeping Higher Education informed during SY2015-2016. The role of IHE in TPE will increase as data systems begin to identify promising practices that can assist in the future content design of educator preparation programs.

Promising Principals Academy

The second year cohort of LEA nominees to this program will begin their work on June 15-18. The OTPE has made a significant investment to expand upon last year's proven successes with additional experiences to better prepare Maryland's next generation of school leaders. We wish this year's participants well as they embark upon this journey and build upon the foundation that was started last year.

A strategic plan, which includes a quality control process and addresses the primary interests of Student Learning Objectives, Communications, and Sustainability