

High Quality Professional Development

Progress on Option 2 Activities

Districts that submitted plans for integrating the teacher professional development planning framework included in the *Maryland Teacher Professional Development Planning Guide* into school improvement planning should report on their progress on each of the four tasks included under this option. The four questions and specific issues to be addressed in the progress reports follow below.

1. Actions to Assure that Somerset County has Integrated the Teacher Professional Development Planning Framework into School Improvement Planning Guidance

a. The School Improvement Plan template has been revised.

- A professional development planning form has been added to the SIT template.
- An additional consideration for planning and implementation has been added to the 6 steps. School Improvement Teams are directed to use the Response to Intervention or RTI in developing Teacher Outcomes. Somerset County believes that just as students may need a different level of instruction and follow up, so do teachers.
- This planning form was used in the development of 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 School Improvement Plans.

b. Schedules and procedures for the approval of all parts have been established.

- An overall schedule of the training, integration of professional development and completed SIT plan was completed in 2009.
- A monitoring and evaluation timeline has been established that defines when specific parts of the Professional Development plan should be completed.
- These were modified after the 2009-2010 School Improvement Plan was completed in November 2009.

c. A process to monitor, provide feedback and approve all SIT Plans is in place.

- Central office staff consisting of the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Secondary Supervisor, and Elementary Supervisor is responsible for monitoring and approving SIT plans.
- Additional staff, including several lead instructional coaches will meet with above supervisors to provide feedback.
- The Option I scoring tool, provided by MSDE was used to evaluate the professional development plans of all SIT plans in 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.
- A complete description of this process can be accessed in the 2009 Master Plan Update for Somerset County Public Schools (<http://www.somersetcountypublicschools.org>).

2. Completion of Training Principals and School Based Leadership Teams in Using the Professional Development Framework

a. Training was completed during the 2009-2010 school year.

- A complete description of this process can be accessed in the 2009 Master Plan Update for Somerset County Public Schools.
- This description is complete with all artifacts.
- Leadership teams completing the above described training then trained their corresponding School Improvement Teams.

b. A leadership conference was held on July 7, 8 and 9, 2009 to begin work on the professional development plan.

- Each school developed three separate plans: one for reading, math and higher order thinking.
- The plans are described in the 2009 Master Plan Update as well.

3. Process of Preparing District Staff for Reviewing and Providing Feedback on Professional Development Plans.

a. The process for reviewing and providing feedback on professional development plans for district staff was completed in 2010.

- The district staff who reviewed plans also participated in the initial training on the Maryland Professional Development Guide with School leadership teams.
- District staff studied the MSDE Option 1 checklist for reviewing professional development.
- Reviewing staff included the Option 1 checklist with the Title 1 SIT plan rubric during peer reviews.

b. Limited training on using the Option 1 Professional Development Review Form was provided.

- Review staff completed the same training as the leadership teams regarding the Maryland Six Step Professional Development Plan.
- Review staff determined the need for training was minimal, and chose to learn to best use the instrument through practice.
- Formal training of district personnel was limited to discussion and agreement on what would satisfy the requirements.
- No formal outside training for the supervisors occurred.

c. The Option 1 Professional Development Review Form will be used during School Improvement Plan "Peer Review" again this year.

- The Option 1 Review Form will remain a part of the monitoring for School Improvement Plans.

- Staff will use the Option 1 Review Form along with the main rubric.

4. Monitoring the implementation and impact of the school based professional development activities by reviewing school improvement plans

a. School based plans are monitored for the inclusion of the Maryland Professional Development Plan.

- School based plans have utilized the Maryland 6 step plan for the last two years.
- Only major professional development initiatives will utilize the full, 6 step process

b. Patterns of strength were seen in how schools addressed each of the six elements.

- All plans were built on an analysis of student data. (Leadership teams continually look at data, so data analysis is second nature.)
- Plans included what teachers needed to know and be able to do.
- Plans clearly indicated who should participate.
- All plans included activities and some included follow up.
- Some plans included an evaluation plan.
- Most plans provided for follow up activities to be delivered by instructional coaches and/or principals and supervisors.

c. Patterns of weaknesses were seen in how schools addressed each of the six elements.

- Some teams have difficulty identifying specific learning needs from data. If the data identified many weaknesses, teams had difficulty prioritizing and directing initiatives toward the most critical weakness.
- Some teams have difficulty aligning measurable, observable indicators to outcomes
- Some teams have difficulty in planning specific activities to achieve the intended outcomes.
- Most plans did not describe the relationship between the initiative and other professional development activities.
- Most evaluation plans involves the delivery of professional development rather than causal relationships. This is because of limited resources and staff to accomplish higher order evaluative data.

d. School teams continue to have difficulty using the Title 1 SIT template and the new Professional Development template.

- The Title 1 template includes a required needs assessment and data analysis component which is to also be used for professional development planning.

- The next section of the Title 1 template is the strategies/activities which includes all the strategies a school would use, including professional development.
- Some sites are able to “pull” their main professional development from this section; others have difficulty coordinating all activities.

e. Professional Development at most sites is differentiated and embedded.

- All schools are staffed with instructional coaches.
- Schools at the elementary and middle level have both reading and math instructional coaches.
- At the 4 elementary and 1 intermediate level schools, both reading and math proficiency rates are in the middle 80 percent range which has required major instructional changes.
- Professional Development sessions are targeted to the Classroom Focused Improvement Process (CFIPS).
- Common assessment data is analyzed to find why students may not have mastered indicators; plans to remedy these students’ weakness as well as enrich students’ learning who did master the material are developed.
- Teachers struggling with instructional weaknesses are worked with individually.
- Instructional coaches continually meet with staffs, facilitating instructional conversations and promoting collaboration with strategies.

f. Lessons learned from 2009-2010.

- The Maryland 6 step Professional Development Plan is an excellent guide to make wholesale instructional changes or to implement new initiatives or programs.
- The plan should be used when the data indicates major changes or new instructional programs are needed.
- The Central office requirement that each school generate three plans may have distracted teams from determining their major initiative.
- Requiring one plan may have been more productive and enabled leadership teams to focus on fully developing, implementing, and monitoring one initiative.
- This exercise, as well as utilizing CFIPS (Classroom Focused Improvement Process), has identified the ability to analyze data, and determine a research based intervention strategy as a weakness among staff.

New for 2011:

COMAR regarding teacher induction/mentoring and new reporting requirements as part of the Master Plan process were submitted to the State Board of Education for approval in March, 2011. Each LEA must provide the following information regarding their teacher induction/mentoring program:

A description of the mentoring program;

Data regarding the scope of the mentoring program, including the number of probationary teachers and the number of mentors who have been assigned; and

The process used to measure the effectiveness of the induction/mentoring and the results of that measurement.

1. The Content, Structure and Participant Outcomes of the Following Elements

a. Orientation Program (held before the school year begins).

- New teachers spend three days of hands on learning during new teacher orientation, occurring the week prior to the beginning of school.
- The anticipated outcome of the session is to better prepare new teachers for their teaching experience and to provide a good introduction/relationship with their mentor.

b. Topics of Orientation (facilitated by the Mentor Coordinator), topics covered during the session include;

- Introduction to their school and community.
- A review of the mentor/mentee program.
- A one on one meeting with the Mentor Program Coordinator and the new teacher's individual assigned mentor.
- A review of teacher certification requirements.
- An overview of school system departments focusing on their function – including student services/social services, health education and technology initiatives.
- A review of core standards.
- Group discussions focusing on effective teaching practices, classroom management, parent/community relationships, PBIS, and assessments.
- Meeting/Conferences between the new teachers and assigned mentor in their classroom at the individual school.

c. School Year Program (after the New Teacher Orientation and during the school year).

- Support from a mentor.
- Regularly scheduled opportunities to observe or co-teach with skilled teachers.
- Ongoing professional development sessions.

- Ongoing formative review of new teacher performance that is based on clearly defined teaching standards.
- d. **The anticipated outcome of the mentor support requirements is to help the new educator in becoming an effective teacher in a positive environment that is open and conducive to learning through a peer “coaching” approach.**

Activities to support this outcome are:

- Meet with the mentee daily or weekly as necessary
 - Conduct observations of the mentee’s instruction
 - Provide written feedback and observation forms to the mentee and the Program Coordinator
 - Have dialogue with the Mentor Coordinator about the mentee’s progress and areas that need additional support
 - Attend 3 evening mentor/mentee progress session meetings.
- e. **Regularly scheduled opportunities to observe or co-teach with skilled teachers.**
- Mentees are provided with opportunities to observe their buddy mentor teacher or other veteran teachers within the school.
 - Principals hire substitutes to provide coverage.
 - The attempt is two observations per year.
 - The anticipated results are better classroom management and effective teaching practices for the new teacher.
- f. **Ongoing professional development sessions for new teacher.**

Topics

- Classroom management
- Effective teaching practices
- Special Ed inclusion
- Reading in the content areas
- Technology initiatives
- Positive parent involvement

Format

- Three professional development days throughout the school year to focus on specific instructional topics.
- Three after school professional development meetings throughout the school year to focus on specific needs of new teachers.
- After school professional development meetings are held weekly for collaboration purposes at the secondary level.
- The Human Resources department notifies all instructional staff of opportunities in other counties for professional development.

- The anticipated outcome is a cost effective method for new teachers to work towards their Advanced Professional Certificate while providing pertinent opportunities for professional development and collaboration with peers.

g. Ongoing formative review of new teacher performance based on clearly defined teaching standards.

- Two Teacher Mentors observe the mentees and provide formative feedback and extended conferencing.
- Buddy mentors observe the mentees and provide constructive/formative feedback.
- New teachers are observed three to four times during the year by building administration and/or district supervisors and provided formative feedback.

2. Mentor Staffing Plan, Including Who Coordinates the Program, the Number of New Teachers and the Number of Mentors and How Many New Teachers Mentors Serve.

- The Mentor/Mentee Program is managed by the Mentor Coordinator.
- The Mentor Coordinator also supervises all teacher mentors and buddy teacher mentors.
- The District contracts with two retired teachers to serve as Teacher Mentors for the program.
- One is assigned to the **southern end of the county and one is assigned the northern end of the county.**
- Each mentee is assigned a buddy mentor from their own school – preferably one that is teaching a similar subject matter.
- Each buddy mentor will be assigned no more than three new mentees per year.

3. The Process of Mentor Recruitment, Screening, Selection and Training

a. The Teacher Mentor Program was re-organized under the Race To The Top Grant in 2011.

- **A Mentor Coordinator was hired July 1 to revise the program**
- The Mentor Coordinator and one teacher mentor attended the New Teacher Induction Academy in August of 2011
- **Teacher Mentors will be hired at a rate of one for every 15 new or non-tenured teachers.**

b. Buddy Mentors are selected based upon the number of years of teaching experience and their ability to effectively teach.

- A mentor should have at least 5 years of teaching experience.
- The Principal of the new teacher recommends to Human Resources who the preferred mentor should be.

- Human Resources reviews years of service of the mentor, verifies proper teaching certification, and reviews prospective mentors' performance reviews.
- Human Resources contacts the recommended mentor to seek agreement to be the mentor.
- Requirements are reviewed with the mentor.
- The new mentor is given a program handbook and signs the agreement to comply with the program requirements.
- Mentors attend a 15 hour mentor training session.
- The anticipated outcome is a supply of trained and effective mentors for new teachers from year to year.

4. The Training Provided to Central Office and School-Based Administrators regarding the New Teacher Induction Program.

- Online materials are provided for all stakeholders and clearly outline responsibilities of all participants including the administrative and supervisory staff.
- Materials and information are placed on the human resources homepage.
- Periodic in service is conducted at central office full team meetings and at A&S meetings to acquaint the leadership with the program and to better explain their respective responsibilities.

5. To the Extent Practicable Given Staffing and Fiscal Concerns, if any of the Following Options were Adopted for New Teachers:

- Budgetary issues were prevented through a reduction in teaching hours or non-instructional duties,**
- Principals did attempt to schedule teaching assignments with sensitivity to classes that included high percentages of students with achievement, discipline and attendance challenges.**

<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>STRATEGY, PROGRAM, OR PRACTICE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</i>	<i>FUNDING SOURCE AND COST</i>
Hired Mentor Coordinator	Staffing	Source: Restricted RTTT 84.395 Cost: \$38,777
Hired two teacher mentors	Staffing	Source: Unrestricted Cost: \$20,000

CATEGORY	STRATEGY, PROGRAM, OR PRACTICE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	FUNDING SOURCE AND COST
New Teacher Orientation Workshop Timeline: August 10--12, 2011	Professional Development	Source: Unrestricted Cost: \$13,200
Teacher Mentoring-Buddy Mentor Teachers Work with New Staff Timeline: August 2011-May 2012	Core Program- Embedded Professional Development	Source: Restricted RTTT 84.395 Cost: \$3,990
Teacher Mentors Timeline: August 2011-May 2012	Professional Development-Teacher Mentoring	Source: Unrestricted Cost: \$20,000