MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
Preparing World-Class Students

Progress on Scope of Work Activities – Successes and Next Steps

Local Early Childhood Councils - Project 1

1.3.8 Support will be provided after all regions receive the Leadership Capacity Building coordinated through MSDE, i.e. attending local meetings and developing customized TA based on local need and evaluation.

- ✓ Site monitoring visits have been scheduled to take place with each local council to ensure action plans are being implemented according to the RTT-ELC grant.
- ✓ On May 29, 2014 the local councils attended the State semi-annual Maryland Social Emotional Foundations of Early Learning (SEFEL) Statewide Partnership Meeting. The local councils were celebrated and given the opportunity to discuss their accomplishments, share resources, and plan for next steps with their SEFEL initiatives.

Maryland EXCELS - Project 2

2.1.3 Recruit and train CLASS assessors.

- ✓ CLASS assessors were trained by Takeisha Edmonds, Quality Measurement Specialist for Maryland EXCELS on May 20 and 21, 2014 at the Maryland State Department of Education. Four assessors attended the training and will be viewing the Teachstone videos to achieve reliability. An additional four CLASS assessors, previously trained to reliability, are currently in the process of re-establishing reliability on the CLASS tool. The later four assessors are also Quality Assurance Specialists with Maryland EXCELS.

2.3.13 Finalize all technical development, procedural development, and training development around implementation of the designations (endorsements).

- ✓ The final Achievement (formerly endorsement) of Culturally and Linguistically Competent Program has been completed with feedback from a workgroup and child care providers and will be made available to participating programs this summer. Achievements now include: *Asthma Friendly Child Care, Health and Wellness, Improving Business Practices with the Program Administration or Business Administration Scale and Culturally and Linguistically Competent Program*. Programs will be recognized on the Maryland EXCELS website for these Achievements. Families looking for child care will be made aware of the additional accomplishments the program has made to improve the quality of services to children and families.

2.4   Increase the number of early learning and development programs, including publicly funded programs, participating in Maryland EXCELS.

- ✓ 2,583 early learning and development programs are participating in Maryland EXCELS Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System as of May 27, 2014 representing an increase of 283 programs since April 12, 2014.

2.10.14 Establish new thresholds for high-need children participation rates to influence priority selection of recruited programs in full-scale implementation cohort 2.

✓ The percentage of providers receiving Child Care Subsidy reimbursement who are participating in Maryland EXCELS reached 48% in January, 2014. This is a 10% increase from December, 2013. Outreach to providers serving high-need children has increased and includes a partnership with the local Service Employees International Union who conducts door-to-door visits to family child care providers and includes information about Maryland EXCELS in the literature distributed to family providers. Follow up occurs when providers request information about Maryland EXCELS and includes phone calls and emails to assist providers with the registration process. http://marylandexcels.org/

Coaching and Mentoring – Project 3

3.6.3 Ongoing provision of quality assurance for the early learning and development programs participating in the Early Childhood Breakthrough Center.

✓ Child Care Resource Center Capacity Builders and Maryland EXCELS staff will meet to discuss technical assistance and capacity building with individual programs in their region as we increase the number of programs that will participate in 2014. We focused on defining roles and services while emphasizing the collaborative nature of this activity.

✓ Breakthrough staff have provided "support groups" to assist programs in registering and planning to progress through Maryland EXCELS. Through peer support activities, child care providers developed handbooks for parents, policies and schedules. Several early childhood programs and elementary schools are continuing to participate in transition activities for four year olds.

✓ The 2014 Breakthrough Center Customer Satisfaction Survey was sent to all programs that have participated in Breakthrough Center activities. The Survey is available in electronic and alternate formats. The Survey results will be used for program planning and program improvement.

3.7.1 Coordination of all Early Childhood Breakthrough Center activities with Maryland EXCELS.

✓ In May, Breakthrough Center staff and Maryland EXCELS staff have participated in bi monthly meetings/calls to share progress and identify programs that need assistance in registering and progressing in Maryland EXCELS. Staffs report additional programs that are participating in the Breakthrough Center, program challenges and plans for expanding the Breakthrough Center services.

3.9.4 Monitor the implementation of the two community hubs in accordance with the approved work plan.

✓ Work is continuing at both Hub sites: child care specialists are providing technical assistance to providers in EXCELS; home visiting continues; and the transition specialist continues to reach out to elementary schools in Hub communities. As some of the children age out of the Hub program, the transition specialist is working with the Child Development Specialists at both sites to ensure that each child has a transition plan.

3.11.7 Statewide implementation of coaching and mentoring training program with remaining local jurisdictions.

- ✓ Contacts with Phase II jurisdictions initiated: Frederick, Washington, Calvert, St. Mary's, and Charles.

- ✓ Two regional face-to-face Coaching Institutes were held on May 8, for Western Maryland (Garrett, Frederick, Washington, Carroll), and on May 29 for Southern Maryland (Charles, Calvert, St. Mary's). Allegany County was an original pilot jurisdiction and participated in the May 8 Institute, sharing progress and lessons learned.

- ✓ Three additional Coaching Institutes are in the planning stage for fall 2014. At the conclusion of the Institutes, all Maryland jurisdictions, Maryland School for the Blind and Maryland School for the Deaf will be implementing the reflective coaching model in community and school-based inclusive early childhood programs and settings.

Promoting Use of Early Learning Standards- Project 4

4.4 Completion of the Guide to Early Childhood Pedagogy (Prek-Grade 2).
- ✓ The Guide has been finalized and submitted to a layout designer for design and formatting of the print version.

4.5 Assign coaches/mentors and assessors located in geographic regions to implement VIOLETS in 50 programs identified through Breakthrough Centers
- ✓ Coaches are facilitating the implementation of VIOLETS in 51 early childhood programs statewide. Observations of VIOLETS classrooms have demonstrated that they are implementing the program appropriately; and children are engaged in the stories and participate in VIOLETS extension activities which support language development.

Professional Development Maryland Model for School Readiness - Project 5

5.0 Professional Development to Promote MD's Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children.
- ✓ The Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) 5 module training is transitioning July 1 to a new title, "Setting the Stage: Assessment in Early Education and Care Modules." In the fall of 2014, training on the new formative assessment called the Early Learning Assessment will be implemented for child care programs through Maryland Family Network.

Comprehensive Assessment System (CAS) – Project 6

6.2.4 Develop items and tasks for the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) and Pre-K/K formative assessments using experts and practitioner stakeholder groups in Ohio and Maryland-the KRA is replacing the MMSR Work Sampling System.

✓ The testing window for the Field Test of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) ended on Friday, December 20th in Maryland and a final report of findings was presented to leadership teams in Maryland and Ohio on February 20th and 21st. Data gathered from the Field Test was used to determine what items will actually be included as part of the census administration in the fall of 2014. The final items have been presented to leadership in both states.

✓ As a second component of the Field Test, Maryland and Ohio are conducted a test of the KRA Virtual Performance Assessment (VPA) items using teachers who participated in the original field test. The purpose of the KRA VPA study was to test 5 items that will be delivered via iPad application to:

. Test the usability of delivery via technology
. Examine the feasibility of the administration of VPA items in the classroom
. Examine student performance
. Conduct a validation study of VPA items versus hands on performance assessment (HPA) items

✓ This study began on April 28th with a 1-hour webinar, and data collection took place through May 16th. A total of 18 teachers from 9 schools in Maryland and 27 teachers from 9 schools in Ohio are participating in this study. The data collected from the study is currently being analyzed and a report should be issued in July.

✓ Initial items for the formative assessment have been developed by WestEd and were tested in two phases in Maryland and Ohio this spring. The first test consisted of a virtual performance assessment usability study where 3-4 year old children were observed and assessed on their use of both the iPad and VPA activity. Children were observed in 2 sites in Maryland from February 24th through March 7th. The second test consisted of a hands on performance assessment (HPA) pilot. The major goals of the Formative HPA Pilot were to explore children's accessibility to the formative tasks and the feasibility of the assessment administration for teachers. It was conducted to validate the usability of the tasks for formative purposes and to use the qualitative data collected from surveys (usability, feasibility, and perception) and focus groups to inform further development, administration, and implementation of the system. Materials were shipped to teachers in March. Professional development came in the form of attendance at a webinar also conducted in March. The testing window for the Formative HPA study was between March 24th and May 9th. A total of 62 teachers enrolled in this study, 33 from Maryland and 29 from Ohio. A total of 1038 children, 572 from Maryland and 466 from Ohio, participated. Data gathered from this study is currently being analyzed and a report will be issued in July.

6.2.9 Conduct formal field test of the KRA and formative assessments in selected sites in Ohio and Maryland.

✓ The testing window for the first Field Test of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) ended in Maryland on Friday, December 20th. Maryland had a very high completion rate with approximately 90% of teachers finishing the field test utilizing all items they were assigned to administer and 97% having at least completing a portion of items they were assigned to administer. Findings from the Field Test were presented to leadership in both Maryland and Ohio on February 20th and 21st.

✓ The first formal field test of the KRA also included two sub-evaluations to gather additional data on the use of the Allowable Supports Document in planning for assessment for children with

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disabilities and ELL students. Findings from the Field Test and sub-evaluations were presented to leadership in both Maryland and Ohio on February 20th and 21st.

✓ In addition to the first formal field test of the KRA that occurred in the fall of 2013, four additional tests were designed to test the system in 2014. They included three tests this spring: a pilot test of the formative hands on performance assessment (HPA) items, a pilot test of the formative virtual performance assessment (VPA) items, and a test of a sample of KRA virtual performance assessment (VPA) items. An extensive field test of the formative assessment system will occur in the fall of 2014. The second component of the KRA Field Test, the KRA Virtual Performance Assessment (VPA) items study, includes teachers who participated in the original field test. This study began on April 28th with a 1-hour webinar and data collection will took place through May 16th. There were 18 teachers from 9 schools in Maryland and 27 teachers from 9 schools in Ohio who participating in this study.

✓ The first test of the formative, the virtual performance assessment (VPA) usability study included 3-4 year old children from two sites in Maryland who were observed and assessed on their use of both the iPad and VPA activity from February 24th through March 7th. The second test consisted of a hands on performance assessment (HPA) pilot. The major goals of the Formative HPA Pilot were to explore children's accessibility to the formative tasks and the feasibility of the assessment administration for teachers. It was designed to validate the usability of the tasks for formative purposes and to use the qualitative data collected from surveys (usability, feasibility, and perception) and focus groups to inform further development, administration, and implementation of the system.

6.3.5 Develop and implement training protocol for the cognitive interviews and the pilot and field tests.

✓ Data and feedback gathered from the Field Test was used to further develop and refine the training protocol. Professional development began with Training of Trainers (TOT) sessions on March 31, 2014 and April 1, 2014. The second session occurred in May 2014 and third will take place in July.

6.4.1 Conduct business analysis of existing Maryland technology and data infrastructure and identify needs for new infrastructure.

✓ All CIO's and LEA's have been provided with updated information on the requirements and specifications for the Ready For Kindergarten ECCAS (formerly called KEA) and were given a new timeline for the development and implementation of the technology. In addition, Maryland's Branch Chief for Early Learning has visited all LEAs to meet with their elementary principals to present on the Ready For Kindergarten ECCAS.

✓ In addition to the LEA visits, information is being disseminated via formal meetings with Early Childhood Supervisors and webinars to provide updates in preparation for census administration of the KRA in the fall.

Child Development Innovations – Project 7

7.1.5 Early Childhood Mental Health Phone Consultation for Pediatricians: Conduct outreach to pediatric Primary Care Providers.

✓ The RTT team is launching another Learning Community in Southern Maryland on June 26, July 10, and July 24, 2014. The Charles County Health Department is a co-sponsor. The Children's Health and Emotional Care Learning Community for Primary Care Providers (CHECKup) focuses on early childhood mental health. Training topics include screening, management of psychopharmacological treatments, and addressing stress and trauma. Primary Care Providers can earn up to 6 CMEs.

7.5 Developmental Screening for all Early Learning and Development Programs: Develop a statewide developmental screening process/practice for early learning and development programs.

✓ MSDE has formed a diverse Developmental Screening Training workgroup to develop content for a required developmental screening training. The training will be offered online for free in a self-paced format. Face-to-face trainings on developmental screening as well as specific screening tool trainings will also be offered around the State.

Family Engagement and Support – Project 8

8.1.4 Family Engagement Coalition: Conduct Coalition meetings three times per year.

✓ On May 21, 2014 both the Family Engagement Coalition and Communications Work Group held its meeting to discuss implementation strategies of *The Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework: Maryland's Vision for Engaging Families with Young Children*.

8.2.2 Family Engagement Coalition: Oversee implementation of strategies.

✓ The Communications work group with the support of the full coalition will oversee implementation strategies to support the framework.

✓ In addition to the Communications work group, an additional sub-committee will be designed to specifically focus on/monitor the content of the implementation strategies being developed.

8.3.1 Develop and follow process for on-going communication and joint implementation.

✓ To support on-going communication and joint implementation of the Framework with local councils, technical assistance will be provided upon request.

8.4.3 Parent Cafes: Connect with hard-to-reach families, making times and dates for the cafes flexible to promote wide participation.

✓ On May 15th MFN submitted a proposal to Abilities Network to provide Strengthening Families Maryland Parent Cafes to a minimum of 25 parents and child care providers and to train parent and community representatives to fulfill the role of Table Host during Parent Cafes. The project is targeted for the Cherry Hill community.

Workforce Competency and Leadership Development- Project 9

9.1.9 Publish and disseminate the revised Core of Knowledge/Work Force Competency Framework to early care and education community.

✓ MSDE has contracted with Evaluation Strategies, LLC to work with the workgroup to complete the alignment and conduct final edits of the Framework.

9.5.7 Conduct Early Childhood Leadership Academies each year, starting October 2013.

✓ Towson University is administering the 3 locations for August 2014. The format will follow last year's academy with a capacity of 240 participants in school teams of 6 (3 school staff and 3 child care staff) per location.

Early Learning Data System – Project 10

10.1 Create the professional development grants and incentives module in the internal CCATS application.

✓ Develop and document the functional requirements of the module is in progress.

10.2 Enhance the CCATS public portal by including the trainer support and professional development grants and incentives modules.

✓ Design system changes that meet all the functional requirements is in progress.

10.2.8 By February 1, 2015, the trainer support and grants/ incentives modules are live in the CCATS public portal.

✓ The target date for implementation remains July 2015.

10.3 Design, develop, and implement the child care subsidy point-of-service (POS) system for pilot purposes.

✓ Design system changes that meet all the functional requirements of the POS system is in progress.

✓ The projected roll-out date of the portal for user acceptance testing purposes is September 30, 2014, with a go-live pilot of the attendance/enrollment tracking module to be implemented by December 31, 2014.

10.5 Develop the Early Childhood Data Warehouse (ECDW) as the main repository for collection, integration, and reporting of DECD data through the creation of a comprehensive database and the development of data dashboards, pre-determined data reports, and an ad hoc database query capability.

✓ An MOA with Towson University has been finalized that will enable GIS technology to be incorporated within the ECDW. The first GIS project under the MOA will be to map licensed child care programs in spatial relationship to public elementary schools. Map end-users will be able to select displays by child program characteristics such as quality rating level.

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For more information:

http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/challenge.htm