West Virginia State Board of Education
Comprehensive System of Support for Improving Professional Practice
Implementation Guidelines
June 2012

During the 2012 legislative session, House Bill (HB) 4236 was introduced at the request of Governor Earl Ray Tomblin and enacted by the Legislature. This Act includes the new W.Va. Code provisions (§18A-3C-1 et. seq.) entitled Improving Teaching and Learning. These provisions codify the framework for continuing the phased state-wide implementation of the important work initiated by the West Virginia State Board of Education’s Teacher Evaluation Task Force.

W.Va. Code §18A-3C-1 “To create a comprehensive infrastructure that routinely supports a continuous process for improving teaching and learning. Its focus is on developing strong teaching and school leadership, without which effective learning does not occur. The general components of this infrastructure include the following:

- High-quality teacher preparation, induction and evaluation;
- Universal support for emerging teachers including comprehensive new teacher induction and support for student teachers, teachers teaching in assignments for which they have less than a full professional credential and teacher candidates pursuing certification through an alternative route;
- Evaluation of the performance of teachers and leaders in demonstrating high quality professional practice, leadership and collaboration and the resulting growth in student learning;
- Focused improvement in teaching and learning through the use of evaluation data to inform the delivery of professional development and additional supports to improve teaching based on the evaluation results and to inform the need for improvements in teacher preparation programs;
- The creation of a leadership culture that seeks and builds powerful alliances among all stakeholders focused on continuous growth in student learning.”

Purposes of Evaluations
The West Virginia Board of Education (WVBOE) believes the revised educator evaluation system provides guidance for evidence-based decision making and encourages professional growth and development through reflective practice. The primary goal of the evaluation system is to increase student learning and to serve as the basis for:

- Improvement of the performance of the professional personnel in their assigned duties; (school and county)
- Professional development specifically targeted on the area or areas identified through the evaluation process as needing improvement. If possible, this targeted professional development should be delivered at the school-site using collaborative processes, mentoring or coaching or other approaches that maximize use of the instructional setting; (school and county)
• Establishment of priorities for the provision of county-level professional development when aggregate evaluation data from the county’s schools indicates an area or areas of needed improvement; (county)

• Informing the teacher preparation programs in this state of an area or areas of needed improvement in the programs, or informing a specific program of needed improvement, when state-level aggregate evaluation data indicates that beginning teachers who have graduated from the program have specific weaknesses; (state)

• Providing an indicator of level of performance of the professional personnel; (school)

• Serving as documentation for a dismissal on the grounds of unsatisfactory performance; (county) and

• Increasing the professional growth and development of professional personnel. (school, county and state)

Comprehensive System of Support
In order to increase the professional growth of personnel, each county school system is required to establish a comprehensive system of support for teacher induction and professional growth. The WVBOE recognizes the significant variability in needs and circumstances among counties and, rather than mandate a specific approach, allows flexibility for counties to adopt a plan for implementing a comprehensive system of support to achieve the objectives of the statute consistent with the county specific circumstances and needs. However, the following parameters should be noted:

• Beginning July 1, 2013, a county board is not eligible to receive state funding appropriated for the purposes of the new W. Va. Code §18A-3C-3 or any other provision of law related to beginning teacher internships and mentor teachers unless it has adopted a plan for implementation of a comprehensive system of support for improving professional practice.

• The plan must be verified by the WVBOE as meeting the requirements of the code and the WVBOE will verify that the county is implementing the plan.

• Beginning July 1, 2013, no specific level of compensation is guaranteed for any employee service or employment as a mentor, academic coach or master teacher, and such service or employment is not subject to the provisions of this code governing extra duty contracts except as specified in the county’s approved comprehensive plan and in accordance with HB 4236 requirements.

• The Legislature expects the highest priority for county, regional and state professional development will be on meeting the needs indicated by the results of annual educator performance evaluations and that the transition to a comprehensive system of support for improving professional practice will reflect substantial redirection of existing professional development resources toward this highest priority (§18A-3C-3(a)).
**Definition of Professional Development**

Professional development includes sustained experiences that lead to the development of knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions educators need to help students perform at higher levels and achieve college and career readiness.

**Standards for Professional Development**

The WVBOE has adopted the Learning Forward (formerly National Staff Development Council) Standards for Professional Learning, as its guide for providing high quality professional development. According to the standards, *professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students*:

- Occurs within *learning communities* committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment;
- Requires skillful *leadership* to develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning;
- Requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating *resources* for educator learning;
- Uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system *data* to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning;
- Integrates theories, research, and models of human learning into *learning designs* to achieve its intended outcomes;
- Applies research on change and sustains support for *implementation* of professional learning for long-term change; and
- Aligns its *outcomes* with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

**Comprehensive System of Support Guidelines**

The following guidelines shall be utilized as the basis for the design and implementation of a comprehensive system of support for improving professional practice in each county school system. The purpose of the guidelines is to assist the county board with the design and implementation of a system that best achieves the goals within the county.

The WVBOE recognizes implementing systemic change in schools and classrooms is a long-term process that requires a significant commitment of professional development, technical assistance and continuous support. The guidelines provide for full implementation in the 2013-14 school year with annual review and improvement in subsequent years.

**Required Pre-Planning Activities**

1. Convene a district team to collaboratively develop the plan. The team should be comprised of diverse representation including professionals responsible for coordinating pertinent elements of the plan and those impacted by the professional development within the county.
2. Complete a needs assessment  
   a. Examine the following data:  
      i. Attrition rate for teachers/administrators by school (retirements, resignations, relocations etc.) for the previous 3 years  
      ii. Retention rate for *new teachers/administrators by school (*1-5 years in the profession) for the previous 3 years  
      iii. Expected number of new teachers/administrators for upcoming school year  
      iv. Other data to consider: Employment rate of student teachers who completed pre-service requirements within the district  
   b. Identify priority areas of professional development for individuals/schools/county based on:  
      i. Data from individual professional evaluations  
      ii. Needs of teachers/administrators from self-assessments  
      iii. Student learning data from multiple measures  
      iv. Needs of beginning educators  
   
3. Analyze the district’s current system of support  
   a. Induction process - support for educators in the initial (1-3 years of experience) and intermediate (4-5 years of experience) progressions  
   b. Support to create a productive learning experience for student teachers  
   c. Use of educator performance data as the basis of determining and prioritizing professional development  
   d. Support for educators whose performance evaluation is rated in the emerging and unsatisfactory level of performance  
   e. Provisions for job-embedded professional development (e.g. collaborative teaming processes, professional learning communities, peer assistance, technology integration)  
   f. Manner of monitoring the implementation of the system of support plan  
   g. Other areas of support for professional educators  

4. Evaluate the effectiveness of current resources  
   a. Fiscal resource allocation (e.g., Beginning Teacher/Principal Mentorship, Professional Staff Development Council, RLIS, STEP I, STEP II, STEP VII, Special Education, Titles I, II, III)  
   b. Human resource allocation (e.g., school leadership teams, teacher collaborative teams, master teachers, mentors, academic coaches, peer assistance, availability of substitutes and other utilization of staff)  
   c. System structures (e.g., calendar, flexible scheduling, time within the school day for collaboration, mentoring or coaching, online resources and networking platform)  

**Required Plan Components**  

According to W.Va. §18A-3C-1 the plan shall address the following *(bulleted points are provided for clarification):  

1. The manner in which the county will provide the **strong school-based support and supervision that will assist beginning teachers** in developing instructional and management strategies, procedural and policy expertise, and other professional practices they need to be successful in the classroom and perform at the accomplished level.
• The required data from the pre-planning needs assessment and an analysis of the data that was used to develop the plan must be submitted.

2. The manner in which the county in cooperation with the teacher preparation programs in this state will provide strong school-based support and assistance necessary to make student teaching a productive learning experience;

3. The manner in which the county will use the data from the educator performance evaluation system to serve as the basis for providing professional development specifically targeted on the area or areas identified through the evaluation process as needing improvement. If possible, this targeted professional development should be delivered at the school-site using collaborative processes, mentoring or coaching or other approaches that maximize use of the instructional setting;

• Including individualized support/professional development specifically based on data from the evaluation.

4. The manner in which the county will use the data from the educator performance evaluation system to serve as the basis for establishing priorities for the provision of county-level professional development when aggregate evaluation data from the county’s schools indicates an area or areas of needed improvement;

• While county-level professional development is an essential component of a support system, research has shown that ongoing, job-embedded professional development is most effective for impacting professional practice.

5. The manner in which the county will use local resources available including, but not limited to, funds for professional development and academic coaches, to focus on the priority professional development goals of the system of support;

• Priority professional development areas should be based on the needs assessment (see 2 b. i.)

• Counties with limited resources may consider coordinated services through cross-county and/or RESA resource sharing

• Collaboration with other agencies (Center for Professional Development, higher education, WV Department of Education) may enable brokered services such as beginning teacher academy, support for coaching, eLearning opportunities etc.

6. If a county uses master teachers, mentors, academic coaches or any other approaches using individual employees to provide support, supervision or other professional development or training to other employees for the purpose of improving their professional practice, the manner in which the county will select each of these individual employees based on demonstrated superior performance and competence as well as the manner in which the county will coordinate support for these employees.

• W.Va. Code §18A-3C-1 Provided, that the employment of persons for these positions shall adhere to the posting and other provisions of section seven-a, article four of this chapter utilizing subsection (c) of said section seven-a to judge the qualifications of the
applicants. If the duties of the position are to provide mentoring to an individual teacher at only one school, then priority shall being given to applicants employed at the school at which those duties will be performed;

7. The manner in which the county will adjust its scheduling, use of substitutes, collaborative planning time, calendar or other measures as may be necessary to provide sufficient time for professional personnel to accomplish the goals of this section as set forth in the county’s plan;

8. The manner in which the county will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of implementation and outcomes of the county system of support for improving professional practice.

- For each subsequent year, the county’s evaluation of its comprehensive system of support will include data to be submitted with the plan that addresses the following:
  i. Documentation to validate the provision of support for all beginning teachers/administrators and other teachers/administrators needing assistance
  ii. Documentation to validate the effectiveness of support provided for all beginning teachers/administrators and other teachers/administrators needing assistance
  iii. Documentation to summarize feedback from teachers/administrators receiving support regarding the effectiveness of those services

**Plan Submission**

1. Plans shall be included in County Professional Development Plans utilizing a template provided by West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE).

2. Plans for 2013 shall be submitted on or before March 15, 2013. Thereafter, plans shall be annually updated and submitted on July 1.

3. Plans will be reviewed for alignment to the components. Plans that do not meet the required components must be revised and resubmitted for approval.

**Resources**

**Framework for Induction**

**Coaching Task Force Findings**
http://wvde.state.wv.us/coachingforlearning/documents/coaching-task-force-findings.pdf

**CPD Beginning Teacher Academy and Mentor Program**
http://www.wvcpd.org/cmsprgm.aspx?name=BTM&ProgramID=4

**Framework for Induction Recommendations**
http://wvde.state.wv.us/coachingforlearning
Stakeholder Group Educator Evaluation Task Force Members

Katrina Andrews  Lowell Johnson
Stephanie Armentrout  Michael Kelley
Barbara Ashcraft  Richard Lawrence
Nikki Bailey  Dale Lee
Dixie Billheimer  Cathy Marino
Michelle Blatt  Anita Maxwell
Linda Bragg  Christy Miller
Sam Brunett  Dave Mohr
Keith Burdette  Kenny Moles
Christine Campbell  Terry Nelson
Deborah Chapman  Emily Papadopoulos
Suzette Cook  Eileen Poling
Amelia Courts  Georgia Porter
Cindy Daniel  Wendy Redd
Karen Davies  Michelle Samples
Juan D’Brot  Terry Sauvageot
Richard Dulee  Brad Simmons
Sandra Duncan  Jan Stanley
Lee Ebersole  Erin Sullivan
Edward Evans  Libby Surface
Fred Farris  Carla Warren
Ann Gaudino  Barbara Whitecotton
Robert Hagerman  Leatha Williams
Judy Hale  Leatha Williams
Jackie Hersch  Lori Wiggins
Rick Hicks
Lynn Hurt