
MCLA Diploma TA Survey Summary (May 8, 2013)

A. When you think about your district's current capacity to implement proficiency-based diploma requirements, how concerned are you about:

1. The number of potential standards.

Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not concerned	Unsure
67%	28%	6%	0%

Representative Comments:

- It has occurred to us that, as systems select which standards they will focus instruction on, the concept of "common" in the CCSS won't be so common. And too, matching the standards being instructed to those being assessed (like SBAC's) will be a guessing game.
- Too many standards in each of the 8 content areas. Our district is prioritizing these.
- If our students will be held accountable to all of the NEW standards in the Common Core and the New Science Standards I am very concerned!
- Not only is the number staggering, guidance has been to select "power standards" without clear indication of what will be tested as far as content- makes it somewhat of a gamble that a district "selects" the correct "power standards".
- We have "adopted" the Cohort's learning targets and are using those to form the basis of our proficiency reporting. RSU __ has already implemented proficiency-based diploma requirements, and are finishing up a graduation requirements policy around proficiencies.

2. Providing multiple opportunities/pathways for students to become proficient.

Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not concerned	Unsure
44%	33%	17%	6%

Representative Comments:

- This is something we should all be doing for all students anyway.
- If we're talking about high schools, that will be a long running saga of trench warfare.
- Requires more resources than we currently have (technology-based, community-based, teachers as coaches)... Takes time to develop these opportunities (which by the way are not equitable across the state) and pathways.
- What will that look like and what resources will small, rural schools be able to draw upon.
- We can't educate in and for a 21st Century world on a 20th century budget and calendar.

3. Providing multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate proficiency.

Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not concerned	Unsure
33%	50%	17%	0%

Representative Comments:

- Probably the greatest critical issue/expectation as relates to changing how high schools function.
- Will there be the same level of rigor expected for all students across the state in these opportunities?
- Systems will need resources to draw upon for assessments - both SBAC and locally. Teachers are concerned - wondering if this means multiple "tests" and how they will manage all of that.

4. Developing a local process to ensure student demonstrations are evaluated at the same level of proficiency across content areas and teachers.

Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not concerned	Unsure
67%	17%	17%	0%

Representative Comments:

- This entails A LOT of PD. Who is paying for this? When and how will this happen?
- Instead of each district inventing the wheel, I would appreciate if someone at DOE told us the process.
- When it is a "local" process, there become different criteria and definitions for "proficiency".
- Our high poverty schools should have the same expectations and opportunities as our more privileged.
- Validity and reliability was such a huge issue when we were in the LAS system, and I can't believe that it will be any less important now. Training teachers in this work is needed when monies are not present.

5. Assessing the Guiding Principles.

Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not concerned	Unsure
19%	50%	19%	13%

Representative Comments:

- GP's are for all Maine students so DOE needs to provide this, period!!
- Sorry, but I'm not clear here on which guiding principles we're referring to.
- The guiding principles are skills that take a lifetime to achieve. How will students be involved in understanding these, engaging in self reflection on their progress, and what rubrics and scoring guides will be provided?
- We are excited about this work but again, developing plans that make sense and are doable will take time/money.

6. Aligning instruction with standards.

Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not concerned	Unsure
24%	65%	12%	0%

Representative Comments:

- We're already in the process of doing this, so I'm somewhat concerned, but we're getting the hang of it.
- Here again, if we are in fact, seeking common ground on content and assessments we have an enormous task across the state. Most of which I believe can be accomplished, but there must be a coordinated undertaking, and there's no ability for DOE to do this.
- They are simply so understaffed and overworked, it's like watching the charge of the light brigade.

7. Helping parents and community understand and support proficiency-based diplomas.

Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not concerned	Unsure
71%	24%	6%	0%

Representative Comments:

- There must be A LOT of public discourse about this. Not enough has been done to help districts understand this let alone helping parents know what this will look like.
- This is an area that the DOE could be very helpful. Ad campaigns to educate the public about Education Evolving and what PBE is would be really helpful especially using media campaigns.
- We are pleased to be working with our neighboring school depts. so that all schools in our region will hopefully be sending the same message.
- This is the most important part of the survey. Communication is extremely important.

8. Developing appropriate and effective proficiency-based learning district policies.

Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not concerned	Unsure
29%	59%	12%	0%

Representative Comments:

- This may be the one place where the dept. can help.

- The need for models and exemplars is great.
- Time needed / PD needed For high schools in particular.
- What will the graduation policies look like? Will schools have a 1 - 4 grading or still keep the 0 - 100? Valedictorian? Honor parts are a potential issue.

9. Connecting and coordinating other programs and requirements with proficiency-based learning.

Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not concerned	Unsure
41%	53%	0%	6%

Representative Comments:

- How will proficiencies at the vocational programs be used to fulfill requirements for diploma? Will there be only one kind of diploma? How will CTE, church and civic organizations be involved in creating or tracking pathways?
- SPED expectations continue to be of concern.
- If this means programs outside of our district, we are a bit concerned as they don't have the same level of knowledge around proficiencies that we have at this time.

10. Engaging teachers and administrators in learning about and working toward proficiency-based learning.

Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not concerned	Unsure
28%	61%	11%	0%

Representative Comments:

- Second order change is not accomplished with a couple of years of PD - we have seen that in the districts and schools that have effectively integrated technology.
- We need time to make the shift for parents, students, teachers and systems. Again, we are well on our way with this work but continue to think about how to engage those who are resistant.

11. Documenting and reporting student proficiency.

Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not concerned	Unsure
53%	41%	6%	0%

Representative Comments:

- What is the system? Is it Educate? If not, then what? When do we get trained on the system?
- This is just as critical as the assessments themselves. Needs to be computer based and that is challenging.
- Each district is trying to do this. A duplication of time, effort and energy on districts part.
- Think LAS! This is a HUGE issue!
- How will local assessments figure into proficiency - is there a formula of percentages, etc. like the new "School Grading system"?
- We have a program that does this, and have been using it for two years.
- It appears that a lot of time and work will be needed to import to systems such as Power School and although Educate appears to work well.

12. Finding the technical assistance we need to meet the requirements.

Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not concerned	Unsure
65%	29%	6%	0%

Representative Comments:

- I do not believe the State DOE currently has the resources or capacity to be helpful.
- Who will help with this work and when? The timeline is looming - we have very few in-service days during the school year and then if it is in the summer we have to pay teachers a per diem for training.

- This will be the weak link. The Dept continues to be stretched thin and local districts have some experience in moving in this direction. How much will grass roots efforts to meet the requirements of PBE be honored and celebrated?

B. Technical assistance is most beneficial to my district when:

We choose who we work with	We work in partnership with the provider/consultant	Support is tailored to our unique needs and stage of development	Support is consistent with other work we're already doing
14%	26%	36%	24%

Representative Comments:

- School districts are all at a different place -need to honor the work done and taking a district from where it is to where they need to go - just as we do with our students!
- We need "just in time" technical assistance - not a one size fits all model which is what we're trying to move away from in our schools.

C. DOE's technical assistance plan will provide the support our district needs.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
6%	12%	53%	12%	18%

Representative Comments:

- I really believe that the dept. would be well served to provide consultant support much like the structure provided to districts when consolidating.
- Currently over a third of the districts are working with either WMEC or MCCL and Northern district just formed the NMEC.
- A website with links is okay - but will not get this huge job done.
- I don't believe they have the capacity to assist us - I believe we must use collaboration to build this with support from the DOE.

D. What else do you want MCLA to know as we represent you in this discussion?

- Keep us in the loop.
- We will need a lot of help with this shift.
- The state "listening tours" need to be asking different questions because we never see these things in any reports. What will P-B education look like in your district? How are you getting there? What do you need now? What should the state provide to all districts?
- Hiding behind local control doesn't cut it anymore because there is no local control for districts.
- Research shows over and over that what goes on in the classroom, the instruction that is given, the interactions that occur here are what changes student achievement.
- The P-B education system can be powerful but why do we all have to design the structural pieces? Teachers need to be spending their time on improving, refining instruction.
- Give all districts the things that are supposed to be common across the state and let us spend our time designing the instruction to match.
- Our work with MCCL provides some first steps towards this. I hope our current work is not curtailed in any way.
- If DOE cannot provide the necessary, and continuous assistance to this initiative, MCLA will be perceived as a shill for the dept. and our credibility will be significantly affected in the field. My other concern about this initiative is that we will get left with expectations to be the provider for much of the articulation and training for all of this; and in the high schools, that is a huge undertaking obviously.
- I am tired of the dept making decisions about what we need to implement without consulting or even listening to us. DOE works in what is equivalent to the Ivory Tower. They can mandate all the changes that want but have little power or support to make it happen.

- It would be incredible if DOE forged alliances and relationships with folks doing the work-maybe this is too much to ask as it is a political org.
- Many schools and educators are very excited about this work - we need positive support (even if there's no money - stop beating up our schools!) - We need encouragement that we this is the right thing to do by kids.
- Public school systems will need models.
- Please focus on the right things for kids, not the latest programs.
- I have been disappointed with the ideas presented thus far by MCLA, and feel the organization is way behind the 8-ball. There needs to be a huge leap forward to supporting proficiency-based education, and I am unsure if this organization is ready for it.
- Rural parts of the state are very much in the dark about this entire process. Foundational work to move schools forward has not yet begun. The DOE does not seem to recognize that there are extreme differences in districts' capacities to undertake this work or even to recognize what the work actually is.
- There is good reason for grave concern. That your work and efforts are highly valued. That there is dubious reputation from the DOE because of previous history with the services provided in the past and worry that teachers with that history will respond negatively.
- Our district has been pleased with the efforts put forth by Great Schools Partnership and from MCCL, at the administrative level, (our teachers have valued GSP and feel distanced from MCCL) so anything you can do to reiterate to DOE that their previous reputation in ed. reform won't stand them in good stead this time around would be helpful.