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MSP Professional Development Models and Activities

1. What is the minimum length of a summer institute? How long are follow-up activities required to be?

Approximately 60 percent of MSP projects report providing summer institutes. By definition, a summer institute must be for a minimum of 2 weeks (or at least 60 hours). Follow-up for summer institutes should include a minimum of 4 days. Other MSP projects provide shorter summer workshops during the summer and focus more of their activities during the school year.

2. What should be the main focus of professional development activities?

Professional development <u>must</u> focus on increasing teacher content knowledge through intensive professional development. In addition to the focus on increasing teacher content knowledge, the training may also cover other priorities, such as improving pedagogy, changing teacher beliefs and attitudes, and aligning the curriculum to the standards.

3. Can administrators participate in professional development?

All professional development <u>must be</u> focused on teachers. Administrators can be involved as long as the key focus of the training is on teachers.

4. Can MSP funds be used to purchase classroom sets of materials or to fund student activities?
No, MSP federal funds must <u>not</u> be used for the purchase of classroom sets of materials. Materials can only be purchased for teachers attending the professional development, and may include no more than one item per teacher. Similarly, grant dollars may not be used for funding student activities.

Reporting

5. When are reports due?

Reporting is required on an annual basis. Due dates for annual performance reports (APRs) are based on the following guidelines from the U.S. Department of Education. Each MSP project is required to report its MSP activities for each 12-month period during the grant. Projects have 60 days beyond the end of each 12-month reporting period to submit the report to the U.S. Department of Education through their MSP State Coordinator. For example, if your grant award date is September 1, 2009, your report would include activities that took place from September 1, 2009, through August 31, 2010, and the Annual Performance Report is due to the U.S. Department of Education by October 31, 2010.

Because the award dates differ among grantees, the due dates also vary. Projects with 13–18 month awards have only one report due to the U.S. Department of Education 60 days after

the end of the 13–18 month reporting period. Projects with a duration of 19 months or more must submit a report to the U.S. Department of Education 60 days after each 12-month reporting period. Therefore, a project of 19 months duration is required to submit two annual reports.

To view the due dates for the projects in your state, go to http://www.ed-msp.net/msp23d3AOW/protected/searchStateCoordinator.jsp and select your state from the drop down menu. Click the blue circle to the left of your annual performance report to view the due dates. State Coordinators are responsible for providing the APR due dates that appear on this page. If no date is visible for your state or you have a question about your due date, please contact your State Coordinator.

6. What time period does the report cover?

The time period for the report is for the previous 12-month annual performance period.

7. How should local evaluation reports be submitted?

Evaluation reports are submitted as files uploaded within the evaluation section of the online reporting form. Evaluation reports should be submitted, at a minimum, with the final report at the end of the grant so that their findings can be reviewed and added to the MSP knowledge base.

Submitting APRs to State

8. How do I submit a complete annual performance report (APR) to my State Coordinator for approval?

When the report is complete and you have checked to be sure that all the information is accurate, you are ready submit the APR to your State Coordinator. To submit the report, click on **Change APR Status** beside the appropriate project on your APR homepage. You will see two tabs near the bottom of the table representing two submission options: **Submission** and **Partial Submission**. By selecting the **Submission** tab and clicking on the **Submit to State** button you will submit the report to the State Coordinator and at the same time change the report's status to "Approval Pending." The report will become read-only. You will not be able to edit the report unless you receive an email notifying you that your State Coordinator has requested revisions.

9. What should a project do if all data to be reported are not available when the APR is due?

If the report is due to the state before all of the data are available, you may use the **Partial Submission** function. To use this function, select **Change APR Status** beside the project tile on the APR homepage. From here, click on the **Partial Submission** tab. Identify the missing data and click on the **Partial Submit to State** button. Once the report is partially submitted,

you will only be able to edit the sections corresponding to the missing information you identified. (Precisely, **sections VII.F-J, VIII.A-B, and IX.B** remain open for editing after a partial submission.) When the State Coordinator submits your report to the Department of Education, the status will change to "Partial Approval Granted."

When the missing data become available, you should enter the information and re-submit your completed report to your State Coordinator. Click on **Edit New APR** to enter the missing data on the form. Then return to the homepage by clicking on the **Reports** tab and select **Change APR Status** beside the appropriate project on your APR homepage to uncheck the missing data. Finally, click on **Submit to State**. At this time, the entire report will become read-only, unless you receive a message notifying you that revisions are needed.

State Review

10. What is the involvement of State Coordinators in the reporting process?

State Coordinators review each annual performance report (APR) for their state and officially submit the report to the U.S. Department of Education.

11. How do I review and submit a report to the U.S. Department of Education?

Click on **My APR** and carefully read each section for accuracy and completeness. If revisions are necessary, make comments for the Project Director.

When you are ready to submit the report or return it to the Project Director for revisions, click on the **Reports** tab, which brings you back to the APR home page. Then click on **Change APR Status** beside the appropriate project. There are two tabs near the bottom of the table: **Submission** and **Partial Submission**. Select **Submission** unless any of the following data are not available in time: data on gains in teacher content knowledge or student achievement data. At the bottom of the **Submission** tab, there are two buttons: **Approve** and **Revisions Needed**. Clicking on the **Approve** button will submit the report to U.S. Department of Education and at the same time change the report's status to "Approval Granted."

If a Project Director submitted a report before all of the project's data were available, the report's status appears as "Partial Approval Pending" and the **Partial Submission** tab is displayed after you click **Change APR Status**. A filled-in checkbox indicates which data are missing from the report. The following buttons will appear near the bottom of this tab: **Partial Submit to ED** and **Revisions Needed**. If the report is due to the U.S. Department of Education, select **Partial Submit to ED** to submit the report and, at the same time, change its status to "Partial Approval Granted." After the Project Director resubmits the report with the missing information, review it, and then click **Change APR Status** once more to submit the completed report. You will notice that no missing data boxes are checked, indicating that the information is no longer missing. Instead, the following buttons will be displayed: **Submit to ED** and **Revisions Needed**, allowing you to resubmit the completed report to the U.S. Department of Education.

Online Project Administration for State Coordinators

12. How do I archive completed APRs?

As soon as an annual report has been submitted to the U.S. Department of Education, it should be archived. Archived reports are still accessible to projects and states. To archive a completed report, simply click the **Archive** button that appears in the far right column beside the report with "Approval Granted" status, and then select **APR Approved** from the list of possible reasons to archive the report: End of Grant Cycle, Discontinued Funding, Duplicate, APR Approved, Other. Click on **Continue** to complete the archive process. Please note that you may choose to create new APR forms before or after archiving submitted reports by following the instructions in the next FAQ.

13. How do I create a new APR?

If there are additional years remaining in the grant, and a report for the previous year has been submitted to the U.S. Department of Education, click the button called **Create New APR Form**, which appears in the far right column beside the project on the Project Administration homepage. Please note you may create a new APR form for a project before or after it has been archived. Confirm your selection by clicking on the **Copy Annual Report** button on the following page. When you create the new report, please make a note of the new Project ID and APR ID. This information will help you identify the new report on the APR website.

14. Is it possible to transfer information from one year's APR into the next year's APR?

Yes. All project reports generated through the **Create a New APR** function will automatically copy information from the first three sections of the previously approved report: MSP Project Information, MSP Project Abstract, and Responsibilities. All of the copied information must be reviewed, edited if necessary, and saved before the report is submitted. You may include additional information from the previous report by cutting and pasting the information manually.

Saving APRs

15. How do I save and print the APR?

At the bottom of the My APR page, there are three links, Download as html, Download as text, and Download as doc. The Download as html option will allow you to save the report as it appears on the website. To save your report on your own computer for future use, select any of the **Download** options. Click **Save**. Select the folder where you would like to save the document, and click **Save**. To view your report immediately, click **Open**. Once your report is saved, you can print the file.

MSP Website Users

16. How do I retrieve my password?

If you forget your password, click on the **Forgot your password?** link that appears near the bottom of the APR login page: http://apr.ed-msp.net. This will prompt you for your email address and then send you a message containing a link where you may reset your password.

17. How do I add other users to the reporting system?

To request access for project-level staff, the Project Director must contact their MSP State Coordinator and request that project staff information be updated for a specific project. You can access your State Coordinator's contact information on the following page of the public MSP website: http://msp.ed-msp.net/msp23d3AOW/searchStateCoordinator.jsp. In your message, please include the following information for each user you would like to add:

- User name (first name, last name)
- User email address
- Level of authority for this user (Full-Access or Read-Only Access)
- APR ID or Title of the MSP Project

To request access for state-level staff, State Coordinators must contact the U.S. Department of Education or Abt Associates. In your request, be sure to specify the level of access required (SEA Status, Full Access State Contact, or Read-Only Access).

Teacher and Student Findings

18. Which teachers are required to take pre- and post-tests?

All teachers who participate in professional development are required to take pre- and post-tests measuring teacher content knowledge for each course in which they participate during periods of intensive training.

19. How do I enter teacher pre-test and post-test scores in the electronic spreadsheet?

In the annual performance report (APR), Section VIII. Government and Results Act Reporting, A. Teachers, you should click on the link to the electronic spreadsheet.

You can either save the spreadsheet file or open it directly. When you do, the following window should appear:

If the window appears, then select the **Enable Macros** button in the pop-up window.

If the Window does not appear, open Excel and try these instructions to reset the Excel macro security from High to Medium:

    a. From the **Tools** menu, select **Options**.
    b. Click the **Security** tab.
    c. Click the **Macro Security** button (lower right), which brings up another window.
    d. Select the **Medium** security level and press **OK**.
    e. Press **OK** to close the window.

Then attempt to open the spreadsheet again.

If you still do not see the window with the **Enable Macros** button, then check with your computer staff or Internet provider for help getting the spreadsheet past any firewall or anti-virus software that may be blocking the macros.

20. How do I enter pre and post-test data into the spreadsheet when I have a treatment and comparison group?

Projects that have a control or comparison group need to complete separate spreadsheets for the treatment and control/comparison groups. Save each spreadsheet on your computer and specify whether the teachers listed belong to the treatment or control/comparison group in the filename. Only significant gains for teachers who belong to a treatment group and participated in MSP professional development activities should be reported in question 8A.

21. What are the assumptions about the pre- and post-tests when the t-statistic is used?

The *paired-samples t test* assumes that each subject's score is independent of any other subject's score and that the difference scores are normally distributed. The assumption of independent observations between subjects is controlled by the study design. When the assumption of normality is not met, the *paired-samples t-test* can be invalid. For each evaluation program, a sample size of 30 or more teachers should be large enough to meet the

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normality assumption and the *paired-sample t-test* can be used validly.   For sample sizes with fewer than 30 teachers, normality tests on their pre- and post-test scores should be performed to see if the distributions are normal.

22. Should the same test be used for pre- and post-tests?

Yes. The pre-test and post-test should be the same test.

23. When should pre- and post-tests be administered?

The pre-test should be administered before or at the beginning of the intervention; and the post-test should be administered after the intervention has ended.

Projects that rely on a single post-test should administer the test shortly after the intervention is completed. In most cases, projects that provide a summer institute would administer the post-test in July or August when the summer institute ends, or in September or early October. Projects that administer a second or delayed post-test should administer it at the end of the school year or when follow-up activities are complete.

24. How many questions/points should be on each test?

It depends on the test used. If you use an existing state accountability assessment or other widely used assessments (such as Iowa Test of Basic Skills, TerraNova) it is safe to assume that the psychometric properties are adequate. If you create a test using selected items from one or more validated and reliable instruments, the resulting test must include at least 10 items, and at least 70 percent of the items must be taken directly from the validated and reliable instrument(s).

25. Do the pre- and post-tests have to have the same number of points?

Yes, because they should be the same test.

26. What if pre- and post-tests have a different number of total points?

The pre-test and post-test should be the same test. Using the same test allows for the measurement of change/gain.

27. Is there a place to enter the total number of points on the teacher content knowledge assessment?   Is that important?

Technically, the total number of points is not necessary for calculating the significance of gains as assessed on a particular instrument.

28. If the same teacher takes one test more than two times (e.g., pre-test, immediate post-test, and delayed post-test), how do these get entered and counted?

The first test should always be entered first since it is the pre-test, and the score serves as the baseline. The recommended way to handle subsequent tests is to average the test scores and enter the average score as the post-test.

29. If the same teacher takes more than one pre- and post-test in one professional development course, are all tests entered?

Projects that administer more than one test for a single professional development course should select the most relevant or important test and report the results for that one.

30. If the same teacher takes more than one pre- and post-test in multiple professional development courses, how do these get entered and counted?

Projects that provide multiple professional development courses *within the same subject (math or science)* should do the following:

- Report results for all professional development courses with at least 6 participants, regardless of whether there is an overlap in the samples of teachers. Teachers who receive PD in more than one course should be counted separately for each course they participate in.
- Complete a separate spreadsheet for each test administered. Do not complete a spreadsheet for a test in which there were 5 or fewer participants tested. Do not include teachers from control or comparison groups in the spreadsheet.
- Sum the results to respond to items 2, 3, 5, and 6.
  - For example, if your MSP project used Test A for 30 teachers who participated in algebra and Test B for 30 teachers who participated in geometry, you should enter pre- and post-test scores for each teacher who took Test A in one spreadsheet, and then do the same for Test B in a separate spreadsheet. If the report for Test A shows that of the 30 teachers with both pre-test and post-test scores, 25 had significant gains, and the report for Test B shows that of the 30 teachers with both pre-test and post-test scores, 15 had significant gains, you should sum all mathematics teachers with both pre-test and post-test scores (30 + 30) to report "60" for item 2, and then sum all participating mathematics teachers who had significant gains (25 + 15) to report a "40" for item 3.

Additional Questions

31. Whom should I contact with questions?

- For questions about the MSP program in your state, contact your MSP State Coordinator. State Coordinator information is available on the public MSP website at: http://msp.ed-msp.net/msp23d3AOW/searchStateCoordinator.jsp.

- For questions about the MSP program, legislation, and national policy guidance, contact Pat O'Connell Johnson, Patricia.Johnson@ed.gov or Kate Meeley, Kathryn.Meeley@ed.gov

- For questions about MSP annual reports and submission of annual report data, contact Abt Associates Inc.:
  - o MSP Program Support msphelp@abtassoc.com

- For technical questions about how to use the online reporting form, contact Washington Software, Inc.:
  - o MSP Website Development msp@wasoftware.com