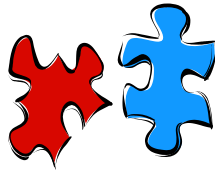


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### Piecing It All Together



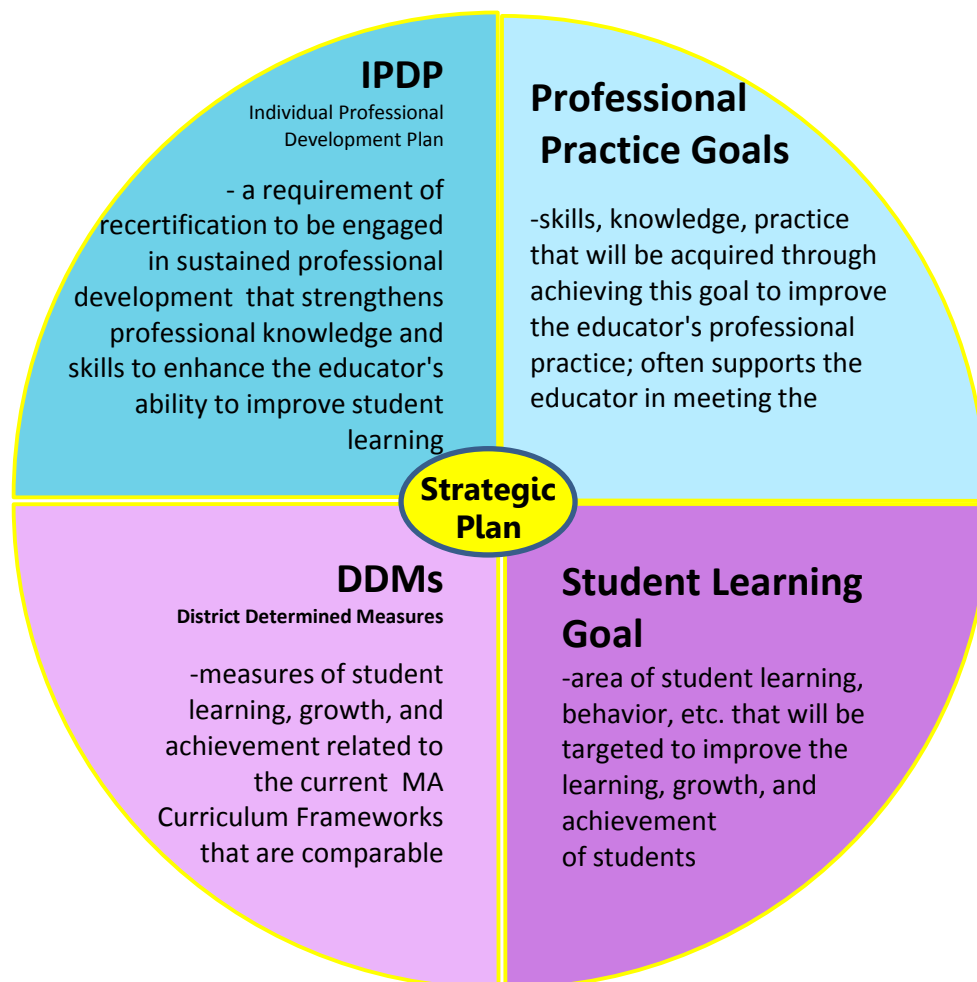
Time and time again, teachers have reiterated their frustration with each mandate that is handed down from the state and federal governments. On the surface level, each expectation seems completely unrelated to everything else already on their overflowing plate. The Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) has been around since the Education Reform Act of 1993. Every five years all educators who hold a professional level license are required to write at least two goals for a 5-year professional development plan. These goals are tied to their school and district improvement plans. IPDPs are 5 year plans. School improvement plans are generally 3 year plans. District improvement plans tend to be 5 year plans. All of these plans rely on one another, yet they are rarely on the same cycle. Educator planning was stable until the new Evaluation System was enacted. This required educators to complete a self-assessment and data analysis that led to Professional Practice and Student Learning SMART goals. In Year 2 of implementing that system, DESE introduced District-Determined Measures (DDMs) requiring every licensed educator to create two measures of student growth to collect two years' worth of data to calculate their Student Impact Rating. It makes one's head spin to keep track of the cycles that don't even line up. But perhaps, through a different lens, there is a way to find the common thread that weaves these seemingly unrelated tasks together . . .

### Important Dates:

- **District Meeting: September 24**  
*District Determined Measures (DDMs)*
- **Evaluation Due Dates:**
  - **By Sept 24 –**  
**Notification of Evaluation**
  - **By October 1 –**  
**Submit self-assessment and proposed goals**
  - **By October 15 -**  
**Meet with evaluator to establish plan**
  - **November 1 -**  
**Educator Plan is due**
- **All-Cape Professional Day – October 10**
- **DDMs submission to Central Office - October 17**



## Educator's Cycle for Improved Student Learning



Admittedly, when I was a classroom teacher I would complete my IPDP, get it signed, and then file it away for safe keeping until it needed to be signed again in two years. Occasionally, I might make the effort to update my goals but only if there was some drastic shift in the direction the district and/or school was headed. And the only time I used my IPDP goals as a part of my evaluation goals was if I was in year one of the IPDP and the goals were fresh in my mind. Otherwise, never did the two documents ever meet. My first year working with the Educator Evaluation system was year 5 of my IPDP and I believe both the school and district improvement plans were under construction so not much attention was paid to either. But having stepped out of the classroom and given the opportunity for a more global view of things, I had an epiphany of sorts.

As I read the descriptions of each requirement, the one common denominator was that each is ultimately about student learning. How do we as educators continue our learning (IPDP, Professional Practice goal) in order to meet the needs of our students (Student Learning goal) and what will be the most effective way to show evidence of our efforts (DDMs)? Instead of viewing each as a separate task to check off a list, what if we started looking at them through the lens of improved student learning? How does each assist me in meeting my ultimate goal of increasing my students' ability to achieve? So, I took an example of something I might have done as a classroom teacher and walked it through each task. Take a look:

Individual Professional Development Plan	Professional Practice	Student Learning	District Determined Measures
<p>In order to recertify, I must create an IPDP every 5 years. My goals must be aligned to district and/or school improvement goals. I know that one of the goals for both is about writing curriculum maps so they are aligned to the current MA Frameworks/CCSS so one of my IPDP goals will be about curriculum mapping.</p> <p><i>*This only applies to teachers who hold a professional level license.</i></p>	<p>After completing my self-assessment of my professional practice using the rubric of standards, indicators, and student engagement elements, I am ready to write my SMART goal. One of my IPDP goals is about curriculum mapping so my professional practice goal will be about collaborating with grade-level content peers to create a curriculum map.</p>	<p>Once I have analyzed my student's learning growth and achievement data, I can begin planning my SMART goal. The data has shown that my students are weak in the area of argument writing. I know that argument writing is an integral part of my curriculum. I will focus my student learning goal on creating assessments that will allow me to monitor their growth on this standard. These assessments will be included in my curriculum map.</p>	<p>My student learning goal is to create and monitor assessments on argument writing. I will be sure to include in my curriculum map multiple (at least 3) opportunities for students to display growth on this standard. By creating a rubric and protocols for administering the assessments and scoring, I have met the requirements of a DDM.</p>

I realize that this is a content-specific example but can you see how it might look if you substituted your content? Last year was a big re-certification year for many of us, it was the end of the first two-year evaluation cycle, and both the district and the schools have recently created new improvement plans. It's a brand-new school year; the district is at the start of a cycle of renewal . . . what better time for a fresh perspective and new outlook?



## Summer Learnin', Had Us a Blast...

*"And suddenly you know: It's time to start something new and trust the magic of beginnings."*

*-Meister Eckhart*

The summer of 2014 may have been brief but it was certainly jam-packed with professional development opportunities. Teachers took courses in Universal Design for Learning, Keys to Literacy: Writing Instruction in the Content Areas & Argument Writing, Class Management to Promote Student Learning, Issues in Urban Education, Assessment and Intervention for Children and Adolescents, Teaching for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The iPad Classroom, Picture Writing and Image Making, Teaching Science with Toys, and Standards Based Energy Education. Feedback from the participants of the district-sponsored Keys to Literacy course was overwhelmingly positive; 100% felt that the training increased their knowledge of content literacy instruction and 97% said they learned something that they would use in their teaching. The District Teaching and Learning Council spent three days learning about Understanding by Design and Curriculum Mapping and spent a morning with Jane Daly from DESE on Data Protocols and the Continuous Cycle of Improvement. Feedback on the Data training was also very positive. On a scale of 1(no)-5(yay), the average rating of teacher leaders being able to discuss and apply the Continuous Cycle of Improvement was 4.02, to be able to facilitate PLC discussions using protocols was 4.24, and to analyze MCAS and SMI data was 3.91. Summer is a time for rest and rejuvenation, for making memories and spending time with family, so we appreciate the time that so many of our teachers spent on their own learning in order to better meet the needs of our students.

## 10 Reasons D-Y Rocks ...

### District Determined Measures



During the upcoming school year, we will focus on implementing the DDMs which were piloted last year. Most educators will have at least two to choose from this year; those who don't will decide a second DDM to pilot. This list includes Related Arts teachers, Specialized Instructional Support Personnel, and most teachers at the high school level. Three district-level meetings have been set aside for teachers to meet by grade level and content area to discuss common assessments and plan for the year. The first meeting will be on Wednesday, September 24. Educators will then be asked to submit a brief summary of their DDMs to central office by October 17th so that we can keep a record.

### Curriculum Mapping

One of the goals of the district's strategic plan is to "Maintain and enhance a challenging and rigorous curriculum that empowers students to achieve success in a world community of continual change and accelerating complexity." In order to meet this goal, it was decided that curriculum maps in each content area need to be updated. The District Teaching and Learning Council met with a facilitator from Seaside Consultants during their training week to learn more about Understanding by Design and how to apply the tenets of UBD to curriculum mapping. Time will be devoted during PLC's, faculty meetings, professional development days, and district meetings to facilitate this process.

### Literacy Collaborative

During 2013-14, the three elementary schools in the District were invited to participate in a grant-funded five-year project with Lesley University. This partnership launched professional learning in the Literacy Collaborative model for teachers in K-2 and started the training year for Literacy Collaborative Coaches. This year the LC coaches will expand their role as they provide professional development designed to support colleagues in the implementation of the language and literacy framework. These efforts support the District's continued focus on best practices grounded in research. The outcomes of this learning include effective use of data, reflection, and analysis of instructional practices that lead to higher achievement for all learners.

### Model Curriculum Units

Listed here are a sample of the teacher-created [Model Curriculum Units](#) available on MA Dept. of Ed website. Please take a moment to browse them and perhaps even choose one or two to implement at your grade level. Math Detectives! Using Properties of Operations to Find Change Unknown - Grade 1, Adding & Subtracting Fractions - Grade 5, Reading and Writing Informational Texts: Negro League Baseball - Grade 4, What is Financial Literacy? - Grade 5, Ratios, Rates, and Percents - Grade 6, The Art of Persuasion and the Craft of Argument - Grade 11. These Model Curriculum Units that include day by day lesson plans, assessments, resources, and performance tasks were created by teams of teachers whose members included our DY colleagues.

### Word Generation

Word Generation is a curriculum offered in grades 4-8 that offers the opportunity to acquire academic language as well as argumentation skills through a series of discussable dilemmas. Students read, discuss, debate, and write about the unit topics using newly acquired academic vocabulary words. The approach is cross-disciplinary and actively engages students in the skills prioritized by the Common Core. Science, Math, ELA, and Social Studies teachers in grades 6-8 use Word Generation to collaborate on the shared goal of having students use academic language to articulate their thinking. "Join the national conversation."

### New Science Standards

Significant changes to the Science standards are on the horizon but for the moment, it is business as usual with the current curriculum frameworks. One of the major changes is that there are no longer grade-spans of standards; each grade is assigned a specific set of learning targets by domain. Since some of the biggest changes are occurring at the middle school level, there will be a focus on vertical alignment of the Life Sciences at grades 6-8 by mapping out the curriculum for cells.

## D-Y Rocks Continued

### Massachusetts Kindergarten Entrance Assessment (Teaching Strategies Gold)

This year the district is in year five of our implementation and accreditation process with Tools of the Mind. Kindergarten staff will now start to focus on a new initiative (MKEA) from the Department of Early Education and Care in conjunction with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The Department has chosen an assessment called Teaching Strategies Gold for all Kindergarten teachers to use this upcoming year. This is a system that can be used easily with any developmentally appropriate early childhood curriculum and will connect directly with the work we are doing with Tools of the Mind. This assessment uses ongoing observation to plan appropriate learning experiences for children to help them succeed, both academically and socially.

### PARCC testing

In June, the school committee agreed to adopt the PARCC test as our state assessment tool for the 2014-15 school year. There were many factors that were brought under consideration while making this decision. First, by 2015-16 school year, all schools must administer a “next generation assessment” so the current MCAS as we know it would receive a major overhaul. Second, there is no risk to our accountability levels. Our level can only improve or stay the same; it cannot decline. These two factors allow us to acclimate our students to the demands of more rigorous testing requirements without fear of a negative impact to our accountability level. There will be no double testing this year; all students in grade 3-9 and grade 11 will take the PARCC test for ELA and Math in the spring. Students in 10th grade will still be required to take the MCAS as a determination of competency for graduation. A determination will be made regarding which schools will take the test online and which will have the paper/pencil version. The Science MCAS will remain in grades 5, 8 and the high school. The following is a brief description of the two assessments students will take.

- **Performance-Based Assessment (PBA)**  
administered after approximately 75% of the school year, in March. The English language arts/literacy (ELA/literacy) PBA will focus on writing effectively when analyzing text. The mathematics PBA will focus on applying skills, concepts, and understandings to solve multi-step problems requiring abstract reasoning, precision, perseverance, and strategic use of tools. In high school, the mathematics PBA will focus on expressing mathematical reasoning and modeling real-world problems.
- **End-of-Year Assessment (EOY)**  
administered after approximately 90% of the school year, in May. The ELA/literacy EOY will focus on reading comprehension. The mathematics EOY will call on students to demonstrate further conceptual understanding of the Major Content and Additional and Supporting Content of the grade/course (as outlined in the [PARCC Model Content Frameworks](#)), and demonstrate mathematical fluency, when applicable to the grade.

Please stay tuned for more updates and information to follow.

### Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

Teams of educators spent 3 days last June in a cramped room at the Yarmouth Police Department in an effort to learn about PBIS and create implementation plans for each of their schools. The fruits of that labor were delivered to staff across the district on September 3. The PBIS team at each school, led by a coach, will meet monthly to monitor the execution of the plan, making adjustments and modifications as necessary. Data will be collected to inform decisions and staff will be surveyed in the spring to measure the effectiveness of the plan and determine next steps.



## Year 2- Go Math! and Engage NY Resources



Work on the implementation of the Massachusetts Frameworks for Mathematics integrating the Common Core continues in grades K-3. Summer training on curriculum mapping and design supported K-2 revision teams in their efforts to tease out student understandings, knowledge and skills in the beginning of the year Engage NY modules; grade 3 worked on fractions. This work allows for a deeper understanding of the standards themselves. In addition, the work supports teachers in their use of Engage NY as a resource for better teaching. Teachers can use the “mapped out” topics as a planning guide for problem based instruction within a workshop approach.

Fourth, fifth and sixth grade teachers will use GO Math during the school year as the primary printed resource. Seventh grade teachers will use Engage NY and eighth grade will continue to write and revise units based on the Common Core standards. As teachers grow in their understanding of the Common Core and increased rigor these resources will serve as guides. Everyone will welcome the familiarity of the resources as they plan for their students.

### RETELL Update

- The week of September 1, 2014 the data from 2013-14 SEI Endorsement courses will be passed into the ELAR system so that all those who successfully completed courses will be awarded the SEI Endorsement. After that week, educators will be able to log in to ELAR and see their SEI Endorsement displayed.
- This fall, five of the state’s collaboratives will begin coming on line as DESE-approved for-cost providers of SEI Endorsement courses. Courses offered through these sites will utilize the exact same curricula used in Department-sponsored no-cost trainings; their facilitators have been screened and trained by the Department and are expected to deliver trainings at the same high level. Successful completion of these courses will lead to the SEI Endorsement. These courses draw upon a separate pool of course facilitators, and may be of interest to:

- Districts that would like to train a larger proportion of their teachers than the Department has committed to train;
- Individuals interested in taking both the SEI Administrator and SEI Teacher Endorsement courses, the second at their own expense;
- Individuals who do not avail themselves of their no-cost opportunity who choose to complete their training after the conclusion of their district’s training window;
- Individuals who fail to complete or to earn a passing grade in their no-cost course and who therefore need to pay for training at a later date;
- Individuals who have been on leave, or who are moving to Massachusetts from other states, who wish to earn the SEI Endorsement in order to improve their chances of finding work in a Massachusetts public school;
- Individuals who, under regulation, are not entitled to a no-cost opportunity to enroll in an SEI Endorsement course but who wish to take the course to improve their capacity to meet the needs of their ELLs;
- Core academic teachers who never received the Endorsement training because during the time horizon of Department-sponsored training who subsequently do become teachers of ELLs and therefore require the training.

- Throughout the 2014-15 school year, 51 educators from D-Y will be participating in the RETELL course, most of which will take place Monday evenings at the high school.

### Coming Attractions



- Information on Individualized Professional Development Plans (IPDPs)
- Taking a look at the website [Achievethecore.org](http://Achievethecore.org)