

## NORTHEAST REGION REPORT

### Marta Cambra, Northeast Regional Director

I am very pleased to begin this report with the news from the Northeast Region that the following confirmations are on the Executive Board agenda for committee assignments: Nancy Pugliese from Connecticut will replace Marta Cambra as the Northeast representative on the Professional Preparation and Continuing Development Committee. That committee will be continuing to work on standards for online teaching. Also, Larissa Grenier, the newest addition to the Investigation Group at the Vermont Department of Education, will be the Northeast representative on the Professional Practices Committee.

### **Pennsylvania**

The new Teacher Information Management System (TIMS) is very nearly completed. Major software applications such as TIMS are complex and subject to delaying factors. We are working to resolve all issues so that we can ensure the new online application system available to meet user needs. It's been a challenging task but certainly a rewarding one.

We have automated the teacher certification process and enhanced the application so that teacher preparation programs, certification applicants, certificated individuals and employers will benefit from the efficiencies and enhancements of the new TIMS system.

Teacher and Principal Evaluation – PDE continues its work in the area of teacher effectiveness by embarking on a second evaluation pilot with over 6000 teachers and 513 supervisors in 109 school entities participating. The second pilot will also focus on the development of a system that incorporates a detailed practice rubric based on the Danielson Framework and Multiple measures of student achievement. Our goal is to implement the first part of a new system beginning in 2012 with new components to follow the teacher piece for principals and education specialists. We are working with outside researchers to improve our practice model and to find correlations between student achievement and the components of the practice rubric as well as to define an effective way of building student achievement into the evaluation process. This is a complex system to build and we plan to be thoughtful and thorough in our approach.

Pennsylvania has developed an electronic application system for all teacher preparation program applications and review. The original system was deployed January 2009. An advanced system has been developed to perform the functions of all teacher certification program applications and reviews that include the following applications:

- Initial Program Approval
- Full Program Review (occurs every 7 years)
- Annual Report (provides yearly data to assess the health of a program)

The benefits of this online certification approval system include:

- All program information will be entered online
- Time consuming and document heavy self-studies will no longer be required
- Onsite visits will not be required for new programs and will be optional for full review.
- New non- higher education programs will be able to apply through the new system.

This electronic system has streamlined the approval and review process and has eliminated on-site visits. The system provides flexibility for both IHEs and reviewers to enter and/or review information anytime, anywhere.

## **Maine**

Maine has a few things going on, but nothing too “earth-shattering” to report.

We are in the thick of developing our new credentialing program as part of the statewide longitudinal data grant we received. The vendor was selected, and they have already spent three days on site gathering information. We have two weekly conference calls with the company, one for overall project status and another on the data conversion process. Another three-day visit will occur early next week. The original expected goal of going live was set for May, 2012, but we may have to delay that based on our current business practices.

Staffing shortages and retirement incentives continue to take a toll on our productivity and well-being, but we manage to go forward.

## **Rhode Island**

### *Educator Evaluation:*

All school districts in Rhode Island are participating in the gradual implementation of new educator evaluation systems this year. Currently, they are completing professional goals and student learning objectives as the first steps in the new process. Observations are beginning in the next month as part of the gradual implementation plan. Throughout the year, we are providing training in modules for the various components of the system. More intensive training will be provided during the summer of 2012. For more information, please visit <http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/>

### *Certification Regulations:*

RI has drafted a set of certification regulations that were out for public comment through October 11. Most notably, we are proposing significant changes to the renewal requirements for all certificates. New certificates are being proposed such as Mathematics Specialist and Instructional Leader. The proposal also includes substantive changes to special educator certification by requiring a general educator certificate and the elimination of transcript analysis as a way to become certified in RI. The Board of Regents in RI will now consider all public comment. We are planning for a November vote on the new set of regulations. For more information, please visit <http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/CertificationRedesign/Default.aspx>

### *Educator Preparation:*

We have enacted a temporary hiatus on full program approval visits. RI maintains sole authority over the designation of approval and the approval timelines. Our strategic plan outlines a timeline for the revision of program approval standards and the process for approval. During the hiatus we will work with all programs, traditional and alternative, to revise and implement new standards for approval. The development work in this area has not yet begun.

### *Induction:*

For the first year, we are implementing an educator induction model that provides 90 minutes of instructional classroom observation and feedback each week. It's still early, but so far the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Even though RI does not experience high turnover, our beginning teachers need support to improve their instruction early in their careers. We are working closely with the New Teacher Center in the design and implementation of this program.

## **New Jersey**

New Jersey is essentially in a review period for its Licensing policies and code, with a governor's report due out in January. At that time, various task force recommendations will be made public for a complete revision/reauthorization of the education code, including Licensing. The January recommendations will likely include some key recommendations about rethinking professional development and its links to teacher effectiveness, including support for collaborative pd such as professional learning communities. However, the most fundamental changes will likely not be proposed until the fall of 2012 and would reflect policy decisions about teacher evaluation systems in which the judgment of teacher effectiveness is based at least 50 percent on student growth as reflected in test scores. A number of NJ districts and schools are currently piloting such evaluation models [a consequences free pilot year] and the department is hiring one of the state higher education institutions to evaluate the pilots and recommend policy.

NJ is also moving ahead in the development of databases that will link teachers to student performance.

In addition: NJ Licensing is in the process of preparing an RFP to rebid our computerized licensing systems, which are now variously 6 to 8 years old and in need of updating. And Licensing is also in the process of improvements to its customer service system. Additional staffing (we are fee funded) has allowed us to cut phone wait times from 45 minutes at the busiest times to less than 3 minutes on average.

However, like other NJ agencies and other states, we continue to be hampered by hiring restrictions on our professional staff flowing from the general revenue downturn.

## **Massachusetts**

1 – New Evaluation Regulations were approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) in June 2011, please see the following link: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr35.html> and attached is a quick overview of the new evaluation standards. The following is the timeline for implementation:

- (a) Districts with Level 4 schools, as defined in 603 CMR 2.05, shall adopt and implement in the Level 4 schools evaluation systems consistent with 603 CMR 35.00 for the 2011-2012 school year.
- (b) Districts that are participating in the Commonwealth's Race to the Top activities shall adopt and implement evaluation systems consistent with 603 CMR 35.00 for the 2012-2013 school year.
- (c) All school districts shall adopt and implement evaluation systems consistent with 603 CMR 35.00 by the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year.
- (d) A district may phase in implementation of its new evaluation system over a two-year period, with at least half of its educators being evaluated under the new system in the first year.

In addition we have 11 Early Adopters who will implementing Evaluation Systems that address the new requirements. The following is the link on our website with information about Evaluation in Massachusetts: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/>. Attached is a 2-page document with a high level overview of the new Evaluation System.

2 – As part of our award of Race to the Top federal funds, Massachusetts is in the process of developing and adopting rigorous program approval regulations required for all educator

preparation programs state-wide and creating a web-based accountability system, which will enable us to build a workforce of effective educators in Massachusetts, with particular focus on demonstrated high-need areas. The new web-based accountability systems will enable Massachusetts to strengthen our ability to collect and use quality data to meet reporting requirements and data requests, and inform policy and program improvement. We will bringing proposed regulations to program approval to the BESE in February 2012.

3 – In October we will bringing proposed changes to the leadership licensure standards to BESE for a vote to go out for public comment and then final vote and approval in December. These standards along with indicators will define licensure requirements, preparation programs and the preservice performance assessment work we are currently working for Principal licensure. In addition, there will be several “tweaks” made to the licensure regulations with the “highlight” being the development of an American Sign Language License.

4 – The Licensure Office is now a retained revenue account, however, a cap was placed on the amount of revenue that can be retained. We are continuing to redesign our online licensing system (ELAR), which is now almost 10 years old and are developing features specifically designed to help reduce the turnaround time of applications. We recently completed phase two of moving to a paperless process (we no longer send hardcopy licenses and now we send most correspondence via email), the next phase is developing a public look up.

## **Vermont**

Vermont has just begun the process of looking into an online licensing system. A project manager has been hired to work on several initiatives in the DOE and her first assignment is to help develop the RFP for a licensing system. I personally want to thank all my NASDTEC contacts for providing such valuable information to Lynne when she called to ask about your online systems. We are bringing in all stakeholders from the very beginning to ask for their input into the process and we will compile the information that we receive to inform what we need to include in the RFP.

The Vermont Standards Board For Professional Educators has adopted the InTASC Standards and we are now working with them to develop the timeline for implementation.

Last March, the Task Force on Teacher/Leader Effectiveness held its first meeting to develop an evaluation system that will contain components to be used by school districts in the state. This Task Force is co-facilitated by the DOE and the VT-NEA and is comprised again of all the stakeholders in the state. The work of leading researchers in this field have been presented to the Task Force and several state models have been presented to the group so that research-based and well-informed documents will be used to create the document to be presented to the Standards Board and State Board among others for their approval.

A Design Team has just been formed to work on the Flexibility waiver for the USDE.

All of the above-mentioned work is housed primarily in the Educator Quality Division.