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TO: Accountability and Implementation Board
FROM: Mohammed Choudhury, State Superintendent of School: 
DATE: May 16, 2023
SUBJECT: Initial LEA Blueprint Implementation Plans: Updates and Recommendations for Approval

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has completed its first round of reviews, feedback, support, and revisions for the LEA Initial Blueprint Implementation Plans, and is now recommending that the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) approve 12 LEA Initial Blueprint Implementation Plans, as statutorily required (MD Code, Ed. §5-404).

MSDE's independent and rigorous Blueprint Implementation Plan review process has concluded that each of these 12 Initial Blueprint Implementation Plans has met all criteria listed in the approved [Criteria for Success](#). The remaining LEAs who are not being recommended for approval at this time will receive additional feedback and support so that their plans can be revised to meet criteria across all pillars.

Training and Review Process

Consistent with its legislative mandate, MSDE conducted an independent review of each LEA Blueprint Implementation Plan to recommend approval or disapproval to the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB). The teams tasked with reviewing LEAs' plan submissions to inform MSDE's recommendations of approval reflected the diversity of Maryland public school students and included individuals from the following groups:

- MSDE staff directly responsible for the Blueprint implementation planning with LEAs;
- MSDE staff supporting the implementation of individual Blueprint pillars;
- National experts with deep experience in implementing equity-driven, research based, transformative educational practices proven to be successful and who are approved partners for Maryland Leads; and
- Members of the MSDE Expert Review Team, a team of individuals who support the ongoing assessment of Blueprint implementation efforts.

Rating consistency across LEA plans was of paramount importance when reviewing the Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan submissions. Based on the importance of ensuring that each LEA's Blueprint Implementation Plan is fairly and consistently scored against the AIB-approved Criteria for Success, MSDE ensured that each reviewer was properly trained and had no conflicts of interest.

In total, each review team member received approximately eight hours of training on how to rate the Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan submissions, rooted in consistently applying the approved Criteria for Success and providing feedback to LEAs. Each LEA plan was then reviewed by each reviewer individually, and then by two teams of three reviewers before a final rating and feedback were determined (see Figure 1).

The training and review process for Review Team members included:

- Multiple norming sessions focused on applying the Criteria for Success and drafting feedback;
- Individual, small group, and large-group rating sessions;

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- Multiple-team reviews to ensure that all feedback to LEAs was aligned to the Criteria for Success, clear, direct, and concise; and
- An additional separate process for resolving any rating variance between teams.

Summary of Results

The Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Template had 164 questions for each LEA to answer. The responses to these questions were rated against the 63 Criteria for Success statements. Each criterion was given a rating of “Meets Criteria”, “Partially Meets Criteria”, or “Does Not Meet Criteria”. A summary of ratings received by LEAs is outlined in the table below. An overview of pillar-specific results for each LEA can be found [here](#). The most common reason an LEA’s response was rated as “Does Not Meet Criteria” or “Partially Meets Criteria” resulted from responses lacking clarity or specificity as required by the Criteria for Success.

As of May 16, 2023, the current status of each LEA’s Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan is listed in the table below. In the Initial Blueprint Implementation Plans that require additional revisions, the number of revisions needed by each LEA ranges from 1 to 7 revisions. This is significantly less than the number of revisions needed in each plan after the Department conducted its initial review.

Status	Local Education Agencies
Recommended for Approval	Allegany County Public Schools, Anne Arundel County Public Schools, Baltimore City Public Schools, Baltimore County Public Schools, Caroline County Public Schools, Cecil County Public Schools, Frederick County Public Schools, Harford County Public Schools, Talbot County Public Schools, Washington County Public Schools, Wicomico County Public Schools, Worcester County Public Schools
Additional Revisions Required	Calvert County Public Schools, Carroll County Public Schools, Charles County Public Schools, Dorchester County Public Schools, Garrett County Public Schools, Howard County Public School System, Kent County Public Schools, Montgomery County Public Schools, Prince George's County Public Schools, Queen Anne's County Public Schools, Somerset County Public Schools, St. Mary's County Public Schools

Next Steps for LEAs Whose Plans Require Revisions

LEAs that did not receive “Meets Criteria” for each criterion also received feedback for each criterion with guidance on how to revise their response to meet the stated criteria. **LEAs must submit their revisions within ten business days of receiving their results from MSDE’s review.** For example, LEAs who receive results on May 16th must submit revisions by May 30th or sooner. As soon as LEAs are able, they should submit a completed version of the “Team Review Ratings and Feedback” form provided by reviewers. When submitting the form, LEAs should use the blank column to respond to all feedback provided by the Review Team related to narrative questions, small revisions to data tables, and linked artifacts. Any substantial revision of data tables should be completed in the original Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan itself and resubmitted along with the feedback form.

Any LEAs that need further revisions must meet with MSDE staff members to review the feedback to ensure a common understanding of the feedback provided and expectations of the revisions needed. LEAs will continue to receive feedback and meet with MSDE staff until all questions in the Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan receive a rating of “Meets Criteria” according to the Criteria for Success.

Submission of Recommendations for Approval

The table below outlines the timeline and major activities for the revision process, including submission dates of recommendations to AIB. MSDE will only submit recommendations for approval for plans that meet all criteria.

Revision Group	LEAs Revise Plans	MSDE Reviews Plans	MSDE Submits Recommendations to AIB
1	April 26 - May 9	May 10 - May 15	May 16
2*	May 16 - May 30	May 31 - June 5	June 6
3*	June 6 - June 20	June 21 - June 26	June 27

*If necessary.