2011 NPD Cohort Monitoring Questions

Current Program Status
Describe your current on-board key personnel, the percentage of time on the grant, current vacancies and any recruitment challenges.

- Key personnel are the same. Time on the grant Eliana D. Rojas, 60%; Xaé Alicia Reyes, 33%
- Recruitment challenges are impacted by a State Department of Education effort to train more qualified ESL/Bilingual Education teachers through an Alternate Route to Certification 6 week program. It is our position that these new teachers will need further professional development after obtaining certification and classroom positions. The first group to enter classrooms will be in September, 2012.
  o Recruitment has also been affected by the Windham Public Schools Special Master’s decision to have all district teachers reapply for their positions. He also intends to replace, at the least, 20 of those positions with Teach for America newly certified candidates who would most certainly require additional professional development built around the education of ELLs.

Have you met your targets for recruitment of project participants according to your approved work plan? How many are currently served by participant type? What challenges have you experienced with participant recruitment?

- Targets: 20 The original application projected this number on the application. The target was 15 for degrees and the project has 13. However, there are 7 enrolled for Professional Development for a total of 20 participants.
- Participant Type: 13 Degrees/certification  7 Professional Development coursework

What professional development activities have you conducted to date for project participants, which may include higher education faculty?

- Dr. Rojas has established partnerships within Neag in the following departments: University course work, seminars, workshops, Counseling/ Ed Psych and Measurement, Gifted and Talented

What activities have you conducted to date related to the development/revision of course curricula, field practice?

- We have emphasized the discourse of Math and Science throughout the disciplines within culturally relevant teaching practices. A focus on contextualized teaching based on community socioeconomics and cultural factors is an essential component of all courses.

How have LEA partners (and other partners) contributed to planning and carrying out your program objectives and activities? How satisfied are you with the support of your partners? Have you experienced challenges in working with your partners?
The agreed partnership with the Windham Public Schools has been slow because of the State take-over and by district directions under new leadership. Specific STEM goals are presently being implemented in the district. Joint execution with the LEAD Project has resulted in the design and set-up of model STEM classrooms. Each classroom will have TI Navigator nspire calculators with a teacher control kit; a multitouch Smart Board with a unified 75 projector and speakers. The Windham District and the LEAD Project will host a STEM training/conference required for all teachers the week of August 20th, 2012.

The Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Windham has been helpful in sharing current plans, activities and results. It is expected that Windham in-service teachers will have a greater role in advocating for ELLs in the next year’s activities. The Assistant Superintendent has agreed to in-service teacher surveys as the implementation of the State Common Core Standards in Math become a factor in the education of their students.

The challenge has been time for joint planning of activities, development of evaluation tools and in-service professional development. All plans for the next school year will be discussed in early July.

In selecting sites for student practice which of the following are you considering: High concentration of ELLs; experienced master teachers; school climate supportive of English learners and the professional development program?

The coursework designed in the Neag School of Education includes requirements for in-service teacher development of techniques to reach all students, formative evaluation, reflection, documentation of methods and materials, mentoring of colleagues and presentations to audiences of educators. The sites that are considered viable for this project are those with a high concentration of ELLs and a school climate where the education of English learners needs to become a priority. The project seeks a climate where outside perspectives and teacher input are welcomed in the over-all effort to increase the educational opportunities of ELLs.

If your program has a STEM focus, What STEM PD activities have you conducted to date and how will they result in improved pedagogical skills and content knowledge of EL teachers?

How often do you review your Management Plan with stakeholders to assess progress and/or refine the plan?

In this first year, in-service teacher participants are learning both skills and content. The Windham Schools, for example, have taken one year to conduct a massive training of all math teachers in the new common core standards for math. This is on-going. The component that this Project envisions is Professional Development to follow the content knowledge that has as its focus the differentiation of content for ELs, the expansion of the vocabulary of math across the disciplines (instilling STEM in the minds of teachers and students) and the training of in-service teachers in the uses of technology for learning in math, science and other disciplines. A three day professional development will occur in August of this year.
• We meet quarterly and at the end of each academic semester. The participating in-service teachers are informed of all new directions in the field, especially those connected to the STEM grant. Participant feedback is collected each semester in order to revise course offerings.

**Evaluation, Data Collection Activities**

How do you plan to refine your project objectives to ensure that they are measurable, reflect participant outcomes and will provide quantitative and qualitative data?

• Baseline data was collected through the Assistant Superintendent for information on student achievement in 2011. This will be followed as grade cohorts advance, measuring improvement of the same cohorts over time.

• Teachers will rate themselves as improved in content knowledge and skills based on a modified self-efficacy test agreed on with Windham.

• Focus groups of Project graduate student participants will be analyzed for both qualitative and quantitative data.

Based on what you learned from the Performance Report webinar, follow-up teleconferences, and the NPD grantee meeting do you plan to refine your evaluation plan?

• The evaluation will continue to track cohorts of LEAD participants during the life of the Project. Of special concern will be analysis of accelerated achievement in math and science among EL students.

• Disaggregated data will track the progress of ELLs, data related to areas of weaknesses and strengths will be used to improve teacher training.

• The evaluation will monitor teacher appropriate use of technology, especially in math and science. Teacher surveys will be used to document areas where increased Professional Development is needed.

Have you contracted with an external evaluator?

• Yes.

Are you working with an internal evaluation team?

• Yes, Ed Psych and measurement

How often do you and project staff meet with evaluators to discuss the evaluation activities, timeframes and results?

• Monthly

Have you shared the performance report webinar, APR form and APR guidance materials with your evaluator?

• Yes.

Do you anticipate any challenges in completing the APR?

• No.

What assessment tools have you developed/selected to measure the following?
• Surveys, questionnaires, focus group interview protocols, reflections are all being revised to specifically fit LEAD objectives.

Participant reaction to training?
• Surveys/Focus groups/exit interviews upon completion of program

Participant learning outcomes?
• Participant activities in their own schools will be recorded to obtain information on: mentoring, presentations, improved achievement of students, development of new techniques and methods for teaching/learning

Completer effectiveness?
• All project participants register email addresses to allow contact after completion. As the SDE is the only entity able to award certification, we require participants to up-date the Project data base after completion of University coursework.

Impact of the program on K-12 student outcomes
• Baseline data is on file and will be up-dated each testing cycle using the State standards of Proficient, Goal and Above goal to determine percentages. Disaggregated data allow a comparison of ELLs and all others. If individual in-service teachers are followed over the course of the Project, their classrooms will be followed for achievement purposes.

During the NPD project directors’ meeting we talked about strategies to follow-up completers. Have you developed strategies to follow-up completers in the instructional setting after 1 year, after 3 years?
• We are refining procedures, developing an on-line instrument that can be e-mailed to graduates, and tracking their employment turnover in order to increase the return rate of surveys
• Participant activities in their own schools including panels for colleagues and communities will be recorded to obtain information on: mentoring, presentations, improved achievement of students, development of new techniques and methods for teaching/learning

How will changes or improved capacity building of the organization (LEA and/or IHE) be measured? How will the program make improvements in professional development related to the needs of ELs for all teachers within the institution?
• LEA capacity building will be determined by changes made in the organization of students, the on-going professional development of teachers, the supervisory tools used to evaluate teacher effectiveness, and, most particularly, the improvement in the achievement of ELs and their inclusion in all academic programs offered in the public schools.

What challenges do you anticipate in collecting data on any of the bolded items above?
• All interaction with teachers and public school students must be approved by the IRB at the University, the Board of Education of the LEA, parents of students. It is necessary to design an evaluation that can yield qualitative and quantitative data while not infringing on the privacy of any group. All data collection goes through several steps.
Have you used evaluation data to make improvements in the program?

- Yes.

**Budget**

How often do you meet with your business office to reconcile budgets and ensure grant funds are managed effectively. Do you anticipate revisions made to the budget?

- The Budget Office sends a monthly report on expenditures and discussions are held to meet the challenges and emerging needs as they present themselves.

How is your project maximizing resources to ensure you are able to provide professional development for the greatest possible number of participants?

- Participation in the Windham District “transformation” has enabled LEAD to reach all teachers involved in STEM content. The ability to locate weaknesses through data analysis will refine the process of training in the next four years.