Massachusetts Performance Assessment for Leaders: Leadership Preparation Programs Webinar

September 30, 2015
Objectives for the Webinar

• Share field study experiences and results
• Provide updates for 2015-16 implementation
• Share next steps
• Answer your Questions
Assessment Development Process

- Design
- Implementation and standards setting
- Development and readiness
- Field trial
- Fall and spring pilot
## Program Participation in Designing Assessments

### Bias
- Boston College
- Northeastern University and Center for Collaborative Education (CCE)
- UMass Boston
- Lesley College
- Bridgewater State University

### Content
- MA College of Liberal Arts (MCLA)
- Harvard GSE
- MESPA

### Design
- MSSAA
- University of Massachusetts, Amherst
- Bridgewater State University
PAL Assessment Tasks

• Task 1
  Leadership through a Vision for High Student Achievement (with an emphasis on student learning culture)

• Task 2
  Instructional Leadership for a Professional Learning Culture.

• Task 3
  Leadership in Observing, Assessing and Supporting Individual Teacher Effectiveness.

• Task 4
  Leadership for Family Engagement and Community Involvement (with an emphasis on school-family culture)
PAL Assessment task components

• Four parts to the work for each task
  – Investigate
  – Prepare
  – Act
  – Assess

• Three types of products
  – Artifacts
  – Other documents
  – Commentary
Systems and Supports

• ShowEvidence information management system
  – Work product submittal
  – Scoring
  – Scorer training
• Candidate Assessment handbook
• Website
• Administrative Field guide
• Informed consent forms and model letters
• Videos about enrolling, task completion and submission
Field Trial:

- Scoring 416 candidates’ submissions
- Feedback survey results (number of candidates=92)
  - 63% had completed their program
  - 59% were a teacher or guidance counselor
  - 43% plan on becoming a principal as soon as possible
- Preparation program feedback (n=11)
- Scorer feedback (n=20+)
- Leadership team, design team and content validity team feedback
## Field Trial Candidate Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics of PAL Field Trial candidates</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non program (administrative apprenticeship/panel review)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation program</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No preference for race/ethnicity</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Candidate feedback on the tasks generally

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Task 1 Mean</th>
<th>Task 2 Mean</th>
<th>Task 3 Mean</th>
<th>Task 4 Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The task provides candidates with authentic job-related experiences.</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>2.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The task is relevant and essential to the work that successful school leaders must be able to do.</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The task is flexible and adaptable so candidates in different types of school settings can structure meaningful activities and produce relevant products.</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The task is aligned to the MA standards.</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The task was complementary to my leadership preparation.</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing the task required a realistic amount of work.</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Program director feedback on task attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Task 1 mean</th>
<th>Task 2 mean</th>
<th>Task 3 mean</th>
<th>Task 4 mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of responses</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the work candidates in my program must engage in to complete the task.</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The task provided candidates with authentic job related experiences.</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The task is relevant to the work that successful school leaders must be able to do</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The task is flexible and adaptable enough so that candidates in different types of school settings are able to structure meaningful activities and produce relevant products.</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is feasible for candidates to complete the task within the structure of a course or internship that my institution offers.</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The task is aligned to the curriculum of the program that my institution offers to prepare new school leaders</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The process of supporting candidates in completing this task has been a catalyst for rethinking how we prepare school leaders.</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Task 1

Select an initial learning priority area

What are the gaps in student learning?

Determine which target student group has the most challenges or needs

What are the characteristics of this target group and their challenges and needs?

Determine the programs and services that already exist to support student learning

What are their gaps or limitations for the target group?  
What other programs or services might be more effective?

Investigate the student learning experience in the priority area qualitatively

What reasons can be identified that explain the target student group’s low performance?

Develop a plan to improve student learning for one target group in the priority academic area

What strategies need to be proposed to improve the target student group’s performance?

Solicit feedback and revise plan

How will feedback be collected and from whom?
Candidate feedback on Task 1

What was valuable:
• using data
• working with others
• planning, particularly for school turnaround
• being able to do something good for their school or district.

Recommended changes:
• Advice to programs and candidates about preparing for the task
• Advice on the task instructions
  – Reduce redundancy
  – Clarify instructions
• Request for district or principal support
Program director reports on candidate learning in Task 1

- One candidate who was working in the Physical Education Dept. Task One led him to realize that math vocabulary was a significant weakness in his school.
- This task did force candidates to examine school data and look for trends.
- The Leadership coursework had already provided our candidates the deep learning for this work. The PAL task "officialized" what they were doing and why.
- Task 1 pretty much replicated the work our candidates do in our Summer Intensive which is organized around a low performing school
- Utilizing data is critical for successful administrators. Candidates were able to present their data, findings, and recommendations to a larger groups.
- Numerous students reported that Task 1 required them to do "real leadership work," which included navigating the politics involved with territorial ownership of data, insecurities, and so on.
- Candidates were pushed to think beyond solutions to problems by hypothesizing about the causes of problems and then validating hypotheses through more data analysis.
- Using data to formulate at least one strategy for student improvement is an important leadership requirement.
Changes made to improve Task 1 instructions:

- Clarify plan components further
- Add “changes in school organization and structures” to plan components
- Stress providing an explanation of how feedback was collected, synthesized and used in revising the plan
- Clarified the purpose of the commentary for candidates to describe (and analyze) their leadership skills used in completing all steps of the task
Changes made to improve Task 1 rubrics

• Added detail to clarify how the data collection indicator is measured, based on the scope and diversity of data collected and how purposefully.
• Added an indicator on evaluating existing policies, practices and programs
• Added detail to clarify how the vision and plan focus indicator is measured, based on specificity and use of data
• Added an indicator on soliciting input from others in developing the plan and as distinct from gathering feedback on the plan
• Added more detail to clarify the indicators on plan details, plan feedback and assessment of leadership skills and to better differentiate performance levels
Task 2

1. Identify a priority academic area
   - What evidence demonstrates that a subject or performance area and target student group are a priority?

2. Form a group of interested teachers
   - What teachers or staff members would benefit from and contribute to group learning?

3. Select an instructional practice focus
   - What specific instructional area or practice should be the focus for group learning?

4. Enact a group learning approach
   - What structured group process approaches are needed to support and enhance the group’s learning?

5. Support individual and group learning
   - What types of assistance are needed to support group and each member’s learning?

6. Gather feedback and evidence of group learning and practice improvement
   - What evidence needs to be gathered to document improvements in teaching practice that lead to improvements in student performance?
Candidate feedback on Task 2

What they valued and learned most:

- Working with a group of teachers to improve instruction
- Group process, group facilitation, working with a team
- Mechanics of group process, using protocols
- Supporting individual teachers

Recommended changes:

- Removing redundancy and adding clarity around the supporting documents
- Suggestions for when and how to situate the task work within program time and coursework
- Developing district support for completing the task
- Recognizing the contributions of other staff to this work.
Program director reports on candidate learning in Task 2

- Task 2 enabled our PE candidate, aspiring to the principalship to work with a group of teachers to determine strategies to address improved student performance in math vocabulary, and to get a taste of leading a PLC.
- As leaders foster collaboration amongst staff, the professional learning network aspect of this task either affirmed what the candidates saw or provided a model for what could be.
- The work involved in Task 2 is aligned with one of our major performance expectations in our program. Our coaches expect to see our candidates supporting a PLC or grade-level team during the course of the internship or practicum.
- The candidates were able to research, through data gathering, and be able to present a data driven problem with recommended outcomes and solutions.
- Working with a group of teachers to implement a strategy, and provide support for that group, is an essential leadership requirement.
Changes made to improve Task 2 instructions

• Clarify that the professional learning group is to be:
  – A small group
  – Focused on improving instructional practice in curriculum, instruction or assessment
  – Engaged in professional learning
  – On-going
  – Engaged in trying out new instructional practices in their classrooms

• Stress that candidates must clarify their role in meetings and in working with individual teachers
Changes made to improve Task 2 rubrics

• Stress team formation in the first indicator
• Provide more elements on the attributes of a good learning plan (goals, objectives, structure and process)
• Clarify the qualities of team process
• Stress the qualities of teacher feedback in assessing professional learning process
Task 3

Select a priority area and teacher to observe
What priority academic area will be your focus for the classroom observation and which teacher will you observe?

Visit several classes to see what is common instructional practice
What are the typical instructional practices that teachers employ for the priority area and how do they vary across classrooms?

Learn about the teacher, students, and unit of study
What information about the teacher, students in the class, and unit of study do you need to understand the lesson you will observe and what the teacher wants to learn?

Conduct pre-observation
How will you facilitate a two-way discussion with the teacher in preparation for the observation?

Observe and video record 2 or more classes
What are the school’s policies on video recording a teacher observation?
What teacher observation guide or rubric will you use and how to focus on effective teaching practices?

Conduct post-observation conference
How will you develop rapport and engage in a two-way discussion with the teacher?
What observed teaching practices will you address and what improvements would you recommend?

Obtain feedback on observation and support provided
What feedback will you seek and how?
Candidate feedback on Task 3

What was most valuable:

- Learning to give teacher feedback
- How to conduct a teacher observation
- How to prepare for a teacher observation

Suggestions for improvement:

- Clarify instructions
- Make the video uploading easier
- More preparation embedded in the program

Only three complained about union or school culture problems that made the task difficult to complete
Program director reports on candidate learning in Task 3

• Actually observing and then following up with the conference allowed my candidate a chance to be on the other side and to realize that it is more difficult to assess the performance of another adult vs. a young student.

• As leaders, supervision and evaluation are key to the success of the students, staff, and school. This task focused on just that.

• All of our candidates were feeling competent in conducting walkthroughs and observations by the time they got to this task. I think this task showed them that they had more learning ahead in the area of giving substantive feedback and that was good.

• On all four tasks, I liked the fact that they had to reflect on their learning and talk about what they would do differently if they were doing the task again.

• Candidates were able to gain better insight into supervision and evaluation and their true meaning in enhancing both teaching and learning.

• Learning the evaluation process is an important aspect of leadership training.
Changes made to improve Task 3 instructions

• Require that both the candidate and the observed teacher be viewable in the post-observation video recording, to be able to score feedback process.

• Added detail about the pre-observation conference to the initial template, teacher feedback and commentary

• Elaborated on the nature of teacher feedback and its use

• Elaborated on commentary instructions to stress the candidate’s role and leadership skills used in each phase of the process
Changes made to improve Task 3 rubrics

- Added an element on use of a teaching practice rubric in guiding the observation and feedback
- Added an element on candidate’s consistency across the steps of pre-observation conference, observation analysis and post-observation conference
- Added an element on teacher development that clarified the nature and specificity of steps for improving instructional practice
Task 4

Focus on family and community involvement in student learning

How can improved family and/or community engagement be leveraged to improve student learning?

Form a working group

Which staff, family or community members are best informed to contribute effectively to the planning process?

Assess existing family and community involvement

What current status of policies, programs and strategies for family and community engagement relate to the student learning priority area? What are the gaps and opportunities?

Create a plan

What integrated set of strategies could be implemented in the plan to increase family and community engagement in support of improving student performance for the priority area?

Implement one strategy

What implementation steps need to be taken and who will participate?

Collect feedback and evidence of initial impact

What feedback and initial impact evidence can be collected and from whom?
Candidate feedback on Task 4

The most valuable part of the task:

• Learning to work with family and community members
• Learning to consider other stakeholders’ views
• Planning
Program director reports on candidate learning in Task 4

- My candidate discovered that there were many persons and business leaders in his town who had valuable support to offer to continue student learning outside the school doors.

- Sensitized our candidates to the degree of thoughtful orchestration that is involved in mobilizing community involvement, achieving consensus, and executing a product or event.

- Candidates were better equipped to develop work cooperatively with groups both inside and outside of the school community in a problem-solving environment.

- Engaging stakeholders beyond the school setting is an important aspect of promoting student learning.
Changes made to improve Task 4 instructions

- Stress that the task is to link family and community engagement to a priority academic area (or a student social, emotional or health issue that directly influences student learning).
- Adds an emphasis on describing the working group and the participation of family and/or community representatives.
- Added that sources of evidence for planning be included.
- Added that the plan must specify who helped with planning and the candidate’s role; the same was added to the strategy implementation.
- Asked for more explanation on the collection and use of feedback evidence.
Changes made to improve Task 4 rubrics

- Elaborated on the priority area indicator to stress connection to a priority academic area or related student need, and how improving family and/or community engagement would contribute
- Clarified differentiation on work group engagement, to stress the scope and nature of the group’s role and involvement of family and/or community representatives
- Clarified differentiation on the nature and substance of the plan
- Clarified differentiation on strategy implementation, including details and candidate role
- Clarified differentiation of feedback to stress the scope and nature of feedback and the sources of feedback, particularly from family and community representatives
What we learned about using the on-line system

- Candidate access and challenges
- Program director access and challenges
- Enrollment process for the Implementation Year
  - Access to information
  - Registration
## Field Trial Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Tasks Submitted</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>62.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Tasks Submitted</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Tasks Submitted</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Task Submitted</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None Submitted</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>769</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scoring and Analysis Issues

- A few submissions were “incomplete” and thus not eligible for the Field Trial
- A few cases of irregularities occurred, resulting in removal of candidates’ submissions from the Field Trial
- Total Field Trial sample: 416
Improvements Based on the Field Trial

- Provided clarification about completing the tasks, in which candidates should:
  - clarify their role in describing and analyzing the work completed for each assessment task.
  - Blind the submission to remove identifying information
  - Adhere to the length requirements for the work products
  - Use feedback evidence, not just state a summary conclusion

- Stressed basic guidelines for preparing artifacts and required documents, and writing a commentary about their leadership skills in performing the tasks.
Establish criteria on conditions under which candidates’ work is automatically returned:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASKS:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work is not blinded</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not address an academic priority area</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not include all supporting documents</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videos are not of the appropriate length and quality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not describe a working group and does not include family or community input</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A strategy was not implemented</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment Policies

- Program Year purpose
- Initial fee
- Duration
- Refunds
- Resubmissions
- Appeals
Rules of Assessment Participation

- Confidentiality

- Originality and authorship

- Conditions when work is collaborative
Next steps

October: Launch the ShowEvidence registration
October: Scorer re-training for currently certified scorers
October: Standards setting/cut scores established
November 9: Preparation program meeting
November: New scorer training begins
November: Initial score reporting begins, with six-week turnaround
Questions?
Thank you!

For more questions, please email us at:

• PAL@doe.mass.edu

• ma-palinfo@bankstreet.edu