

Arlington Public Schools  
Departments of Instruction and Information Services:  
Offices of Professional Development and Planning and Evaluation  
Teacher Evaluation- Analysis of Professional Practice

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Assistant Superintendent for Instruction requested that Planning and Evaluation undertake this evaluation of the **Analysis of Professional Practice** (APP) teacher evaluation process during the first limited implementation year 2007-2008. The goal of the evaluation is to determine the efficacy of the APP process for providing quality assurance of continuing contract T-Scale staff.

## ***Findings***

The findings of the APP Evaluation process can be summarized as follows:

1. T-Scale staff and evaluators reported finding the APP provided a valuable opportunity to spend time discussing professional practice.
2. The timeline, in which the APP is to occur according to directions in the APP documents and Teacher Evaluation Handbook, is difficult to adhere to.
3. There was a great deal of variance in the use of the APP forms.
4. The APP process was described as being time consuming.

These findings are based upon the responses received as a part of the evaluation process which occurred during a year of limited implementation of the APP. During the limited implementation, 100(?) T-Scale staff agreed to participate in the process. T-Scale staff represented every school, every school levels, core and non-core curriculum, etc. By May, 87 T-Scale staff remained in the process, and approximately 4% of all APS T-Scale employees were evaluated using the APP.<sup>1</sup> Among the staff who were identified for the limited implementation, the response rates to the surveys and form collection ranged from 53%-70%. Finally, the focus of this evaluation has been on the process used for the APP as opposed to the quality of the instrument itself. The results of this evaluation should be viewed with recognition of these limitations.

### *To What Degree Did We Implement The Program Or Deliver The Service?*

The APP process provides for a periodic structured observation for T-Scale employees. Procedures and timelines have been specified within the APP documents and the APS Teacher Evaluation Handbook. This includes the provision of forms to be used to guide participants through the process.

The results of the APP evaluation indicate that the timelines that are currently specified are difficult to adhere to. The central message sent by participants was that often, in the course of the school day, emergencies come up that take precedence over other scheduled activities. Even in the absence of emergencies, coordinating the evaluator's and T-Scale employee's schedules to find time to meet is challenging, making the timelines that are specified difficult to follow. It did not appear that the timelines were unclear or confusing.

This does not seem to be the case when it comes to the use of the forms that are provided as a part of the APP. Here it was indicated that participants found the directions for the forms unclear and that the forms, as they currently exist, created technical problems for the users. In reviewing the APP forms that were submitted, there were several places where patterns emerged that indicated that the directions were not clear. Unfortunately, this often meant that participants engaged in extraneous work that was not intended as a part of the process.

### *How Satisfied Were The Users And Clients?*

Overall, participants in the APP described the process as having value. Specifically, they pointed to the value of having the time to think and talk about the work of teaching. T-Scale staff in particular prized the time they were able to spend with their evaluator and described it as an intellectual luxury to be able to engage in focused conversations about their professional practice with their evaluator.

Of great concern to participants was the amount of time that they felt the APP process required. Since the evaluation of the APP began after many participants began the process, the element of time spent on the process was not explicitly

---

<sup>1</sup> This is based upon 87 T-Scale APP participants of 1,989 total T-Scale employees during the 2007-08 school year.

captured for the 2007-08 school year, so it is difficult to provide specific data on the amount of time spent on the APP process. This difficulty is compounded by the fact that there was great variance in how the APP process was followed among participants. Nonetheless, this appears to be the most significant concern voiced by participants.

### Recommendations

Through continued collaboration with evaluators and teachers:

- Revise APP process to align with existing components of the APS Teacher Evaluation System. This can be accomplished through the utilization of the existing PDP forms and PTO forms and process.
- Continue to evaluate and revise APP forms and process to ensure that all components in the process play a role in making determinations about quality performance.
- Make the resources developed as a part of the APP, such as the unit planner and identification of areas of work responsibility form, available to T-Scale employees as optional documents which can be used to support professional growth.
- Provide individualized support to evaluator and T-Scale participants to clarify the process as warranted.
- Explore how technology may be utilized to reduce paperwork and make more efficient use of time spent on the APP process.

# The Professional Development Office

Department of Instruction  
Arlington Public Schools

The Professional Development Office web page is located on the Arlington Public Schools' web sight (<http://www.apsva.us>). Click Staff, then Professional Development Office. On the Professional Development Office web page you will find teacher evaluation documentation and forms to download, links to the online professional development registration and non-APS professional learning opportunities.

**Professional Development Office**

The Professional Development Office coordinates and implements system-wide professional development to support teaching excellence and improve student learning for employees in APS at all stages of their career. The services coordinated by this office include mentoring teachers, conducting workshops, coordinating in-service programs and working with universities to place field experience students. The office provides support for establishing and maintaining Professional Development Schools, and also provides support for the Teacher Evaluation System. The Professional Development Office is committed to supporting and retaining high quality teachers in Arlington Public Schools.

**Professional Learning Online Catalog**

Click here to view the [online catalog](#) of professional learning opportunities. APS subscribes to the Electronic Registrar Online (ERO), an eSchool Solutions product, to manage the online registration and management of offerings. Users login and search for offerings by title, title, curriculum category, credit type, or keyword.

Click [here](#) to view listings of non-APS professional learning opportunities.

Dr. Sue Sarber  
Professional Development Supervisor  
703-228-2111  
[ssarber@arlington.k12.va.us](mailto:ssarber@arlington.k12.va.us)

Kate Sydney  
Teacher Evaluation Specialist  
703-228-2112  
[ksydney@arlington.k12.va.us](mailto:ksydney@arlington.k12.va.us)