
TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Carey M. Wright, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Schools

DATE: October 22, 2024

SUBJECT: Assessment and Accountability Task Force Update



Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Maryland State Board of Education (SBOE) with an update on the Assessment and Accountability Task Force.

Background

In February 2024, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) announced the formation of the task force to examine the state's assessment and accountability systems to strengthen connections between school ratings and student achievement. The task force is being facilitated by the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (more commonly known as the Center for Assessment).

Executive Summary

Nearly thirty educators and national and local testing experts convened on May 2, 2024, for the first Assessment and Accountability Task Force meeting. A total of eight full day sessions are scheduled to take place over seven months along with multiple interim subcommittee meetings on special interest topics. The guiding priorities for this work include improving outcomes for all students, measuring what is important for improving student outcomes, using accountability to drive behavior, transparency in monitoring and reporting, and achieving the Blueprint for Maryland's Future call for all students to be college and career ready by the end of tenth grade. A final report with recommendations will subsequently be provided to the SBOE for consideration.

Action

No action is required; this information is for discussion only.

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Carey M. Wright, Ed.D., State Superintendent of School 

DATE: October 22, 2024

SUBJECT: Technical Advisory Committee

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Maryland State Board of Education (SBOE) with an overview of the new technical advisory committee (TAC).

Background

In March 2024, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) issued a request for proposal (RFP) for assembling and facilitating aTAC to provide guidance on assessment design, development, and maintenance. The contract was subsequently awarded to the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (more commonly known as the Center for Assessment).

Executive Summary

The TAC provides objective and expert evaluation and advises the MSDE leadership team and assessment vendors on psychometric and related technical considerations to help create a common assessment system that can provide reliable results to inform valid instructional and accountability decisions. This includes but is not limited to psychometric procedures and characteristics of the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP), the Maryland Accountability System, and any existing or new testing programs that may be planned and/or administered.

Action

No action is required; this information is for discussion only.



Maryland Assessment and Accountability Updates

Scott Marion, Ph.D., Executive Director
The National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment

October 22, 2024

National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment

- A NH-based non-profit technical and policy consulting firm established in 1998 with the mission of improving student learning through improved assessment and accountability practices
- Current contracts with 40+ states, districts, and other entities
 - Almost all are long-term contracts designed to provide technical and design support for a range of assessment and accountability issues
- 15 full-time professionals
 - Almost all with doctoral degrees and almost all have worked in the “real world” of state assessment and/or as assessment contractor staff.
- Non-partisan and independent of any governmental agency or testing company

Two Important Work Streams

Assessment and
Accountability
Task Force

Technical
Advisory
Committee (TAC)

Assessment and Accountability Task Force

Assessment and Accountability Task Force

- We often refer to assessment and accountability task forces as the **Noah's Ark** of assessment or accountability design
 - Two superintendents
 - Two principals
 - Two state board members
- The key is that we get multiple users in the same room



Maryland Assessment and Accountability Task Force Members

James, Allrich	Principal, Argyle Magnet Middle School
Jennifer Bell-Ellwanger	President and CEO, Data Quality Campaign
Deann Collins	Deputy Superintendent, MSDE
Clarence Crawford	Past President, Maryland State Board of Education
Tania Cunningham-Raycrow	Teacher (Special Education), Somerset Intermediate School
Melissa DiDonato	Chief Academic Officer, Baltimore County Public Schools
Cheryl Dyson	Superintendent, Frederick County Public Schools
Drew Fagan	Associate Professor, University of Maryland College of Education
Timothy Guy	Director of Assessment and Reporting, Howard County Public Schools
Zach Hands	Executive Director, Maryland State Board of Education
Millard House III	Superintendent, Prince George's County Public Schools
Thornell Jones	Education Chair, Caucus of African American Leaders (CAAL)
Cindy Lotto	Honors and AP US History Teacher, Gaithersburg High School
Maureen Margevich	Supervisor for Testing and Accountability, Washington County Public Schools
Josh Michael	President, Maryland State Board of Education
Jason Miller	Principal, Prince Street Elementary School
Maria Navarro	Superintendent, Charles County Public Schools
Ellen O'Neil	Executive Director, Atlantic Seaboard Dyslexia Education Center
Sharon Pepukayi	Superintendent, Talbot County Public Schools
Evelyn Policarpio	Teacher (Math, Grade 8), Benjamin Tasker Middle School
Alex Reese	Chief of Staff, MSDE
Geoff Sanderson	Deputy Superintendent, MSDE
Laura Stapleton	Chair, Department of Human Development and Quantitative Methodology, University of Maryland College of Education
Andrae Townsel	Superintendent, Calvert County Public Schools
Gerrod Tyler	President, FreeState PTA
Darryl Williams	Associate Director, National Center for the Elimination of Educational Disparities, Morgan State University
Jennie Wu	Executive Director, Strategy & Continuous Improvement, Baltimore City Public Schools

Assessment and Accountability Task Force

- Assessment and accountability systems are best designed when key constituents are involved in the design process.
- This is an extensive process where task force members wrestle with many critical recommendations.
- The process tasks up to a year or more, and rarely less than six months.
- In most cases, we focus on assessment or accountability, but in Maryland, we are addressing both.



The Future of Utah's State Assessment System

Recommendations from the Utah Assessment Strategic Plan Work Group

A REPORT OF THE UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
NOVEMBER 2020

Sydnee Dickson, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Public Instruction



New Mexico's State Assessment System

Recommendations from the New Mexico Task Force for Student Success



Alabama's State Assessment System: Recommendations from the Assessment Task Force

THE ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEBRASKA AQuESTT ADVISORY GROUP CAPSTONE REPORT



CYCLICAL REVIEW OF SOUTH CAROLINA'S ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

Accountability Framework Report

DECEMBER 2020

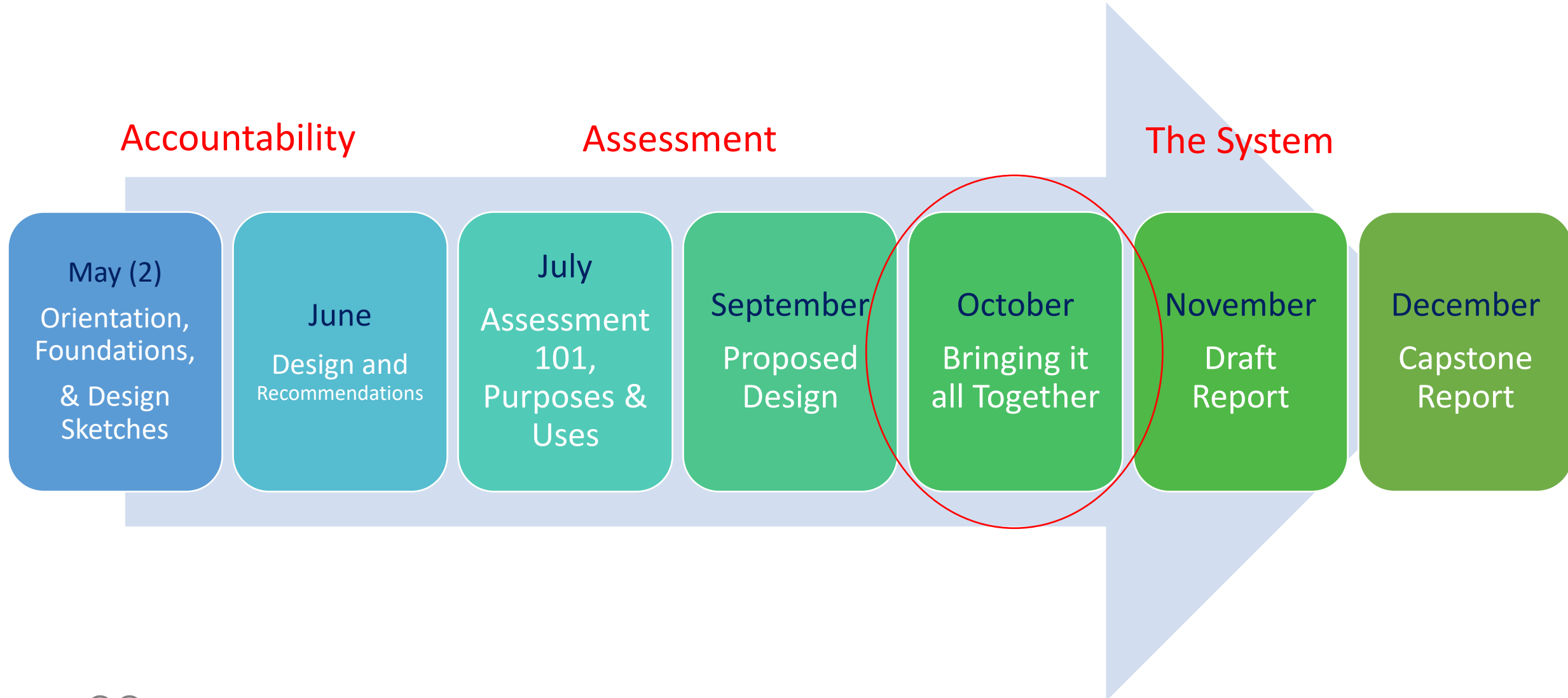
Prepared by Chris Domaleski and Leslie Keng of the Improvement of Educational Assessment for the Oversight Committee and the South Carolina Task Force



Becoming More Common Because They Are Useful



Maryland Assessment and Accountability Task Force Arc of the Work



Overview of The Task Force Final Report

- I. Introduction and charge to the Task Force
- II. Identifying pain points and clarifying goals
- III. Accountability deliberations and recommendations
- IV. Assessment deliberations and recommendations
- V. Recommendations for implementation
- VI. Continuous improvement and evaluation

Accountability Discussions and Recommendations

- Methods of computing required indicators
 - Achievement
 - “Another academic indicator” (growth)
 - Progress in learning English for multilingual learners
 - A measure of school quality and student success
 - Graduation rate (high school only)
- Extended discussions focused on:
 - Evaluating and recommending an approach for measuring student longitudinal growth
 - Working to align the postsecondary readiness indicator with the college and career readiness definition adopted by the State Board
 - Methods for producing and reporting required determinations (e.g., comprehensive support and improvement) as well as determinations for all schools
 - Measuring more of what matters

Assessment Discussions and Recommendations

- Required and other intended uses of test scores
- Testing time and types of test questions
- Score reporting
- The State's role in providing resources other than the required state tests (e.g., interim or benchmark tests)
- Fixed form or adaptive testing
- Communication and credibility

Technical Advisory Committee

What is the role of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)?

- Evaluate: Review the work of the state education agency's assessment contractors to ensure it meets acceptable standards or make recommendations for improvement if it doesn't.
 - Provides an independent check
 - Bolsters credibility
- Collaborate: work with the state education agency to help develop and implement effective continuous improvement systems.
- **Both** are important, but programs often focus on the former at the latter's expense.

Selecting TAC Members

- Focus on key categories of expertise, such as:
 - Item or form development
 - Equating and scaling
 - Scoring procedures
 - Computer adaptive testing, automated scoring
 - Students with disabilities
 - Multilingual learners
 - Student growth modeling
 - Accountability and policy expertise
 - Operational expertise (some TACs include district leaders)
- We try to select TAC members with multiple and complementary areas of expertise.



Dr. Molly Faulker-Bond
WestEd



Dr. Andrew Ho
Harvard University



Dr. Cara Laitusis
Center for Assessment



Dr. Kyndra Middleton
Howard University



Dr. Sanford Student
University of Delaware



Dr. Scott Marion
Center for Assessment

Maryland's TAC

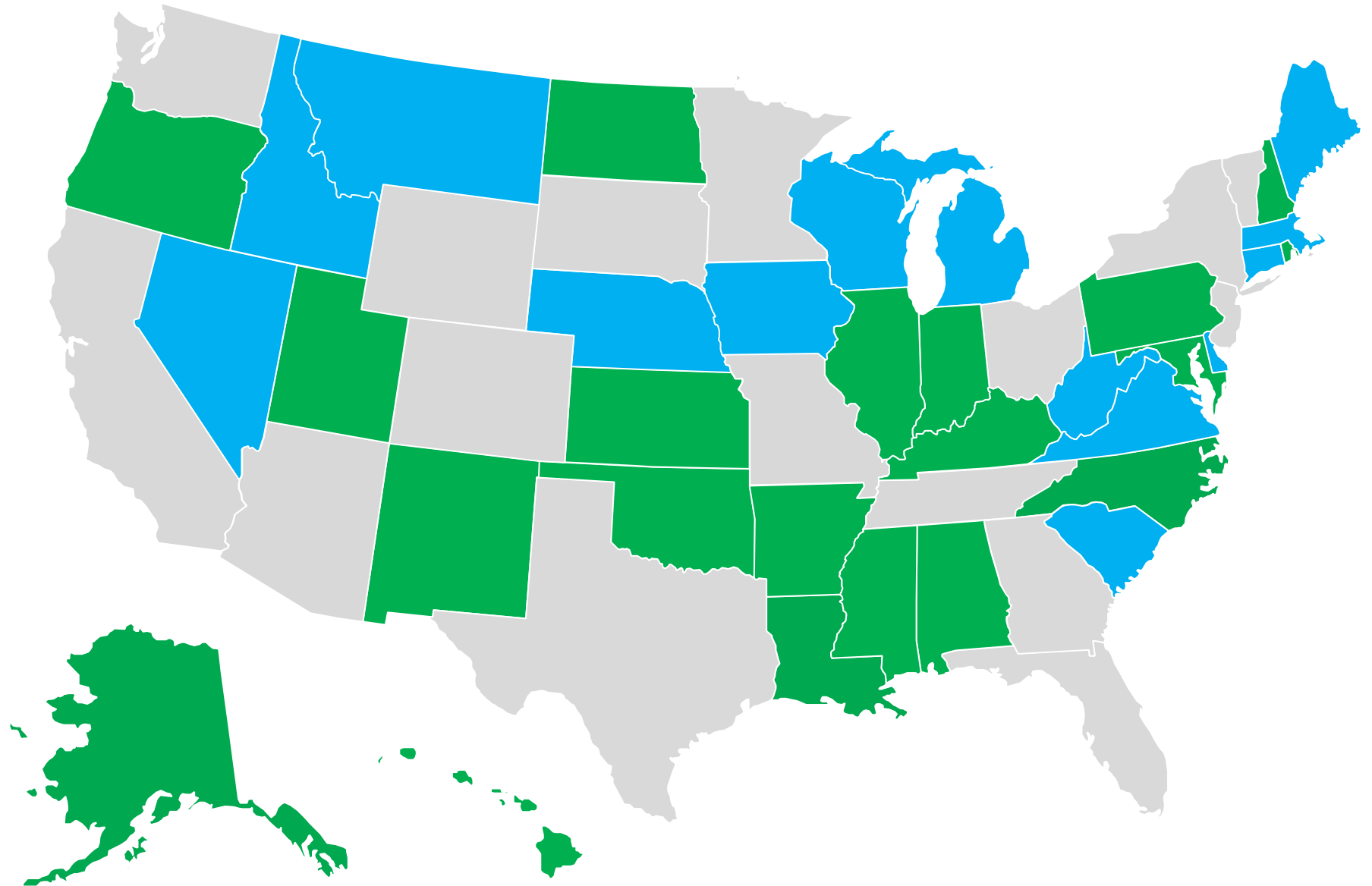
Note: We will be adding 1-2 Maryland members

Coordinating the TAC

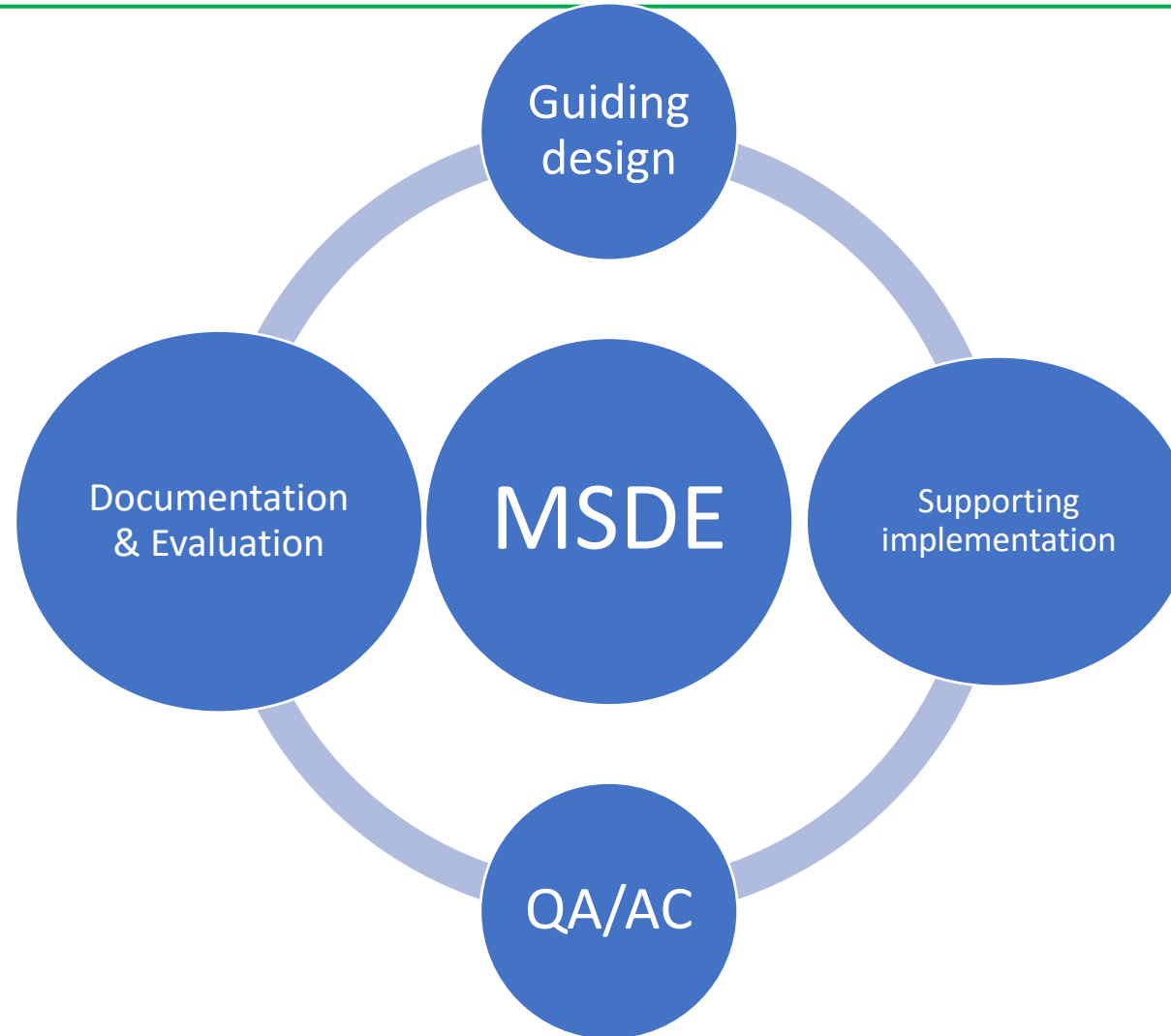
- The key coordination roles include:
 - Develop the agenda along with the state education agency
 - Ensure the test companies and other partners produce the materials necessary to support TAC discussions
 - Effectively facilitate the meetings
 - Summarize action items
 - Produce meeting summaries
 - Work with the state education agency to implement recommendations as applicable
- We are excited to partner with MSDE to lead this new TAC and support high-quality assessment and accountability in Maryland.

Note: This includes state contracts only.

Green = TAC leadership
Blue = TAC membership



How Will a TAC Support MSDE and the Board?



Supporting The Future of Assessment & Accountability

- Both the Task Force and the TAC will support the next-generation assessment and accountability systems in Maryland.
- The Task Force report will help frame the request for proposals (RFP) for the next assessment system.
- The Task Force report will also provide a framework for updating the school accountability system.
- The TAC will support many of the technical design and implementation decisions.
- The TAC will play a critical role in supporting many key technical assessment design and implementation decisions.

Questions

