



**Alabama State Department of Education (SDE)  
Responses to Local Education Agency (LEA) Questions  
EDUCATEAlabama Information WebEx  
April 20, 2011**

**Q: How does a first year teacher use the self assessment in August? Participant, Dale Edwards**

*SDE: All educators, including first year teachers (educators), will use the Educator Self Assessment at the beginning of each school year (typically August), selecting the "level of practice" for each of the 39 indicators that best describes how they "perceive" their practice at the beginning of the year. While first year educators may be inclined to select Pre-service/Beginning for many of their indicators, they have the latitude to select other levels of practice, if those levels truly reflect a first year teacher's perception of their practice.*

**Q: If the LEA chooses to complete the self assessment at the end of the school year (for next year), will the computer system permit this to happen? Colbert County School System**

*SDE: No. The Educator Self Assessment is not accessible until the beginning of each school year. Educators will complete Educator Self Assessment at the beginning of each school year, in keeping with the true intent of the EDUCATEAlabama process, as designed by Alabama's practitioners last August 2010.*

**Q: What is a special education teacher that generally gives the AAA or serves AAA students? Does this not include all special education teachers? Birmingham City School System**

*SDE: Alabama's special educators (any exceptionality) that teach students who generally take the Alabama Alternate Assessment (AAA) are serving students with severe and/or profound disabilities.*

**Q: Please answer the special education question pertaining to the special education teachers of AAA student. CCSS**

*SDE: Alabama's special educators that teach students who generally take the Alabama Alternate Assessment (AAA) are serving students with severe and/or profound disabilities.*

**Q: Now that Psychometrists will use EA, will they still need to complete a portfolio? Barbara Burchard**

*SDE: No.*

**Q: When will the Collaborative Summary Report be available? Dothan City School System**

*SDE: The Collaborative Summary Report (CSR) is no longer used in the current EDUCATEAlabama process.*

**Q: What would you recommend for use to evaluate a gifted teacher that works with a few students in 2011-12? Colbert County School System**

*SDE: All educators, including gifted teachers (educators) will be formatively evaluated using the EDUCATEAlabama process in 2011-2012, regardless of the number of students they are teaching.*

**Q: What is the SDE going to require of principals and LEA's as documentation of completed observations and PLP completion? Dothan City School System**

*SDE: There are no "hard copy" submission and/or documentation requirements associated with the current EDUCATEAlabama process. Like LEAs, the SDE will be able to access all data reports by school and/or system in August 2011, as needed.*

**Q: Why do some education leaders have to request a new password each time they log in? Dothan City School System**

*SDE: As there are many scenarios that might cause password issues, educators and/or instructional leaders should contact the SDE Helpdesk at [helpdesk@alsde.edu](mailto:helpdesk@alsde.edu) or 334/353-1250 for assistance, describing the specific password issue they are experiencing.*

**Q: Some educators are still unable to log in. Next steps? Dothan City School System**

*SDE: Any educators experiencing difficulty logging into the EDUCATEAlabama system should contact the SDE Helpdesk at [helpdesk@alsde.edu](mailto:helpdesk@alsde.edu) or 334/353-1250. When requesting login assistance, LEA personnel need to provide their full name, accurate e-mail address, school, system, password they are attempting to use, and the login error they are receiving. If the SDE Helpdesk is unable to assist, they will direct the request to SDE Leadership and Evaluation or the Alabama Supercomputer Authority.*

**Q: How can you have a closing dialogue with the teacher, yet not close until July? It can't be final until all evidence is entered. Arthur Capers**

*SDE: Instructional leaders and educators are encouraged to continue adding supporting evidence during the summer, as needed, to support any professional development opportunities experienced during that time period. While the instructional leader and educator may choose (not required) to hold a final dialogue prior to the end of the school year, there is no reason that supporting evidence should not be entered after that dialogue is held. Remember that both parties may post comments to any supporting evidence entered during the summer, which do not require a face-to-face dialogue.*

**Q: Who is evaluated under EDUCATEAlabama and who is still under PEPE for 2011-2012? Arthur Capers**

*SDE: All educators (including school counselors, school librarians, Alabama Reading Initiative coaches, Pre-K special educators, speech-language pathologists, psychometrist/psychologists, special educators who teach students who generally take the Alabama Alternate Assessment [AAA]) will be formatively evaluated through the EDUCATEAlabama process starting in August 2011. EDUCATEAlabama does not apply to instructional leaders' evaluation. Instructional leaders will continue to be evaluated through the Professional Education Personnel Evaluation Program (PEPE) until further notification is received from the SDE.*

**Q: Did we understand correctly, closing evidence summary is OPTIONAL this year? Dothan City School System**

*SDE: Yes.*

**Q: How much evidence should be entered to be sufficient for year one roll out? Monroe County School System**

*SDE: The SDE has not designated a "sufficient amount" of supporting evidence to be entered by either the educator and/or the instructional leader. Best practice indicates that instructional leaders and educators will continue to enter all forms of supporting evidence that demonstrates the educator's professional growth (and impact of that growth on student achievement) throughout the school year.*

**Q: How many observations do we have to do for teachers during the 2010-2011 school year? April McCutcheon**

*SDE: Two unannounced observations are required for all educators on "full evaluation cycle." Best practice indicates that instructional leaders will observe all educators in some capacity throughout the school year, as appropriate. Observations in EDUCATEAlabama will, in all likelihood, differ significantly from observations performed in previous assessment systems, since the focus is on two to five indicators.*

**Q: How do I change a teacher's name after changes in marital status? Glen Judd**

*SDE: The teacher (educator) will update his/her profile through the SDE Online Education Directory at <http://schools.alsde.edu/eddir>. If the email address has changed, please contact the SDE Helpdesk with the "old" and "new" e-mail address [helpdesk@alsde.edu](mailto:helpdesk@alsde.edu) or 334/353-1250.*

**Q: How often should a Professional Learning Plan (PLP) be reviewed? Jennifer Maye**

*SDE: EDUCATEAlabama does not require a specific number of times the educator's Professional Learning Plan (PLP) must be reviewed. Best practice indicates that the instructional leader and educator will continuously consult the PLP throughout the school year, to ensure that educator's professional growth mirrors the content reflected in the completed PLP.*

**Q: May the Alabama Reading Initiative reading coach process be augmented for use with school level instructional coaches or instructional specialists? Boaz City School System**

*SDE: All educators are to be formatively evaluated through the EDUCATEAlabama process. However, LEAs may also elect to develop and implement a local developed formative evaluation process, using the SDE guidelines established by the department in September 2010. Procedures for a Formative Evaluation Process developed by an LEA may be found at <http://www.alex.state.al.us/leadership> under the FAQs (left navigation bar) under Guidelines for LEA Approval section).*

**Q: If a principal is able to get the staff to complete the self assessment and the PLP during the 2010-2011 school year but runs out of time for the supporting evidence before teachers leave for the summer, what should the principal do when closing out in July 29, 2011? Birmingham City School System**

*SDE: Supporting evidence may be added by the instructional leader and educator during the summer, after school is dismissed for the summer. While observations for educators may not be possible during the summer, the capacity for adding all other supporting evidence is still available throughout the summer until the next EA process begins in August 2011. In August 2011, supporting evidence may be entered for the 2011-2012 school year.*

**Q: Will there be an icon for the Collaborative Summary Report when it becomes available? When will it be available? Dothan City School System**

*SDE: In keeping with extensive LEA feedback received in summer 2010, the Collaborative Summary Report (CSR) is no longer a part of the current EDUCATEAlabama process, nor will it be.*

**Q: Is there a plan to connect STI PD to EDUCATEAlabama? Boaz City School System**

*SDE: No.*

**Q: Do current 2010-2011 teacher self assessments remain in place for the 2011-12 year? Gina Johnston**

*SDE: Yes. All Educator Self Assessment will be accessible via the EDUCATEAlabama archive system when the 2011-2012 process begins in August 2011. However, all educators will complete a new Educator Self Assessment at the beginning of each school year.*

**Q: How do we take off teachers who have retired? Glenda Wilson**

*SDE: The superintendent or his/her designee will remove retired educators through the SDE Online Education Directory (ED DIR) by following the instructions provided at the ED DIR website . If assistance is needed, please contact the SDE Helpdesk at [helpdesk@alsde.edu](mailto:helpdesk@alsde.edu) or 334/353-1250.*

**Q: Can you give guidance to instructional leaders on how to determine on what level teachers operate after their professional development? The process seems to stress dialogue and minimize student outcomes such as grades, state assessments, and/or other. Shelby County School System**

*SDE: The EDUCATEAlabama process certainly emphasizes the importance of continuous dialogue between the instructional leader and educator during the year. However, the emphasis on dialogue supports, rather than diminishes the equal importance of all forms of supporting evidence to demonstrate an educator's growth during the school year. The supporting evidence (observations, instructional practice, roles/responsibilities, student data, other) should provide compelling evidence that an educator has moved from one level of practice to the next. It is also important to remember that student achievement is an outcome of an effective learning environment, so improvement of teacher practice is the principle focus of EDUCATEAlabama.*

**Q: Are we able to use EDUCATEAlabama for reading coaches this year, if we wish? Dothan City School System**

*SDE: If an LEA superintendent approves the use of EDUCATEAlabama for reading coaches in 2010-2011, the SDE is supportive of this local decision.*

**Q: How do we change schools when they (educators) move to another (school)? Glenda Wilson**

*SDE: Instructional leaders (principals) at the school(s) the educator is transferring to/from are responsible for removing/adding the educator through the "add staff" option in the SDE Online Education Directory (ED DIR) for their school.*

**Q: Upon completion of the self-assessment, why can't the educator see their level of practice before deciding what indicators to work on? Marion County School System**

*SDE: While the educator is able to view his/her level of practice one indicator at a time, the current EDUCATEAlabama process does not provide viewing capability of their entire self assessment for educators. The SDE, in collaboration with the Alabama Supercomputer Authority are working to provide educators with improved viewing access in 2011-2012.*

**Q: Will there be any type of reporting requirements for novice teachers? Jasper City School System**

*SDE: The SDE currently requires no "hard copy" reporting/submission requirements for novice teachers as specifically related to EDUCATEAlabama. The SDE, as with LEAs, should be able to access "novice teacher" data from the EDUCATEAlabama reporting system that should be available in August 2011.*

**Q: How can you go back and make a correction to the PLP after both parties have signed it? We called the help desk but they were not sure. Monroe County School System**

*SDE: During the 2011-2012 EDUCATEAlabama process, the Professional Learning Plan (PLP) is no longer editable after both parties (instructional leader and educator) have signed. The SDE and Alabama Supercomputer Authority are considering the possibility of greater flexibility regarding PLP editing for the upcoming school year.*

**Q: Counselors?? Will they go to EA next year? Will anything be different for them?**

**Ozark City School System-Diane Holman**

*SDE: Yes. School counselors will be formatively evaluated through the EDUCATEAlabama process. School Counselor will use a slightly modified Educator Self Assessment reflecting their specific counseling role as educators. The modified self assessment is based on the work of a group of LEA school counselors, SDE personnel, professional association and university representatives during 2010-2011.*

**Q: Is there a tutorial for principals on how to close out? Birmingham City School System**

*SDE: Yes. Instructional leaders (all superintendents, principals, assistant principals, career technical education directors, central office staff) have the Instructional Leader and Central Office Staff tutorials available within the EDUCATEAlabama website at <http://educatealabama.asc.edu> under the "Help" menu. The tutorials describe how to close out the process for each educator this year. Additionally, close out procedures are described in the "hard copy" directions entitled "Supporting Evidence" under the same "Help" menu.*

**Q: If a leader closed out a teacher , how may they reopen it? Please cover this. Glenda Wilson**

*SDE: If an instructional leader (e.g, principal, assistant principal, career technical education director) prematurely closes the educator's EDUCATEAlabama process for the year, they may re-open it by:*

- Logging into EDUCATEAlabama;
- Locating the educator on their Current Status list;
- Place their "cursor" over the circular arrow next to the word "complete" under the Feedback column;
- The word "re-open" will appear;
- Click on the arrow, and the educator's process should re-open for additional entries.

**Q: Can the teachers that are not on full evaluation, complete their evidence anytime? Do both educator and administrator sign off again? Dothan City School System**

*SDE: Like instruction leaders, educators (teachers), whether on “full evaluation cycle” or not, may add supporting evidence at any time during the year, after the Professional Learning Plan (PLP) has been completed and signed, prior to the beginning of the next school year. The only signatures required in the EDUCATEAlabama process are those applied to the PLP at the beginning of the school year.*

**Q: When the teachers input supporting evidence, will EDUCATEAlabama be changed to allow them to select a level on the continuum? Brewton City School System**

*SDE: The SDE, in collaboration with the Alabama Supercomputer Authority, are considering providing educators with the ability to select a “level of practice” when adding supporting evidence sometime in the future.*

**Comment: If Rick (SDE and/or Alabama Supercomputer Authority) could make it possible to allow the administrator to access the self-assessment this year for next year, it would be greatly appreciated in the future. It is extremely busy at the beginning of school. If not this year, if it could be done next year, it would be great!**

**Colbert County School System**

*SDE: The SDE is aware that the beginning of school is extremely busy for all instructional leaders and educators. However, in keeping with response to LEA feedback in summer 2010, the EDUCATEAlabama work group (comprised of 18 instructional leaders and educators) representing all school board districts determined that the Educator Self Assessment will be completed at the beginning of each school year for the following reasons:*

- *The entire EDUCATEAlabama process is based on the educator’s deep and meaningful reflection and completion of his/her self assessment.*
- *The Educator Self Assessment determines the educator’s direction for professional growth for the upcoming year, and is not a reflection of the year just completed;*
- *At a minimum educators will have new students to teach, and may very well receive a different teaching/educational assignment.*
  - *That being the case, a self assessment completed in the spring may have very little connection with the students they will be teaching or the responsibilities they may be assigned.*

*Based on the above, the Educator Self Assessment will be completed at the beginning of each school year, and will not be accessible until the new year begins. However, if the instructional leader and/or educator chooses to view the archived Educator Self Assessment, they may do so by accessing the appropriately marked Past Self Assessment section.*

**Q: Is it an electronic signature? Perry County School System**

*SDE: Not in the true sense of “electronic” signature. The EDUCATEAlabama process applies the instructional leader’s and educator’s name, as the “signature”, when either party selects the “sign” button on the Professional Learning Plan.*

**Q: Will you be sending this PowerPoint to the instructional leaders? Limestone County School System**

*SDE: The EDUCATEAlabama WebEx PowerPoint and full recording of the entire session is available to any individual at <http://www.alex.state.al.us/leadership>. Once at the website, select Educator Evaluations, then scroll down to EDUCATEAlabama Webinar NEW to listen to the recording and view the PowerPoint.*

**Q: Once the teacher adds evidence from the PLP will the data merge onto one completed form? Dothan City School System**

*SDE: Currently, all components of the EDUCATEAlabama process are printable in isolation. The Alabama Supercomputer Authority is working on the ability to print all supporting evidence in “roll-up” (all at once), opening printing options for ALL users, and providing printable documents in multiple formats (e.g., PDF, Word, other) for 2011-2012.*

**Q: Can you type your supporting evidence in Word and copy and paste it to EA? Vic Adkison**

*SDE: Yes.*

**Q: Is it possible for teachers to be notified electronically when an observer makes a suggestion to do something or to read something? Brewton City School System**

*SDE: No. In keeping with the direction provided by the EDUCATEAlabama work group (18 instructional leaders and educators that guided the development of the current process), there will be no electronic correspondence (e-mail) notifying instructional leaders and/or educators when a comment has been added to an educator's process. Instructional leaders and educators are encouraged to systematically check their personal sites for new entries.*

**Q: Have any additional training dates been set for the summer? Vic Adkison**

*SDE: No. The SDE is currently planning EDUCATEAlabama summer training for 2011. As soon as training dates and details are finalized, all superintendents, evaluation coordinators, technology coordinators, and selected professional organizations and university personnel will be notified via electronic correspondence.*

**Q: It was stated that specialty area teachers will be implementing EDUCATEAlabama this fall. Should these teachers (educators) go ahead and "sign up" through the SDE Online Education Directory (ED DIR) or do they need to wait until everything is read for them this fall? Glenda Wilson**

*SDE: Specialty area teachers may certainly register their accounts through ED DIR, if approved by your LEA. However, please keep in mind, that if their position or school assignment is different in August, they must update their ED DIR profile in August 2011.*

**Q: I also have not had the supervisors sign up on ED DIR. I was presuming they would do that when our evaluation was up and going. Do I need them to go ahead and sign up on ED DIR? Glenda Wilson**

*SDE: As directed by your superintendent, any instructional leader (superintendent, central office staff, principals, assistant principals, career technical education directors) that needs to access EDUCATEAlabama as a central office staff "reviewer" or as an "evaluator" may register their accounts through ED DIR now. Again, keep in mind, if their position and/or assignment changes, they will need to update their ED DIR account in August 2011, as well.*

**Q: When the SDE was explaining that the superintendent would have to "add staff" what was the department talking about? May I, if designated by the superintendent, "add staff" at the central office? Glenda Wilson**

*SDE: The superintendent, or his/her designee (which may be you, if your superintendent has designated you) will "add staff" at the central office level through the superintendent's login, just as principals "add staff" at their school, for the purposes of accessing the EDUCATEAlabama process, and other possible SDE applications.*

**Q: Where are the funds for professional development? Chad LaQua**

*SDE: The SDE and LEAs are well aware of the extremely limiting financial resources for all education needs within Alabama and nationwide. However, each LEA professional development coordinator should be able to provide instructional leaders and educators with potential local, state, and/or federal funding sources for professional development for the upcoming year. There are currently a multitude of free online professional development opportunities available through the SDE's Technology Initiatives section. There are also several downloadable training modules aligned with individual continuum indicators that can be found on the Leadership and Evaluation website at <http://www.alex.state.al.us/leadership>. The SDE is working on identifying and making available additional online professional development opportunities at no or minimal cost through selected SDE sections and units in 2011-2012.*

**Q: If sample PLPs are still provided for teachers the examples should be more specific and measurable. The ones available now are somewhat vague and do not encourage specific, measurable goals. Will those examples be updated? Brewton City School System**

*SDE: It has and continues to be the SDE's experience that providing detailed completed samples of documents, such as the PLP, does not lend to quality individualized plans created by instructional leaders and/or educators. For that reason, sample PLPs will remain in their current form.*

**Q: How do you modify a signed PLP in the event it was signed by the wrong administrator? Auburn City School System**

*SDE: In the event that a Professional Learn Plan is signed by the wrong instructional leader and/or educator, those individuals should contact the SDE Leadership and Evaluation unit at [djones@alsde.edu](mailto:djones@alsde.edu) or 334/353-8924. Specific assistance will be provided for each individual circumstance, as appropriate.*

**Comment: You said to use Internet Explorer version 8 but STI says that INow is not compatible with version 9.**

**Cyndy Smith**

*SDE: The EDUCATEAlabama process is not connected to the INow initiative, therefore EDUCATEAlabama WebEx presenters are unable to address INow browser comments. To access EDUCATEAlabama process the recommended browsers are still Internet Explorer 8 and Firefox 3.5.*

**Q: How long does evidence last? Does it expire? Birmingham City School System**

*SDE: The EDUCATEAlabama process should archive the educator's data on an annual basis, and does not expire. Currently, the SDE anticipates that an educator's data may be archived indefinitely through the EDUCATEAlabama system. However, always remember that any computerized process is capable of failing. It is always in the instructional leader's and educator's best interest to "back up" their computerized archived data in another format (e.g., flashdrive, hard drive, other).*