

During the concurrent session blocks on Tuesday afternoon participants may choose to attend presentations offered at the 2014 MPA Summer Leadership Retreat.

Time	Activity
1 PM	<p><b>Concurrent breakout workshop session A</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Proficiency-based learning simplified (Craig Kesselheim, <b>Education Center</b> – Aroostook)</li> <li>2. Communicating school improvement and proficiency-based learning (Steve Abbott &amp; Pam Fisher – <b>Summit</b> – Compass)</li> <li>3. Supporting professional learning groups (Ken Templeton – <b>Summit</b> – Searsport)</li> <li>4. Grading, reporting and transcripts for proficiency based learning (Jean – <b>Education Center</b> – Oxford)</li> </ol>
2:15 PM	<b>Break</b>
2:45 PM	<p><b>Concurrent breakout workshop session B</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Refining local policies to support proficiency-based learning (Duke Albanese – <b>Summit</b> – Searsport)</li> <li>2. Supporting all students (Students with disabilities &amp; RTI in a PBL system) (Angela Hardy -- <b>Education Center</b> – Aroostook)</li> <li>3. Developing proficiency-based assessments and units (Ken Templeton – <b>Education Center</b> – Oxford)</li> <li>4. Proficiency-based learning simplified (Mark Kostin– <b>Summit</b> – Compass)</li> </ol>

***Proficiency Based Learning Simplified (Sessions A1, B4)***

In this workshop, participants will learn about the fundamental components of an effective proficiency-based teaching and learning system, learn about an array of resources that can support their work, and begin to develop a plan that addresses policies, practices, and community-engagement activities that will lead to the successful implementation of proficiency-based learning.

***Communicating school improvement and proficiency-based learning (Session A2)***

In this workshop, participants will learn a variety of effective communication strategies that will work in any school or situation, including the construction of a compelling narrative, the power of specific examples, and the use of language that speaks to the core values of parents and community members. We will also provide a brief introduction to the [Glossary of Education Reform](#), a new online resource created by the Great Schools Partnership, and discuss how the glossary—which features more than 450 terms and 120 in-depth entries on a wide variety of educational topics—can help participants improve understanding of complex school-improvement concepts in their communities.

***Refining local policies to support proficiency-based learning (Session B1)***

When policies work, no one notices; but when policies don't, the results can be disastrous. Forward-thinking policies can sustain successful practices in the event of leadership or staff turnover—a critical consideration for schools that have invested years in the development of new systems of teaching and learning. Using the New England Consortium's High Leverage Policy Framework and sample policies

supporting proficiency-based learning, this workshop will show participants how to develop effective educational policies and leverage formal systems to create equitable, high-performing, student-centered schools.

### ***Professional learning groups that support proficiency-based learning (Session A3)***

Research has shown that professional learning groups (PLGs) are perhaps the single most effective, affordable, and sustainable professional development strategy available to schools; they are also an essential structure for implementing and refining proficiency based systems. For too long, teachers have worked largely in isolation, rarely sharing what works or questioning what doesn't. Yet thousands of schools throughout the United States and the world are successfully using PLGs to strengthen instruction, improve curriculum, and significantly increase student performance. This workshop includes a comprehensive overview of the most essential, high-impact PLG practices, while providing practical, step-by-step guidance for school leaders looking to develop or improve a PLG program that supports implementation of a proficiency based system.

### ***Grading, reporting, and transcripts for proficiency-based learning (Session A4)***

Grading with accuracy and consistency is an ever-present challenge for school administrators and educators. Grading has a long history of controversy, which suggests just how much is at stake in this daily practice. That said, the research on effective grading is proportionally rich, although many grading systems remain out of step with what we know works in measuring student learning. Even within a single school, grading practices are often dramatically uneven and contradictory. Shifting to a proficiency-based graduation system has implications for the design and content of transcripts also. This session will help participants adopt and use grading and reporting practices that are more consistent and coherent, and that are focused on helping all students achieve proficiency and meet high learning expectations. While altering grading systems may require changes in record keeping, assessment practices, software, report cards, and transcripts, a thoughtfully considered process can help your school transition incrementally and without confusion. We will share a selection of practical strategies from schools that have moved to more authentic and meaningful grading practices, and a set of general principles they can use to design their system for reporting the summative academic record of an individual student heading to college or the workforce. Participants will have access to exemplar guidelines, timelines, policies, communication materials, and anecdotes.

### ***Developing proficiency-based assessments and units (Session B3)***

Assessments are a crucial part of the teaching-and-learning cycle. In a proficiency-based system, teachers assess for learning, using ongoing formative assessments to inform instructional adjustments for students and design their units accordingly. Incorporating an analysis of the formative-assessment practices used by leading educational experts, participants will learn how to provide clear expectations for students, develop ongoing progress checks, and create a system in which students become agents of their own learning. We will share examples of how teachers develop checks for understanding and discuss a variety of student-centered formative-assessment strategies, including peer assessment. We will also outline some of the essential design features of a proficiency-based unit, utilizing the Understanding by Design model developed by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe. This session will help participants understand the difference between formative and summative assessment; how to develop a manageable formative-assessment system in their classroom that supports student learning; how to design a proficiency-based unit; and how to help their students reflect upon and evaluate their own learning progress.

***Supporting all Students (including implementing RTI and supporting Students With Disabilities)  
(Session B2)***

How can proficiency-based learning serve students with disabilities? When successfully designed and executed, a proficiency-based system can improve and accelerate learning for all students, clarify academic expectations, enable differentiated instruction, refocus teachers on the assessment of learning rather than compliance, and—above all—ensure equitable access to the curriculum and multiple opportunities for success. In a proficiency-based system, Individual Education Plans (IEPs) can not only address unique learning needs, but they can also scaffold the learning process and move students toward college readiness and postsecondary success. In this session, the presenters will address the role of Individual Education Plans in a proficiency-based system, including the development of appropriate accommodations to ensure that students with disabilities achieve proficiency.