

Q/A from the Elluminate Sessions held April 2, 2007

1	How do we the Technology Coordinators view results of the teachers and administrative surveys?	Each technology coordinator should create their own login for reporting purposes only using the “Administrator” registration. We ask that you use your actual name in the “Unique Identifier” so that you could be easily found in the database. The database administrator will locate the known technology coordinators as listed in our files and turn on the survey reporting availability to the login you have created. Once this has been done, you will be able to click on the “District Technology Coordinators Only” link to view reports. Note: Some of the individual school reports are still in process and will be completed soon.
2	When will the IMPACT survey be opened?	It is open now. There are additional technology reporting functions being added but teachers and administrators can begin. They should always go to http://ti.alsde.edu to start and click on the IMPACT survey link.
3	Is there a way that we can print out the survey questions and share them with teachers prior to completing the survey?	Yes. It is available at http://ti.alsde.edu .
4	Participation has been an issue; do all teachers have to take the survey?	Systems should ask that every teacher and administrator take the appropriate survey and make a good faith effort to get as many of their teachers and administrators as possible to take the survey. In most cases, this will result in an appropriate response rate. In those instances where response rates (at the district or school level) are seriously low, districts will be offered guidance and assistance in efforts to improve response rates in future years.

5	<p>Do teachers have to provide their name in the registration process? Why is a registration system needed?</p> <p>Do teachers have to register before taking the survey?</p> <p>What do you mean by unique? There are lots of John Smiths out there, will it kick back and tell them that user name has already been used?</p> <p>Do other Departments/sections at the State level conduct surveys using end users names and email addresses?</p>	<p>We have removed the requirement for respondents to enter their actual names as part of the registration process. Individual registration is required so that we can be fairly assured that each survey comes from a unique individual and not from a single person and/or someone entering data for someone else. Unique data – even if we do not get a 100% response rate within a district – is better data. High response rates are insignificant if they are in fact the result of misrepresented data. However, the report of teachers and administrators will display the Unique Identifier instead of the teacher’s name. You as the District Technology Coordinator can make the call as to what you want the teachers and administrators to enter in this field. This field now is no different than the previous survey.</p> <p>It is possible to proceed directly from the registration process to taking the survey; so registering “before” is perhaps more of a technicality than an actual barrier.</p> <p>This is why it was suggested that the username be an email address. All email addresses are unique (or at least they need to be if they work). But yes, if one chooses “John Smith” as the username then this probably <i>will not</i> work as there are indeed many John Smiths. The Unique Identifier is there for the LEA use. The Unique Identifier (UI) will appear in the TC’s list of surveys taken if they (IU) are all John Smiths then that is under your guidance.</p> <p>Again using the actual name of the person taking the survey or completing the registration has been changed to an option of entering a Unique Identifier with the primary use of providing the Technology Coordinator a way to identify which teachers have taken the survey. This was added several years ago at the request of a large number of technology coordinators. The registration form does ask for a username in the form of an email and password (login) to deter a respondent from providing duplicate responses. In the event a duplicate login is entered, the first response will be the only response actually entered into the database. The end user can decide what email they want to use to register. The reality of using the email as the username is that the respondent can register with just about any username (not just email addresses) they want to enter but there is an increased risk that the respondents that use the same username/email will not be able to actually respond. In these cases, if during the registration process the respondent has entered a duplicate username/email that has already accepted a response to the survey then when the duplicate respondent goes to take the survey the “Take Survey” button will not appear after providing login information. More information concerning this will be posted on the “Technology Coordinators Only” website. (see http://ti.alsde.edu). A new optional mechanism for the teachers to check their planned email/username has been added as well.</p>
---	--	---

6	Is there a limit to characters for passwords?	No, but caution is needed. It is recommended that at least 6 alphanumeric characters be used and to avoid special characters such as #,\$%^and -.
7	Can we create one teacher login for each school for every teacher at that school to use?	No
8	Why does the survey ask “Have you been provided enough time for PD?” We have been told not to pull teachers from classrooms because it interferes with instructional time.	It’s just a question. Please don’t read intent into the questions. Districts are not held responsible for their teachers’ responses to the survey.
9	So to print out a report for a school, we have to do it question by question and then compile it for them? Will the data print out by school/district or question by question?	No, technology coordinators will not have to print out a report question by question and compile. They can access a reporting module that produces an Excel-spreadsheet-compatible data file for the entire survey <i>by school</i> . Compilation of individual questions should not be necessary. Reports are currently available in by-school, by-district, and by-question formats. Which one or ones a district chooses to use is up to the district.
10	Why does the SDE require Windows-based equipment and other Microsoft products to complete the Online Technology Plan?	We have re-programmed the template to accommodate those few Technology Coordinators having this issue. The Online Tech Plan site will work on Mac-based machines without Microsoft and will collect the exact same data; however, the instructions for completing the Online Tech Plan outside the Microsoft realm are a little different.

11	Are three objectives a minimum or target/ideal number of objectives with each goal?	As in the past, three is the minimum required for each goal. While there isn't really an "ideal" number, systems are reminded that each objective requires actions and will ultimately necessitate specific data collection. Therefore, it is wise to carefully consider the number of objectives and to not create more objectives than can be readily addressed.
12	Can we print the information we need to work with our committee?	The Assist Guide describes what is required in a system plan, and that should be sufficient to guide a committee's work. Having the exact "forms" (represented by the Template) available for the committee does not seem necessary. But it is possible to make print screens from the Template if this is desired. There will be a print button that can be selected to print the current standing of the technology plan at anytime during the process and after.
13	Can you change the due date of the technology plan to a later time in August? I don't have time to get the survey and the plan done before the end of school.	LEA system-wide budgets are due on August 15 th so it is only logical that the system technology plan is written before the budgets so the technology plan can help guide the budgeting process. Many of the tech coordinators <i>want</i> to write the plan before they leave for the summer (May), but technically you have four more months. We recommend you focus efforts on gathering survey data over the next six weeks (as in the past) and meeting with committees to start the planning process, and then write the plan over the summer. This is the same timeline that has been used over the past several years by the majority of districts. Or alternatively, get teachers/administrators to take the survey in the next three weeks and then write the plan between the beginning of May and the end of June .
14	Will the district need to have the LEA Tech Plan completed before the local school plan is written or reverse?	This is an LEA decision on when school tech plans are written. While ALSDE expects that school plans will exist, there is not a specific deadline for creating those plans, and it is not necessary to file those plans with the state. From a purely strategic point of view, it makes sense to have created the <i>System</i> plan before the school plans, and to let the System plan guide the content of school plans.
15	The District will use the template; how will individual schools create their plan?	There are not specific state guidelines for school plans. This is an LEA decision. Conceptually, school plans should follow the basic structure of the System plan.
16	Does the District plan align with the school plan or does the school plan align with the District plan?	This is really a decision left to the district. Our opinion (and it's only an opinion) is that school plans should align with the System plan; but surely an argument could exist for doing it the other way around.

17	Is the Assist Guide available now?	Yes. It is on the ALSDE website. (also at http://ti.alsde.edu click on “Technology Coordinators Only”
18	Is this plan designed to cover the next 3 years?	This is an LEA decision. The state plan is a 5-year plan, reviewed and revised annually. As far as how E-Rate and ensuring coverage for a specific funding year, you will actually make that decision within the Action Steps. For E-Rate purposes you can include an optional duplication (from your current technology plan) for the Funding Year 2007-2008, you will have to cover Funding Year 2008-2009 but you could go all the way up to FY 2010-2011 in detail. How you choose to proceed is your choice. It will be your responsibility to meet this E-Rate requirement.
19	Are the costs listed in Action Steps tied to E-Rate or EETT formula?	They can be. There is an “E-Rate” check box in the part of the Template where Action Steps are created. (See other responses to this list)
20	Are you to complete an objective and then Action Steps for that objective or type in all objectives and then Actions Steps for all objectives?	That’s up to the individual plan’s creators. It can be done either way. Our opinion is that it’s best to create Action Steps then relate them to the associated with each objective.
21	Will this remain accessible all year long so we can review our actions steps as we move through the school year?	The site will be open year round for review and printing. You should constantly create printouts of your plan using the “Print Plan” button at the top of the page specifically when you have finished your initial entries and submitted it for review/approval. You should make printouts of your plan every time a change or set of changes have been made. These printouts will be dated and may be helpful for E-Rate inquiries. You will be given Read & Write rights to your site during the initial phase of data entry. Once you have submitted your Technology Plan the Write capabilities will be removed and you will only have Read rights. If during the submission review you are asked to make changes then those Write capabilities will be restored until you indicate you are ready for another review and submit the plan again.
22	What should be used for the enrollment number? 40-day report or last month of school?	This is an LEA decision as it is only used by the software to calculate student-to-computer ratios for planning purposes. STI-reported enrollment will be used to calculate student-to-computer ratios for the report cards.

23	FTE-Do we use this to represent one person, even though they are not a teaching unit as far as the State is concerned regarding funding?	LEA decision. Used only for planning purposes.
24	Will an error report be made available?	This is built into the template as you enter required fields. If you have a need for a bringing a certain error to your attention, we will certainly add it. We welcome your input in this tool.
25	If we have new schools that will be constructed, but do not yet have an NCES number (years 2009-2012), should we include them for those years based on our current knowledge?	Not in the inventory section. The Inventory will be based on the last day of the school year of the current year. If these schools are to open in the school year upcoming then they will not have inventory data. (INVENTORY) If the school was opened during the current year but does not appear in the Inventory list they will have to be added. This will be handled on an individual case by case need. (INVENTORY) In other areas of the technology plan the new school(s) should be addressed including E-Rate needs as well.
26	Do the enrollment numbers affect E-rate?	No
27	Do you mean that we will not see the IMPACT data results in our online plans anymore?	There is no need now for survey data to automatically flow to the System Plan Template since the step of reporting targets and benchmarks for state objectives is being eliminated. There is also no requirement that Systems use <i>any</i> of the IMPACT objectives in their plans.
28	If the SDE does not address the individual school technology plans then how are those schools that individually apply for E-Rate discount going to have an approved technology plan?	You should be sure that all details of any E-Rate activity for the individual schools are covered in an approved technology plan. Since the SDE is the official USAC approver of technology plans you should specifically cover individual school projects in the District Technology Plan. Block 5 (Item 20b) in the SLD Form 470 addresses this situation. Be sure to mention specific schools and specific services in your Action Steps of the new Online Technology Plan.
29	When will the Districts have usernames and passwords?	The usernames and passwords should be available by 4/12/07. An attempt to get these out earlier will be made. The username and passwords for the IMPACT survey are self-generated and are already available.
30	When we break out data using the survey, how will	First, the decision to “break out data using the survey” is made solely at the discretion of the district. Assuming that school plans are aligned with the district plan, then it would follow the

	<p>those objectives be aligned to the school plans?</p>	<p>objectives on the school plans which are somehow mapped to the System plan objectives; and if these objectives are any of those covered by the survey, then the data will map. But, if a System and/or school have created their own objectives, then Systems and/or schools will need to develop their own data collection plans for gathering data on progress toward meeting these home-grown objectives. This is the intent of the new evaluation process, and districts that engage with this process (e.g., Pioneer districts) will develop the tools and skills necessary to gather the data they need for objectives created by a system.</p>
31	<p>Will school names and enrollment be uploaded from STI?</p>	<p>School names are already loaded. The Enrollment numbers from the past technology plan will be imported and will display. The Enrollment figures displayed may need adjustment but they will need to be answered if you want ratios calculated.</p>