

## **Educator Effectiveness Council**

### **Minutes from Meeting of August 26, 2010**

#### **Absent**

*Mr. Christopher S. Barclay*

*Delegate Anne Kaiser*

*Ms. Judith Walker*

#### **Opening Comments and Introductions**

Each of the two co-chairs, Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick and Ms. Betty Weller, welcomed the Council members. Each of the Council members and staff introduced themselves.

#### **Ground Rules:**

Dr. Grasmick and Ms. Weller explained the following ground rules that will govern Council meetings:

1. There will not be a group break. Individuals should feel free to take a break when needed.
2. Council members are strongly encouraged to attend each meeting. Substitutes cannot represent Council members at Council meetings.
3. Audience observers are not permitted to participate in Council discussions. However, observers can speak privately with Council members and ask a member to bring questions to the Council.
4. Council members were encouraged to be active participants and to ask questions in the public forum provided to ensure a transparent process. Members were also encouraged to speak with their constituent groups and relay their questions/concerns to the Council.

#### **Review of Executive Order and Charge to the Council**

Mr. John Ratliff, Director of Policy, Office of the Governor, advised the Council of the Governor's expectations for the work of this group. Per Mr. Ratliff, the Council will:

- Examine current evaluations used in this state
- Make recommendations for a statewide evaluation model to include:
  - How student growth is to be measured
  - How non-tested areas and grades will be measured
- Define what it means to be an effective/highly effective teacher or principal.

Mr. Ratliff further explained it is not the purpose of this Council to debate the merits of the law, but rather to make recommendations for its implementation within an incredibly tight timeline. He also commented that an Advisory Panel would be created which would

include individuals with particular areas of expertise and that the Council would have to determine how the members of the Advisory Panel would be selected.

### **Education Reform Act of 2010 and State Board of Education Proposed Regulations**

*Ms. Elizabeth Kameen and Ms. Demetria Tobias, Assistant Attorneys General*

Ms. Kameen provided an explanation of the Education Reform Act of 2010 and the State Board of Education Proposed Regulations. She explained that the law is the framework or skeleton for the teacher/principal evaluation process and that the regulations are the building blocks for implementation. She further stated that any new evaluation system developed in accordance with the Act or the proposed Regulations would not go into effect until school year 2012.

One of the Council members suggested there was a discrepancy between Section (2)(III) of the Act that calls for the State Board to solicit information and recommendations from each local school system and convene a meeting wherein this information and recommendations are discussed and considered before the State Board proposes regulations, and the regulations proposed by the State Board. Ms. Kameen responded that the proposed regulations were very broad, basic building blocks and that there would be a second set of regulations promulgated in the future, after the work of the Council and after meetings with school systems that would be more specific. Additionally, the regulations have been published and there is an opportunity for the public to comment upon them. Additional discussion ensued and Ms. Kameen stated the State Board had the authority to issue this first set of regulations. Other concerns raised by members of the Council:

- The timeliness of the availability of data and how that fits with the schedule of annual evaluations and the timeline for completion of the evaluations.
- The impact on the workload of principals to complete annual evaluations on of all teachers.
- Need for timely feedback for students.

### **Educator Evaluator Framework/ Race to the Top Application**

Dr. Colleen Seremet/ Dr. Jim Foran

Dr. Seremet explained the chart on page 149 of the Maryland Race to the Top (RTTT) application, the Maryland Teacher Evaluation Framework.

Dr. Foran explained the chart on page 150 of the Maryland Race to the Top application, the Maryland Principal Evaluation Framework.

A member of the Council raised the concern that the Maryland Teacher Evaluation Framework uses the Danielson evaluation model and the four domains on page 149 have 22 components to them. Completing that type of evaluation takes considerable time and requires a lot of staff development for principals and teachers. Dr. Seremet responded that it is the LEA's decision to define the four categories; LEA's may decide if they wish to use the 22 components or create their own definitions for each domain. Further, the State understands appropriate professional development is critical and a large portion of the RTTT budget has been designated for professional development related to evaluations.

A member of the Council asked that the 22 components be shared at another meeting. Another member asked if the Council would be setting the percentages for the Teacher Evaluation Framework; that she thought the percentages were a local determination. Dr. Grasmick responded that the RTTT application said the state would determine 30% to be consistent across all classrooms and schools in the State. Another Council member expressed a concern that the Act gives local school systems the authority to determine the pieces of the teacher evaluation. Mr. Ratliff identified this as an area that needed clarification since the Act offers the opportunity to the LEA, but 22 LEAs signed MOUs agreeing to the RTTT application. Ms. Kameen stated the statute is vague; the State Board tried to bring some clarity. She has defended the State Board position, but wants an opportunity to look at it again. She will come back to the Council at its next meeting.

Other issues raised included a concern that the MSAs were not meant to measure student growth and we should not be using a test to measure something it was not meant to measure. Another point raised was that page 151 of the RTTT application says a teacher can't be rated Effective/Highly Effective if they do not meet the 50% student growth measure and there was concern that decision did not lie with the Council.

At this point, a member of the Council noted there were two streams of questions. The first being: What is the charge of this Council? That's not entirely clear, re: what has already been determined; what is to be determined; what is to be determined by the LEA; what is to be determined by the State. The second being questions related to the complexities of the recommendations the Council would need to make.

Mr. Ratliff explained that as to the Charge to the Council, the facts on the ground changed with approval of Maryland's RTTT application because 22 LEAs have agreed to the model framework in the RTTT application.

A member of the Council summarized his understanding as follows: 30% of the evaluation will be based on student growth in a manner consistent across the state, but the Council will offer recommendations as to how that 30% will be defined; 20% of the evaluation will

be based on student growth as defined by the LEA (unless the LEA and the contract negotiation unit cannot agree, in which case, a state default model will be used). The Council will make recommendations as to the default model. The LEA will determine the components of the final 50% unless the LEA and the contract negotiation unit cannot agree, in which case, a state default model will be used. The Council will make recommendations as to the default model for the remaining percentage.

A member of the Council stated all 24 systems will have to use the 30% as determined by the State whether they signed onto the RTTT application or not.

### **Psychometrics and Straw Model**

Dr. Mark Moody/ Dr. Leslie Wilson

Dr. Moody explained there are temporary issues and solutions with using the MSA/HSA to measure student growth for the 30% state portion of the evaluation. These issues will end in 2014/2015 when assessments based upon the Common Core standards are implemented, as they are being designed to measure individual student growth.

Dr. Moody stated the MSA/HSA is not meant to measure individual student growth, but rather student status relative to mastery of state content standards and to determine which category (basic, proficient, advanced) the student falls in. It presents a challenge when we try to tie it to student growth, but there are four methods that can be used:

1. Measure score in grade 3; score in grade 4 and compute change (linear scale); test must be vertically scaled across grades. We will be able to do that with Common Core Assessments. (Can't do it now)
2. Prediction (Regression) Model: If you can correlate test grades between grades you can predict expected score in the next grade. Compare actual performance to predicted performance and determine whether student made adequate progress (Tennessee – William Sanders).
3. Normative Solution: between 2 grades students show this kind of change in test scores (the norm). Then how student actual change compares to normative change.
4. Qualitative approach (Expert judgment approach) – Develop cut scores for proficient/advanced based on expert reviewers expectation. Expand that idea to say look at differences across grades and have experts make judgments about how far a student would have to move to show growth; to show significant growth. From point B in grade 3 to point C or point D in grade 4. We don't have to do anything to the test to use this approach.

Dr. Wilson explained that growth doesn't ensure the closing of achievement gaps; that a student who starts a year behind and has a year's worth of growth will still be one year behind. She further explained educators need a consistent, fair message as to what is expected.

Dr. Wilson then explained a straw model with a point system designed around student growth by assigning weights. For example, each MSA level could be divided into strata such as low basic; middle basic; high basic; low/middle/high proficient and low/middle/high advanced, so that there are nine levels in all. If a student maintains the same status, their growth would be considered acceptable and the teacher would be rated effective: From proficient to proficient (+1 point); from proficient to advanced (+2 pts). From proficient to basic (- 1 point); from mid proficient to high proficient (+1/2 point) and if that particular student is in a special population and makes progress: an extra +1 point.

Council members asked whether other factors had been considered such as student attendance rate, teacher attendance rate, teacher experience. The response was that the work of the Council should include the factors that should be measured and the determination of the weighting.

A Council member requested that MSDE staff bring information to the Council on what other states such as Tennessee and New York are doing in regard to measuring student growth and vertical equating.

A concern was expressed that the straw model as explained might not work for students who were at the bottom of the basic category or the top of the advanced category.

A Council member asked whether the point system had been applied to data and what the results were. Dr. Wilson responded that she had used simulated data. She is waiting for a school system to provide her with some real data. Using the simulated data only one teacher was determined to be ineffective.

A Council member suggested that a conversation about evaluations must include a penalty. Another stated we need to be sensitive about what triggers a penalty.

There was also a discussion regarding performance assessments. The new Common Core assessments are supposed to include performance measures.

### **Non-Tested Areas**

Bernie Sadusky

Local systems use pre and post tests; and formative assessments. 3 LEAs use student growth data in teacher evaluations. 11 LEAs use student performance data in teacher evaluations.

What are Delaware and Tennessee doing related to teacher evaluation in non-tested areas?

**Tennessee:** They've been using value added assessment for some time but not in all areas. Expert panels in all areas are currently looking for appropriate assessments (to be completed by 3<sup>rd</sup> week of September)

**Delaware:** A Governor's Committee: An internal committee in all content areas is looking at what is a fair evaluation. They will bring back to expert panel who will identify a suggested instrument for those non-tested areas. Using terms credible and useful rather than reliable and valid. There just aren't assessments available in all areas.

- National Center for Assessment & Accountability is helping to advise.
- How are you going to identify an instrument? A charge to this group. There are LEAs that would like to submit their assessments.
- National Psychometric Council needs to be a key resource. Also, Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center.

### **Questions, Clarification, Discussion:**

Council Members

Have local colleges and Universities bought into this? They don't teach and assess this way. How does it affect definition of college ready?

There are task forces looking at how expectations for college compare to expectations for secondary school.

Education Commission of the States is looking at certification for work-ready.

Work of Achieve – alignment between K-12 and college/career ready.

Local Assessments – LEAs don't have psychometricians on staff.

Some have tests that would meet the standard.

Be very clear at each meeting as to what we need to accomplish.

### **Deliverables for Next/future meeting:**

- Liz Kameen to provide clarification.
- Staff is to look at evaluation systems from other states and bring information to the Council.
- Council members are to suggest additional factors for the evaluation system (send to Betty Weller or Nancy Grasmick).
- Leslie Wilson is to return with straw model applied to real data.