

Maryland Council for Educator Effectiveness (MCEE)

Minutes from Meeting of September 22, 2010

Absent:

Dr. Lawrence Leak

Dr. Dennis Pataniczek

Opening Comments and Introductions

Dr. Nancy Grasmick, MCEE Co-Chair, opened the meeting by asking each of the Council members and staff to introduce themselves.

Announcements

Dr. Grasmick brought the Council's attention to the minutes for the meeting held on August 26, 2010. She asked Council members to email any corrections or additions to Renee Spence at rspence@msde.state.md.us.

Ms. Betty Weller, MCEE Co-Chair, asked Council members to provide any questions or suggestions by using index cards provided at the Council table and submitting them to either Co-Chair or Renee Spence. She reported that any questions which include the submitters name will be answered directly to that person. Questions that do not include the submitters name will be addressed to the entire group.

Dr. Grasmick asked Council members to submit their nominations for the Expert Advisory Panel on index cards as well. She said that any suggestions should be transmitted to either Pat Foerster or Renee Spence. She urged members to nominate persons with specific expertise.

Dr. Grasmick reviewed the role of the Council and brought the Council's attention to a graphic depiction of that role. **The chart is attached to and made a part of these minutes.** She said that the Council's responsibility is:

- To provide definitions for principals and teachers as effective or highly effective and to recommend ways to determine if they are effective or highly effective.
- Recommend meaningful ways to help improve effectiveness
- Recommend ways to share effective practices
- Recommend ways to evaluate each component of the evaluation model

Dr. Grasmick said that the evaluation of each component must be:

- Fair

- Transparent
- Timely
- Rigorous
- Valid

In response to a suggestion by Cheryl Bost, President, Teachers Association of Baltimore County, Dr. Grasmick said she will include additional color on the chart to represent the Education Reform Act.

Timeline for Implementing Model Performance Evaluation System

Ms. Weller brought the group's attention to a chart depicting a timeline for implementing a Model Performance Evaluation System beginning in August 2010 to be operational during the 2012-2013 school year.

In response to a question by a Council member, Dr. Grasmick said that local school systems will determine which schools will participate in the pilot programs. She said that the pilot programs must be demographically diverse and include elementary, middle and high schools. She noted the importance of including special student populations in the determination of the schools to be piloted. She said that whatever evaluation system is implemented it should be revisited after the pilot program is conducted.

John Ratliff, Director of Policy, Office of the Governor, said that the Governor has stated the need to focus on the pilot programs before and after the programs are conducted.

The Delaware Experience

Ms. Lisa Bishop, Assistant to the Secretary of Education, Delaware State Department of Education (DSDE)

Mr. Peter Shulman, Director, Teacher-Leader Effectiveness Unit, DSDE

Mr. Michael Hoffman, Vice President, Delaware State Education Association (DSEA)

Ms. Mary Jo Faust, NEA Director, DSEA

Dr. Grasmick thanked the presenters for assisting the Council by providing their experience in developing a teacher evaluation system for Delaware. She introduced Meg Dolan from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), who is serving as a liaison to Delaware and Maryland.

Ms. Bishop congratulated Maryland leaders for winning the Race To The Top (RTTT) competition. She introduced the other members of her team and provided a list of key dates outlining Delaware's education reform efforts.

Mr. Shulman urged caution by the Council on the following items:

1. Using experts in the field
2. Measures should keep changing (continuous improvement model)
3. Collaboration with teacher associations (create ownership and buy-in)

Mr. Shulman provided a student growth plan of action and discussed the various steps to determine student achievement. He said the goal should be to identify what one year's level of growth should be. He said that there needs to be a culture change developed to engage teachers and leaders.

Mr. Hoffman reported that the U.S. Secretary of Education has urged the need for collaboration among teacher unions, parents, community members and state education personnel to provide real education reform. He said that his members have seen education reform many times over the last several years but that it is crucial to have buy-in from all levels of education personnel. He reported that more than four hundred educators participated in determining appropriate student growth.

Ms. Faust reported that because of collaboration at the state level, communication was increased. She said that all stakeholders are working together to make change for students. She reported that the DSEA gleaned information from its members and that some facilitators were retired teachers and administrators.

In response to a question by Dr. Grasmick, Ms. Faust said that when local communities provide their input into what constitutes student growth, the state and local education entities work together to standardize them. Dr. Grasmick reported that the RTTT grant requires each local school system to submit a "Scope of Work" by November 22, 2010. Mr. Shulman urged that support and intervention be offered to local school systems in meeting this requirement.

Ms. Bishop said that the DSDE asked that, while the US Department of Education approved the year 1 plan for local education agencies, DSDE assist local education agencies for years 2, 3 and 4.

Senator Delores Kelley asked what criteria Delaware personnel had in mind in prioritizing when local education agencies must provide their plans. Ms. Faust said that local teams were created that met with state personnel who provided assistance in writing the "Scope of Work." She said they met weekly and that the RTTT requirements dictate the use of data measures. She said they struggled to find data to support their plans and that the state provided feedback to "tighten" the plans.

Mr. Shulman said that they should be able to provide the Council with a blueprint in about four weeks.

Dr. Grasmick noted that she will be attending a gathering at the University of Delaware to exchange ideas in the near future.

A Council member suggested that the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center is doing some work on these issues.

In response to a question by Ms. Bost, Mr. Shulman said that the USDE is planning to provide more support rather than just being seen as a compliance organization. He said that USDE made certain requests but were willing to change the timelines when requested. Dr. Grasmick said that the USDE has made it clear that they don't expect the first iteration to be perfect; they want to be collaborative.

In response to a question by June Streckfus on how to make sure that collaboration is happening, Mr. Shulman said that communication is key. He said that educational support personnel need to be included in the process since students learn from everyone in the school building.

In response to a question by Christopher Barclay about the number of tests and measurements will be needed to determine student growth to evaluate new teachers, Mr. Shulman said they are committed to multiple measures which may or may not be standardized tests.

In response to a question by Dawn Pipkin, Mr. Shulman said that they will bring in experts to help determine what definition of *proficiency*. Dr. Grasmick said that once recommendations are completed, they will be vetted by experts.

Dr. Grasmick and Ms. Weller thanked the presenters for providing their time and insight.

Psychometrics Related to the Measurement of Student Growth and Teacher Effectiveness

Dr. Howard Wainer, Adjunct Professor, Department of Statistics, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

Ms. Weller introduced Dr. Wainer and asked him to provide insight into psychometrics related to the measurement of student growth and teacher effectiveness.

Dr. Wainer reported that this process should include a system of constant experimentation rather than constant improvement. He urged the following:

1. Make small changes
2. Have agreed-upon outcome variables
3. Have a control group

Dr. Wainer explained what a Value Added Model (VAM) is and reported on the following challenges that must be overcome to use VAM:

1. Causal inferences
2. Missing data
3. Incomparable test scores
4. No pure measure of teacher effects
5. Very unstable results
6. How to use multiple measures

He stressed the need to go slowly, gather evidence, and measure change.

Senator Kelly asked Dr. Wainer to provide the group with journals that would outline the classroom effect on student achievement. She asked if there were ways to mitigate the outcomes of a value added model. He said that there needs to be a large sample size to mitigate the missing data.

Dr. Grasmick thanked Dr. Wainer and said that they will deliberate very slowly and carefully before making decisions about this critical issue.

Ms. Weller thanked Dr. Wainer for providing the challenges that must be met to meet the goals of this group.

Charles County Example

Dr. Clifford Eichel, Director of Research and Assessment, Charles County Public Schools

Mr. Steve Perakis, Coordinator of Evaluation, Charles County Public Schools

Dr. Grasmick introduced the presenters and said that they will be discussing a Charles County example for the Council's perusal.

Dr. Eichel explained that they viewed a student's record over a period of time and looked for nine categories of growth. He discussed the point system that was used after discussions with principals and content providers.

A Council member said that data gathering does offer the possibility of looking at students where there is a large amount of educational growth.

In response to a question by Dr. Alonso, Dr. Eichel said that teachers of special education students were more difficult to average since those students started out with the lowest scores.

There was some discussion about “adequate growth.” Dr. Grasmick said, “We need to integrate all considerations for all students.” She said that special education teachers have noted that having specific expectations has been very positive for their students.

Dr. Eichel said that they did not include special education teachers although they plan to address this challenge.

In response to a question by Mr. Barclay about how this information is tied back to the teacher’s effectiveness, Senator Kelley said there needs to be systematic professional development. Dr. Grasmick said there needs to be “targeted professional development.”

There was a comment expressed about providing professional development in a timely manner and a question about the Council breaking into smaller groups to discuss the issues. Dr. Grasmick said these were excellent suggestions and reminded members to put their suggestions and questions on an index card to provide for further discussion.

Mr. Melendez suggested that there be a plan of what topics will be addressed at subsequent meetings of the Council in order to prepare in advance. Dr. Grasmick concurred with his suggestion.

Ms. Weller reminded Council members to mark their calendars with the meeting dates. The meeting adjourned at 4 p.m.