

Maryland Council for Educator Effectiveness (MCEE)

Minutes from Meeting of November 1, 2010

Absent:

Senator Dolores Kelley

Delegate Anne Kaiser

Dr. Bonita Coleman-Potter

Minutes

Dr. Nancy Grasmick, MCEE Co-Chair, opened the meeting by asking members to inform Renee Spence or Pat Foerster of any corrections or additions to the minutes of the October 22, 2010 meeting. With no comments, it was moved and seconded to approve the minutes as presented.

Announcements

Dr. Grasmick distributed a list of meeting dates of Teacher Effectiveness Workgroups discussing non-tested areas and suggested that members may want to meet with these groups as additional resources.

Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework

Dr. Jim Foran, Assistant State Superintendent, MSDE

Dr. Foran reported that the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework was developed by staff in the Leadership Division at the MSDE. He said that it is used by every school in Maryland and by all the preparation programs for administrators in Maryland as well. He also reported that it is the only State system reflected on the website of the World Bank and that the system is recognized nationally as well as internationally

He reported that the Framework is not intended to include all responsibilities of administrators but rather as a resource to identify instructional leaders. Dr. Foran explained that the Framework is based on work done by the Southern Regional Education Board and encompasses more than thirty years of research. He noted the following eight outcomes enumerated in the document that demonstrate thirty-five instructional practices:

1. Facilitate the development of a school vision
2. Align all aspects of a school culture to student and adult learning
3. Monitor the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment
4. Improve instructional practices through the purposeful observation and evaluation of teachers

5. Ensure the regular integration of appropriate assessments into daily classroom instruction
6. Use technology and multiple sources of data to improve classroom instruction
7. Provide staff with focused, sustained, research-based professional development
8. Engage all community stakeholders in a shared responsibility for student and school success

In response to a question by Ms. Bost, Dr. Foran said the matrix could be different for each school system. Dr. Grasmick said that this is not the entirety of the evaluation. She said there needs to be a way of measuring student growth in determining the principal's effectiveness. Dr. Foran said this would be 25 percent of the evaluation as currently proposed. He said that principals are used to being held accountable for student growth in their schools and noted that there are no tenure issues involved.

In response to a question by Lee Rutledge, Dr. Foran said that the RTTT application specifies 80 percent of an administrator's evaluation is based on student growth and that 25 percent of that would be based on the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework. He agreed to provide the group with that portion of the RTTT application.

Presentation on Montgomery County Public School's (MCPS) Evaluation System

Doug Prouty, President, Montgomery County Education Association

Gary Bartee, Vice-President, Montgomery County Association of Administrators and Principals

Mr. Prouty explained that the Montgomery County Teacher Professional Growth System (PGS) was introduced during the 2000-2001 school year and was phased-in over three years. He said it gives teachers an opportunity to collaborate with the school system to provide quality instruction and accountability and that the program has been since developed for administrators and support staff as well. Mr. Prouty reported that a staff development teacher is placed in every school and that substitute teachers are provided to allow regular classroom teachers to receive professional development. He discussed the six performance standards for teachers outlined in the program and provided a chart that shows how the standards match with instructional practice. He also provided the sources of data used to measure student achievement.

Mr. Prouty discussed the successes of the Peer Assistance and Review Program (PAR), which provides intensive assistance to all novice teachers as well as experienced teachers who receive a below standard evaluation from their principal. He explained that it

is administered jointly by the teachers' union and administrators' association. He said, "It has been acclaimed one of the most structured support systems in place."

Mr. Bartee also said that the PAR program is one of the most effective and due process systems in place. He noted that teachers are involved in all decision-making and decisions are determined by consensus with teachers and administrators. He said that all new teachers are assigned a mentor and a professional growth teacher and that principals are also assigned a consultant to help them in their growth process. Mr. Bartee provided examples of the assistance provided to two teachers in Montgomery County Public Schools and the outcomes that were realized. He stressed the need to look at data constantly and involve all stakeholders to assure student achievement.

In response to a question by Mr. Barclay, Mr. Prouty said that new teachers are observed formally twice a year by an administrator, twice formally by a consulting teacher and informally each week with both oral and written feedback provided to the teacher. He said that if there are areas of concern, the administrator and consultant make sure that there is support available both inside and outside the building for that teacher. He said that if areas of concern warrant a growth plan, one is developed by the consulting teacher and the administrator which includes specific data and a timeline for improvement. He said the growth plan may allow for up to a year for improvement. Mr. Prouty said that there are also consistent and continual observations of a teacher's performance in the classroom as well.

In response to two questions by Dr. Leak, Mr. Prouty said that the courses of professional development offered to teachers are created and contracted by MCPS. He said there are six classes spread over several months which analyze feeder tapes and discuss scenarios in the classroom.

Mr. Prouty addressed Dr. Leak's question about "what are the lessons learned over the years and how did you rethink the initial ideas?" He said the program cannot remain static and must change over the years. He gave examples of the changes, some of which were minor and some major. Mr. Prouty said an implementation team meets monthly to discuss issues of the PGS and the PAR programs.

Mr. Bartee said that pre-imposed conferences are important and that sharing data sources and assessment data is critical.

In response to a question by Mr. Melendez, Mr. Prouty said that data shows that the student achievement gap in Montgomery and the SAT score gap have narrowed since the inception of the PGS and that the data can be found in the MCPS Annual Report. He noted

that there are other mitigating circumstances that have contributed to the narrowing of the achievement gap for students in MCPS schools.

In response to a question by Ms. Pederson, Mr. Prouty said that in comparing this program to Dr. Danielson's Framework, he sees more specificity in the PGS but noted many similarities between the two programs.

In response to a question by Mr. Burton, Mr. Barte said that principals who are found to be struggling, are provided a professional growth and improvement plan and are placed in a PAR program. He said a principal consultant may be assigned and the principal is monitored by a professional growth team. He said that accountability for teachers and administrators are similar.

Ms. Pipkin asked how a determination for referral is made and how teachers serving in the role of peer reviewers are not seen as punitive but rather supportive. Mr. Prouty said that a review is conducted by a consulting teacher who makes a recommendation to the PAR panel to place the teacher in the PAR program. The PAR panel then makes the final decision. He said that some tenured teachers have been resistant but many come to realize that their teaching skills can improve. He said that there have been some negative experiences over the years.

In response to a question by Ms. Streckfus, Mr. Prouty said that he cannot give specifics on the percentage of the evaluation that is based on student growth, but said it is at least one-third. He said it depends on what grade level and what area is being taught. Mr. Barte said they are looking at baseline data of student achievement and projected growth.

In response to another question by Ms. Streckfus, Mr. Prouty said that it is difficult to set a specific percentage of a teacher's evaluation that is based on student growth, since it doesn't give justice to the complexity of teaching and learning.

In response to a question by Mr. Barclay, Mr. Barte said that in the case of a physical education (P.E.) teacher, observers would look at the skill levels of students to see how they are progressing in a new skill. They would also look at the ability of the P.E. teacher to motivate and encourage their students. He said, "It is all performance-based. Where are they when they came to your class and how are they when they leave?"

Mr. Prouty said that in evaluating in non-tested areas, observers would look at learning objectives for a lesson and how students are meeting those objectives. He said, "We have emphasized re-teaching and re-learning. Some students are retaking some classes; it is tied to specified objectives."

In response to a question by Dr. Grasmick about the financial implications of the program, Mr. Bartee explained that in Montgomery County there are twenty-four consultant teachers which must be replaced as well as an administrator to maintain the program. He said that in the case of consulting principals, there is a pool of funding for substitute principals.

In response to a question by Ms. Bost, Mr. Prouty said that there is an average of sixteen teachers being monitored by a teacher consultant.

In response to a question by Ms. Pederson, Mr. Prouty said that conducting observations is very labor intensive and that if there is an under-performing teacher in a building, that situation becomes a priority for the principal.

Committee Work

Dr. Grasmick announced that Meg Dolan from the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is in attendance to assist committee members. She asked members to adjourn to meet in committee groups as established at the prior meeting and to reconvene at 11:50 a.m. to report out their findings.

Ms. Spence reported that a list of expert panel names has been distributed and that some have been contacted to find out their availability for meeting with the Council. Dr. Grasmick asked members to let Ms. Spence know if there is a specific expert they wish to be contacted. She reminded members to write their questions or suggestions on an index card and provide to either Ms. Spence or Ms. Foerster.

Committee facilitator's reported as follows:

PreK-3

Facilitator: Judy Walker

Ms. Walker said the group discussed the importance of a growth plan and looked at pre and post measures to establish a baseline for student growth. She said using the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) for grades one through three will require development and they recommend a phase-in model with fifty percent coming from a local assessment initially. She said they recommend that the MSDE approve the list of assessments developed and the local education association (LEA) pull from that list until the State developed its own data points. Ms. Walker said that regarding the other fifty percent of the evaluation, LEAs would include their curriculum instructional supervisors in a consortium to provide a closer alignment between LEAs.

Tested 4-8

Facilitator: Bridgette Blue

Ms. Blue said they reviewed a specific combination model used in Prince George's County schools. She reported that they decided to research other models being used throughout the country. Ms. Blue said they looked at standards used for determining teacher performance and effective principals and teachers. She cautioned that it is imperative to determine a specific definition of highly effective teachers and principals prior to determining who is highly effective and the measures to be used. She said her committee plans to meet outside of the Council to work on these issues.

Non-tested 4-8

Facilitator: Cheryl Bost

Ms. Bost said the group wants to look at the Maryland State Curricula since the standards seem to be set through the use of the curricula. She said they discussed the use of growth measures on a sampling of students and that the group wants to meet with practitioners who will be working on teacher effectiveness in non-tested areas. Ms. Bost said that the group agreed that non-tested areas in grades 1 – 3 and grades 4 – 8 cannot be separated.

High School

Facilitator: Christopher Barclay

Mr. Barclay said they need data to define a highly effective principal and teacher. He said the group agreed there seems to be a lot more clarity on teacher effectiveness than principal effectiveness. Mr. Barclay said they are looking at the role and capacity of principals to meet the time-intensive demands of an effective teacher evaluation system. He explained that his committee is looking at what would be included in a matrix for evaluation of a teacher in a non-tested area and that they are working on a model to look at the use of teams to determine appropriate growth in non-tested areas. He expressed their concern about what current measures are and what future measures would be. Mr. Barclay reported that the group would be meeting outside of the Council either by conference call or in person. Dr. Grasmick offered to help with the conference call arrangements.

Ms. Pipkin provided the group with a copy of Dr. Danielson's framework.

With no further discussion, the meeting ended at 12:10 p.m.