

Maryland Council for Educator Effectiveness (MCEE)

Minutes from Meeting of November 29, 2010

Absent:

Enrique Melendez

Clarifying Discussion

Dr. Nancy Grasmick, MCEE Co-Chair, opened the meeting by stating that this Council is extremely important to the teacher and principal evaluation system. She said that the Council is charged with focusing on the thirty percent of the evaluation and that “the thirty percent needs to represent more than one measure. The State Assessment is important but is not the only measure. At the local level, they will be grappling with the twenty percent and fifty percent.”

Timeline for Recommendations

MCEE Co-Chair Betty Weller said, “The law clearly gives local systems a lot of autonomy.” She explained that a letter was sent to the Governor to ask for an extension of time for the Council’s deliberations of approximately six months. Ms. Weller also urged members to work on definitions of “effective” and “highly effective” teachers and principals.

Non-Tested Content Area Meetings

Dr. Grasmick distributed a list of the dates and times of Coordinator Meetings for Non-Tested Areas. She noted the huge challenge in the area of early childhood education and said that the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) may need to be enhanced to include grades one through three.

In response to a question by Ms. Streckfus, Dr. Grasmick said the extension of meetings will still allow for the piloting of a new evaluation system in 2011-2012 since the implementation will not take place until the 2012-2013 school year.

In response to another question by Ms. Streckfus, Mr. Ratliff assured members that the Governor has the final word in seeing that this Council has the time to make informed and deliberate decisions in forming an excellent teacher and principal evaluation system.

Baltimore City Teachers’ Contract

Dr. Grasmick asked Dr. Andres Alonso to talk about the recently-ratified teachers’ contract in Baltimore City. Dr. Alonso deferred to Lee Rutledge, a member of the negotiating team, to discuss the topic.

Mr. Rutledge explained that the contract provides multiple pathways to get achievement units which provide financial incentives. He said, "The work we do here is going to directly affect this."

Dr. Alonso said that the element of uncertainty was a big problem and that they created a collaboration to meet this challenge. He said that as data systems become more sophisticated, the nature of the conversation is going to change. He said, "The agreement is a risk for the system and the teachers, but it's worth taking."

Senator Kelley reported that both Colorado and Minnesota began years ago to link evaluations to student achievement and collaborated with all stakeholders to craft their evaluation systems. Dr. Grasmick said she will provide information links to the Council members regarding the systems in those states.

Dr. Grasmick reported that the General Assembly enacted legislation regarding the creation of a longitudinal data system which will have huge implications at the local school system level.

In response to a question by Ms. Streckfus about what issue was critical in convincing teachers that the contract was fair, Mr. Rutledge said that the contract "puts teachers in control of achievement."

In response to a question by Ms. Bost, Dr. Grasmick said that the local school system cannot change what the Council deems appropriate for the thirty percent of the evaluation. Ms. Bost said that the group ACHIEVE has crafted an achievement test that is excellent. Dr. Grasmick agreed and offered to invite representatives of ACHIEVE to do a presentation for the Council.

Ms. Pipken said, "There is not a lot of enthusiasm because it is taking away from instruction." She said the focus needs to be about student achievement and that "Education is trying to move to a much more collaborative state." She said it is important to determine what we are going to put in place to help students achieve. Ms. Pipken said, "We need more tools to inform instruction. The conversation needs to be -- what do the students need?"

Minutes

Dr. Grasmick asked for approval of the minutes of the November 1, 2010 meeting. Ms. Walker asked that a revision be made to her discussion about the MMSR.

Upon motion by Senator Kelley, seconded by Dr. Leak, and with unanimous agreement, the minutes were approved as amended.

Committee Work

Ms. Weller asked members to adjourn to meet in committee groups and to reconvene at 11:40 a.m. to report out their findings. She reminded members that there is to be no public participation in the committee discussions.

Committee facilitator's reported as follows:

PreK-3

Facilitator: Judy Walker

Ms. Walker said that the group is requesting that Dr. Rolf Graffwallner, Assistant State Superintendent of the Division of Early Childhood Education at the MSDE, attend the next meeting to brief the group on the updating and up-grading of the MMSR. She said her committee is in favor of pre and post performance testing. Ms. Walker said that they are discussing having teachers develop data-driven student growth plans and that the definition of an effective teacher would include the students meeting those student growth plans.

Non-tested 4-8

Facilitator: Cheryl Bost

Ms. Bost said that the committee discussed five questions to be posed to the focus groups working on non-tested areas which they would like Dr. Grasmick to forward to the focus groups. She said that the committee members will be attending all of the focus group meetings and that the committee recommends that Dr. Danielson be invited to attend one of the meetings as well. In response to a question by Ms. Bost, Dr. Grasmick said that principals, assistant principals, and content supervisors will be included in the discussions of the content area groups.

Tested 4-8

Facilitator: Dawn Pipken

Ms. Pipken said that multiple measures are necessary to assess every content area. She said they are looking at students having proficiency showing on multiple measures and that writing can be used across the disciplines. Ms. Pipken said that regarding definitions, "we can't put numbers without guidance. We need clarification on this point." Ms. Pipken said that the committee is firmly in agreement on assessments that target where students are prior to taking a specific subject. She reported that the Committee agreed that an effective teacher will have a majority of students meeting expected growth targets based on where the student is when they enter the class. She also said that a highly effective teacher would

have a majority of students exceeding expected growth targets based on where the student is when they enter the class

High School

Facilitator: David Burton

Mr. Burton said they are working on a definition that encompasses all different subject and content areas and that the Committee is looking at best practices. He said his committee recommended the following definitions:

An effective teacher meets established standards including:

1. evidence of student growth
2. demonstration of best instructional practices

A highly effective teacher exceeds established standards including:

1. evidence of student growth
2. demonstration of best instructional practices

Ms. Pipken said that her group is looking at a value-added model when a class includes a very diverse population with special challenges. She said, “We need to recognize that every student brings unique challenges.”

With no further discussion, the meeting ended at 11:55 a.m.