

Maryland Council for Educator Effectiveness (MCEE)

Minutes from Meeting of March 28, 2011

Absent:

Senator Delores Kelley
Delegate Anne Kaiser

Maleeta Kitchen
Enrique Melendez

Minutes

Nancy Grasmick, MCEE Co-Chair, opened the meeting at 9 a.m. and asked members to review the revised Minutes of February 28, 2011 and the Minutes of March 21, 2011. There were some editorial changes requested and the minutes were approved. Ms. Bost requested that the minutes reflect the questions asked by Council members as well as the responses received.

Dr. Grasmick announced that she will be participating in a meeting with USDE staff along with the other State Superintendents in states awarded the RTTT grants. She reported that she is going to make a request that following the piloting of the evaluation program, the Council would reconvene to make adjustments where needed. She said that the request will include an extension of another school year to make the changes needed. She noted that other superintendents will most likely be in favor of this request.

Ms. Pipkin reiterated her concerns about the enormous numbers of testing being done in March in her school and urged for a unified message about how this process will be conducted.

Dr. Leak and Ms. Hanlin stated the need for a matrix outlining a timeline for this project. Dr. Grasmick said that Jim Foran or Mary Gable could be helpful in formulating a timeline.

Review and Finalize Definitions of Teacher and Principal

The Council reviewed their agreed upon definitions for teacher and principal. Ms. Bost reminded the Council that they agreed to add a caveat “with local interpretation” which is enumerated in the March 21st minutes.

Upon a motion by Dr. Leak, seconded by Ms. Pedersen, the Council approved the definitions, as amended.

Measures of Student Growth for Teacher Evaluation

Dr. Grasmick suggested that the group invite experts to a Council meeting to discuss the structure of an effective portfolio. Ms. Hanlin noted that Laura Goe's website has an excellent piece on evidence binders.

Mr. Burton noted the timeline for staff development for teachers, especially those in high schools that teach a lot of subject areas.

Dr. Grasmick said that these are additional reasons to request an extension of time. She said that anytime new programs are introduced, there is a transition period.

Ms. Streckfus said that it is important to figure out where the RTTT funds will be used for technology in order to think beyond 2014.

Ms. Bost asked if the RTTT proposals will include instructional preparation time in their funding mechanism. Dr. Grasmick said that RTTT Project Manager, Jim Foran can speak to this question.

Ms. Pipkin talked about the serious deficiencies in some of the schools in the technology area. Dr. Grasmick said that there needs to be a plan to find out what is needed in the schools.

Review of Draft Interim Report to the Governor

Ms. Weller asked the group to review a draft Interim Report to the Governor. She said it is a timeline of what has been done by the Council and asked for feedback.

Ms. Bost asked that section VII C be reworded by deleting *Charlotte Danielson's* and adding the domains listed in the Danielson Framework. She also asked that the reference to the Teacher of the Year Summit under section VII D be omitted since the Council did not receive input from this group. Dr. Grasmick said that she will share this information with the Council.

Ms. Bost questioned the bullet under Section VII D referring to Teacher Effectiveness "Think Tanks" saying that when she attended the think tank meetings she found only two teachers included. She asked that the reference to *nearly 200* teachers be deleted. She said she would like to see the breakdown of the numbers of teachers included in the *think tank* groups.

Dr. Grasmick explained that the *think tank* groups include sessions with teachers conducted in local school systems. She said that she will add an additional bullet showing local efforts. She said that the requested amendments will be made and an electronic version will be distributed to the Council by the end of the week.

Use of the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework for Purposes and Use in Principal Evaluations

Dr. Jim Foran

Dr. Foran distributed an excerpt from the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework which includes eight outcomes for evaluating principals. He also distributed a sample of performance standards used in Anne Arundel County Public Schools and Howard County Public School's evaluation document.

Ms. Bost asked if most school systems do their own evaluation or conform to the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework. Dr. Foran said he doesn't have that information.

Dr. Grasmick reported that more than 1100 principals have matriculated through the Maryland Principals' Academy over the last eleven years.

Ms. Bost asked if local school systems are discussing with administrators how to incorporate student growth in the evaluation process. Dr. Foran said that they are waiting for the Council to complete its work.

Mr. Burton said that principals are used to being judged on student performance since this has been the practice for many years. He said this will bring what principals have been doing into alignment with the responsibilities of teachers.

Dr. Foran said that Department staff has been tracking the progress of schools where a principal has matriculated through the Academy and found that these schools are making great progress.

Ms. Pipkin cautioned that people shouldn't be held responsible for things outside of their realm.

Dr. Alonso said he was offended that some members of the Council seemed to be suggesting that expectations should be different for teachers of students who are economically disadvantaged as compared to teachers whose students are not economically disadvantaged. He explained there is evidence that a number of schools in his school system with highly challenging student populations are exhibiting significant gains in student growth. He further explained that his school system provides an excellent example

for learning about teacher and principal effectiveness and the factors that make one school more successful than another, because the student demographics are so similar across the system. So, if the students are demographically similar, there must be other explanations for why the students in some schools show significantly larger learning gains than in other schools. Just as he is strongly opposed to lowering the expectations for economically disadvantaged students, he is also strongly opposed to lowering the expectations for the teachers who teach them.

Mr. Rutledge agreed with Dr. Alonso saying that principal and teacher measures should be very closely related.

Mr. Burton said, “We need alignment across all areas, growth over time and time to gather the results back.”

Perspective of the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP) and Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) on Principal Evaluation

Debbie Drown, Executive Director, MAESP

Gene Streagle, Executive Director, MASSP

Ms. Drown said that the MAESP supports student performance being a part of a principal’s evaluation. She noted the need for multiple measures to determine success of a school leader. She said there needs to be professional development to provide a positive school culture. Ms. Drown said that evaluation and observation are a process, not an event and must be used to determine professional development. She also noted that the length of time a principal has been in the school should be taken into consideration. Ms. Drown said that the active participation by the principal in high quality professional development is imperative and that principals should provide mentoring and coaching to students.

Mr. Streagle said that the MASSP, which represents middle and high schools, agrees that the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework encompasses what should be used to evaluate a principal which includes the domains outlined in the Danielson Framework. He said the rubric must be on a continuum to show progress over time and that the focus should be on areas that are the most important. He said the portfolio might be the most desirable model to use and noted there needs to be an element of self reflection contained in the model and that the growth of a principal should be recognized. Mr. Streagle said that principals should be graded on what professional development is provided to teachers and stressed the need for informal and formal observations. Mr. Streagle said that there should be an element of feedback from the central office as well and suggested survey instruments. He said that principals need to know what the needs of the community are in their interactions with students.

Ms. Bost reported that she heard at a State Board meeting, that teacher attrition should be part of a principal's evaluation. Ms. Drown said that it would be important to look at the reasons teachers are leaving; a higher than expected attrition rate is not necessarily a poor reflection on the principal.

Dr. Leak asked "where does the main source of professional development provided to local school systems come from? Mr. Streagle said that it depends on the county. He reported that smaller counties rely on national conferences and group professional development. Ms. Drown said that her organization will conduct a survey to provide more information on Dr. Leak's question. Mr. Streagle said that when he was a principal, the best professional development he received was provided by MSDE. He noted the importance of principals being able to talk to other principals to discuss similar challenges.

Mr. Streagle said that once students know the principal cares about them, they can do amazing things. Ms. Drown said that trust and relationship building are a very important part of a principal's role.

Mr. Rutledge asked how you could measure trust and student attitude. Mr. Streagle said that surveys and principals holding regular informational meetings can show this.

Ms. Walker said she feels that the difference between highly effective and effective principals is to be an effective learner.

Ms. Bost said that she agreed that reflection is very important for principals and teachers but cautioned that there is not enough time to allow for needed reflection.

Ms. Pipkin said that the most important thing is for a teacher to be able to ask for help when needed. Ms. Drown agreed that teachers need to be able to go to their principal and ask for help.

Dr. Grasmick thanked both presenters.

Possible Measures of Student Growth for Principal Evaluation

Dr. Grasmick brought the group's attention to a compilation of menu items they created at the last meeting to be used to evaluate teachers and asked the group to work on a menu to be used to evaluate principals.

Ms. Pipkin suggested portfolios as one of the measures.

Ms. Bost said that teacher and principal measures need to be aligned.

Ms. Walker suggested that data included in a school improvement plan should be part of the portfolio.

Dr. Grasmick said that the principal's portfolio should include evidence of growth in the school.

Mr. Rutledge noted the importance of principals aligning their goals with the interests of all teachers.

Mr. Burton expressed his concern that since schools will be judged on tested areas, principals will focus mainly on those areas. Dr. Grasmick said that these issues will have to be addressed by local school systems. She said, "We don't want any subject areas to be considered irrelevant."

Ms. Pedersen said that principals are put in a difficult situation due to overcrowding to provide art, music and physical education teachers. Dr. Grasmick said there are solutions if the principals work with the central office.

Ms. Bost suggested the following menu items for principal evaluations: surveys, results of local and state assessments, and portfolios.

Dr. Leak suggested that a principal's evaluation should be based on how they help the teachers in their school meet their goals.

Dr. Alonso said that certain items that matter the most should carry more weight than others. He said there is a school improvement process that can be used to measure a principal's effectiveness.

Ms. Bost urged that the principal evaluation should align from the bottom at the teacher level.

Adjournment

With no further discussion, Ms. Weller reported that the next meeting will be held on April 14, 2011, from 9 a.m. to Noon at the House Appropriations Building in Annapolis. The meeting ended at 12:30 p.m.