

# **Standards of Learning Innovation Committee**

## **Draft Meeting Minutes**

Accountability 2.0 Subcommittee Meeting

Jefferson Conference Room, Monroe Building

January 12, 2015 – 10:00am – 1:00pm

### **Attendees**

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#### **Present Committee Members:**

Dr. Stewart Roberson, Dr. Steve Staples, Dr. Shawnrell Blackwell, President Chris Braunlich, Dabney Carr, Dr. Kim Paddison Dockery, Sarah Gross, Meg Gruber, Dr. Roger Hathaway, Dr. Sue Magliaro, Dr. Laurie McCullough, Delegate Roxann Robinson, Karen Thomsen, Dr. Chriss Walther-Thomas, and Ben Williams

Grace Chung Becker, Kelly Booz, Dr. Jared Cotton, and Dr. Alan Seibert were present via conference call.

#### **Absent Committee Members:**

Karen Cross, Deb Frazier, and Dr. Bill White

### **Scribe**

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Eric Steigleder/Lisa Jackson

### **Agenda**

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- **Welcome and Updates**
- **Work of Subcommittee**
- **Survey Results**
- **Purpose of Accountability System**

- Next Steps
- Adjournment

## Welcome and Updates

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- **10:10am** – Stewart Roberson (Chair of Committee) called meeting to order and gave welcome remarks to the committee.
  - Thanked the subcommittee members for their service on the full committee and subcommittees.
  - Discussed the next steps of the Committee.
  - Recognized Dr. Laurie McCullough as the Accountability subcommittee chair.
- Stewart asked for members to provide brief introductions.
  - Members in the room and participating via conference call provided brief introductions.

## Work of Subcommittee

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- Laurie McCullough charged the subcommittee with remembering 3 important things going forward: Focus, Balance, and Evidence (see ppt)
  - Explained that the focus of the subcommittee would be on the state accreditation system: ratings, what should be included in the accreditation process, frequency of accreditation ratings, focus on support and improvement instead of punishment, and how accreditation data should be reported
  - Explained the need to balance recommendations and ideas that are innovative in nature but also doable and reasonable.
  - Emphasized the term “taming the swing.”
  - Explained the need to use research for evidence to inform recommendations. Explained that the goal is to understand current practices so that the subcommittee can inform recommendations to the existing system.
- Laurie discussed the process of the next 3 meetings and webinars.
  - Explained that learning will occur via webinars between face-to-face meetings

- Presentations will be online and recorded.
- Shelley Loving-Ryder identified several topics to be discussed during the webinars.
  - Explained the webinars will likely take place on January 26<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> and will cover Graduation and Completion Index (GCI), School Report Cards, and School Improvement.
- Sue Magliaro explained that a template will be created that will contain expected information. Discussed the need for feedback about the template, and interested topics.
- Chris Braunlich discussed the parallel track that the SOL Innovation Committee and the state Board of Education (the Board) are on.
  - Discussed the work of the Board over the last year.
  - In October 2013, the Board passed the expedited retakes but placed this on hold until the work of the SOL Committee could be completed.
  - In October 2014, at the Board retreat, they discussed the Standards of Accreditation.
  - Before June, the Board will look at other issues including: 1) end-of-course tests for High School graduation requirements and 2) how to use alternative assessments to measure growth, and the cost associated.
  - Chris informed the subcommittee that he would be letting the Board know when the SOL Innovation Committee meetings would be held and vice versa.
- Steve Staples discussed the current state of the accountability system.
  - Discussed that the system is able to achieve some things well, but struggles with others.
  - Expressed that the system does a good job at identify issues but not fixing them.
  - Discussed the concern of special needs interest groups and how they are affected by the system.
  - Encouraged subcommittee to look at high-poverty schools that are still performing well.
- Sue said it would be helpful if notes for the Board meetings could be shared with the Committee.
- Alan Seibert discussed the need to make a commitment to look beyond Virginia, and to look at other states' accountability systems.

- Laurie discussed the upcoming webinar hosted by Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond on performance assessment and how it is imbedded in accountability system.

## Survey Results

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- Laurie asked that the subcommittee break into 2 groups to discuss the patterns of the survey that was taken by the Committee.
  - Subcommittee was charged with answering 2 questions: What can be learned from this report? and What key questions emerge?
- Group 1 included Sarah Gross, Meg Gruber, Chriss Walther-Thomas, Shawnrell Blackwell, Roxann Robinson, Ben Williams, and Roger Hathaway. Sarah served as the reporter for the group.
  - The group discussed that many of the answer choices for survey question 1 were linked by data.
  - Explained the inequity that is created by data. Concerned that everyone receives the same data but do not have the capacity to interpret it.
  - The questions that arose from the survey included: What are we collecting?, What is useful for each district?, What data don't we collect?, What can we provide to influence improvement?, How do districts have time to teach teachers how to interpret data?, How is it communicated effectively to parents and taxpayers?, How do we compare to other states? How to make best strategic investments? How to link resources with capacity?
  - Discussed the need to build analysis into report, and creating a report that is readable and easy to use.
- Kim added that using the computer adaptive testing (CAT) would add another level of reporting, which would be positive for students but negative for teachers because of the possible inability to drive instruction.
- Group 2 included Chris Braunlich, Kim Dockery, Karen Thomsen, Sue Magliaro, Dabney Carr, and Stewart Roberson. Sue served as the reporter for the group.
  - Focused on issues that may be overlapping from the Board.
  - Explained that there was a need to find a balance between formative and summative assessments.
  - The group was interested in learning more about accountability systems, would like to maintain principles while adopting individual growth measures.
  - Questioned how this could be done in a rigorous and reliable manner without lowering expectations.

- Laurie opened the floor for discussion for participants via conference call.
  - Alan responded by discussing the need for a system that is consistently improving, and the need to place emphasis on student growth and progress of the school.

## **Break**

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- Laurie called for a 20 minute break.

## **Purpose of Accountability System**

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- Laurie called the meeting back to order.
- Laurie posed the question: What should it mean for a school to be fully accredited?
  - Meg Gruber discussed that a fully accredited school would meet, as much as they can, the needs of every student in the school including academic, social, and emotional; providing the entire package.
  - Ben Williams discussed that parents should have a reasonable assumption that schools will prepare their children for the next steps in their lives.
  - Shawnrell Blackwell discussed the need to look at schools that are underperforming and assuring that a label is not being put on them that would elicit negative feedback.
  - Roxann Robinson discussed the need to keep standards high while changing the accreditation system.
  - Laurie asked whether the subcommittee believed that accreditation should be looked at as providing for the entire package or is it a minimum competency issue; a floor or a ceiling issue. Expressed the need for a common understanding of what accreditation is.
  - Ben expressed that if there is a floor, there will not be enough pressure for all schools; while a ceiling may put too much pressure on some schools. Expressed the need to possibly have a multi-tiered system.
  - Laurie expressed that using a ceiling effect would likely be linked to the issue that the system is dealing with now; school performance becomes a measure of poverty.
  - Sue discussed that accreditation all goes back to what the purpose of public education. Discussed that utilizing multiple measures may be too complex and out of the purview of the subcommittee

- Karen Thomsen expressed her belief that some benchmark are necessary to be able to accredit schools. Believed that without multiple measures, we cannot effectively measure all schools.
- Dabney Carr expressed that as a parent, he would desire a school that addresses all aspects of the students' life.
- Kim Dockery discussed the importance of continuous improvement for accreditation because all schools do not start in the same place.
- Laurie discussed that this discussion was similar to the one had before the enactment of No Child Left Behind (NCLB); questioned whether the system is measuring inputs or outcomes?
  - Prior to NCLB schools were measured primarily on success of schools inputs i.e how many teachers, how many students, how many computers, how many textbooks.
  - Discussed that a better measure of quality is outcomes.
  - Steve discussed the importance of multiple inputs, and the importance of measuring progress against self and against an external benchmark. Discussed that growing consistently may not be useful if the ultimate goal of meeting the external benchmark is not achieved.
  - Alan shared that growth should be equated with students, while progress should be aligned with progress. Discussed that using the measure of input methods did not get to the complexity of schools. Believed schools should also have a more in depth accrediting process to their improvement which could help to identify and reflect on what is being done well, and what may need improvement. Suggested looking at other organizations accrediting bodies such as hospitals.
  - Sue discussed the need for a qualitative element of accreditation.
  - Chriss Walther-Thomas discussed the importance that being inclusive should not mean to be separated from achieving excellence, discussed the need to take diversity and put into actionable words.
  - Laurie restated some main concerns: Goal is to create an accreditation process that may include qualitative measures while remaining flexible enough that schools can work on other measures.
  - Kim discussed the need for an accreditation process that includes visits, observations, and qualitative measures.
  - Steve discussed the need for accreditation to be not only a product but also a process; higher education accreditation is usually a process which motivates self-reflection.

- Meg clarified her point; academic needs should also be a part of the accreditation process. Discussed the need to require students to do more than regurgitate information, or to rely on a number on a test to determine failure. Discussed the importance of emphasizing to students because there was failure on the test, does not mean child has failed or school has failed.
- Laurie discussed the need to serve the whole child, safe, supported, healthy, engaged, and challenged – discussed determining how to measure those aspects.
- Chriss posed the question of how the current discussion paralleled the discussions taking place at the state Board of Education.
- Chris explained that the Board was in the initial stages of the conversation. Discussed that there is a consensus that there is a need to have better and more accreditation ratings, would like to focus on remediation of schools that are not accredited and frequency of accreditation.
- Sue suggested looking at other tiered systems in VA that could provide information on how this process would work.
- Laurie asked if subcommittee members would volunteer to take notes from today and pull out the themes to be discussed at the next meeting. Reminded members of the January webinars.
- Sue discussed the importance of looking at other accreditation systems around the nation and Europe and to identify the themes that may help the Committee.
- Chriss suggested utilizing experts on accreditation that could assist the subcommittee in making these decisions.
- Sarah discussed the issue of reporting data without interpretation, discussed that each stakeholder may desire different information, believed there was a need to leave some interpretation up to parents, renters, home-buyers, etc.

## **Closing Remarks**

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- Steve Staples provided closing remarks.
  - Steve thanked those who travelled and attended the meeting.
  - Discussed that there were two aspects of discussion: process and product. Process seem to be both encouraging and overwhelming, and emphasized that closure is not needed over next couple of months but instead to inform discussion for larger group and to help generate thoughts or topics. Product – must keep in mind the other bodies that are focusing on issues, and the need to work together to create change.

- Laurie closed by charging the members to think about what will serve the students best, and what will serve communities best.
- Lisa Jackson discussed logistical update. Explained the change in parking and the need to distribute parking permits going forward. An email will go out to further explain.

## **Next Meeting**

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- February 23, 2015, 10:00am – 1:00pm. Monroe Building, 22<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Jefferson Conference Room, 101 N. 14<sup>th</sup> St, Richmond, VA 23219

## **Adjournment**

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- **12:53pm** – Meeting was adjourned by Laurie McCullough.