

**Minutes  
Education Oversight Committee  
August 11-12, 2014  
Marriott Resort  
Hilton Head Island, SC**

**Monday August 11, 2014 at 1:00 p.m.**

Members Present: Phillip Bowers; Anne Bull; Sen. Mike Fair; Margaret-Anne Gaffney; Barbara Hairfield; Sen. Wes Hayes; Deb Marks; Alex Martin; Dr. Danny Merck; Rep. Joe Neal; Rep. Andy Patrick; Neil Robinson; Patti Tate; David Whittemore (Chair); and Dr. Mick Zais

EOC Staff Present: Dr. Kevin Andrews; Melanie Barton; Paulette Geiger; Lisa Nichols; Dana Yow

Other Legislative and Executive Staff Present: Sally Cauthen; Rachael Fulmer; Grant Gibson; Emily Heatwole; Pierce McNair

Mr. Whittemore called the meeting to order and welcomed the members to the annual summer retreat. He directed the members to the agenda and to the tentative 2014-15 meeting schedule for the EOC.

The Committee then approved the minutes of the June 9, 2014 meeting as distributed.

Mr. Bowers asked that the agenda be amended to include a discussion of the AP United States History courses at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 12, 2014. There being no objection, the agenda was amended.

Melanie Barton then provided an overview of the recent results of the 2014 administration of the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS) and the expanded responsibilities of the EOC pursuant to provisos in the 2014-15 General Appropriation Act and to legislation enacted in 2014.

The Committee then discussed several issues related to accountability.

**A. Update on Special Assessment Panel**

Dr. Merck, Vice Chairman of the EOC and the EOC's appointment to the special assessment panel created by Act 200 of 2014, addressed the members. Dr. Merck provided an update on the special assessment panel's work. The special assessment panel was created by Act 200 to provide advice to the Executive Director of the Budget and Control Board, who is ultimately responsible for procuring an assessment for grades 3 through 8 and 11 and grades 9 and 10 if funding is available, in the content areas of English language arts and mathematics. Dr. Merck noted that the panel approved the request for proposal as required by the law. He noted that the process should ensure that South Carolina procures an assessment that will provide relevance to students for their future college and career goals. Dr. Merck reported that an assessment should be selected by the end of September. He also reminded the EOC that all 11<sup>th</sup> graders beginning this school year would take a college and career readiness assessment and

WorkKeys. Dr. Merck described how his own district has enlisted the assistance of two business owners to help parents and teachers understand the importance of WorkKeys.

Mrs. Hairfield noted that the EOC has worked with other stakeholders and created a flyer to help explain the importance of the WorkKeys assessment to parents and students. Dr. Zais commented that the use of WorkKeys legitimizes the choice of careers over post-secondary education in South Carolina's culture. Mr. Martin encouraged members to take WorkKeys with Mrs. Tate concurring that educators should not give an assessment that they themselves are not willing to take. Ms. Hairfield also commented on the importance of Career Readiness 101 to assist students in preparing for WorkKeys.

## **B. Designing Accountability Systems of the Future**

Then Chairman Whittemore recognized Dr. Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director of the National Center for Innovation in Education at the University of Kentucky, former state school superintendent in Kentucky and Arkansas, and former head of the Council of Chief State School Officers. Dr. Wilhoit then presented an overview of assessment and accountability in the era of post-No Child Left Behind. Dr. Wilhoit explained that accountability helps define how well schools, districts and states are doing at educating children. In the current world economy, every student has to be on the path to career, further education and life in the interconnected world. There is an important need to get this broader message out to parents. What accountability should do is to diagnose, intervene and monitor student progress.

Developing an accountability system for college and career readiness requires states to develop a new paradigm:

1. Focus on meaningful learning, enabled by
2. Professionally skilled and committed educators, supported by
3. Adequate and appropriate resources.

Such a system should be comprehensive and reciprocal meaning each level of the system (state, local, and school) should be held accountable for the contributions it makes. Second, the system must build capacity by addressing the inputs, processes, and outcomes that produce learning. Finally, it should be focused on a wide range of measures including the skills and abilities that students need to be college and career ready. For example, Dr. Dave Conley's four keys to college and career readiness that includes the cognitive strategies for learning as well as soft skills that employers need.

States should define what a strong academic foundation means for students and the goal of the state accountability system. This step would include adopting rigorous standards and assessments. Then the state must set goals to measure and improve college, career and citizenship readiness. Then the state would use a balanced system of assessments and measurements. As Dr. Wilhoit explained, accountability is not just one summative assessment.

Mr. Martin explained the new individualized career learning that 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders at Greer High School are provided this school year.

States must be able to measure individual student growth over time so that children do not get behind. In addition to knowledge, students must also develop the skills and characteristics that will assist them in careers and college. Accountability systems have

to use multiple measures and evidence from a range of sources over time. The focus has to be on demonstrated learning.

An example – how do states measure a student's ability to cooperate? Some districts are using digital portfolios as a tool for self-reporting. Parents have access to the portfolio, which can be used, for college applications as well as for job applications.

What are the barriers? At the local level, districts must have rich summative and formative assessments that are used as tools to inform learning. The balance is finding reliability and validity and not using summative assessment results to make all decisions. This will require greater professional capacity for teachers and administrators to shift their focus toward learning rather than assessment.

Transparency is another key piece of accountability. Information to communities, parents, teachers, etc., must be provided in a timely fashion in order to develop public trust in the system.

The Inspector model may work the best. If teaching and learning are taking place, then greater autonomy and flexibility are given to the local school district. Where the results are not showing teaching and learning, then there needs to be intervention.

The members then engaged Dr. Wilhoit in further discussion.

### **C. Reviewing ELA and Math Standards**

Then Chairman Whittemore recognized Dr. Rainey Knight to describe the process used by the EOC in conducting the cyclical review of the English language arts and mathematics standards required by Act 200.

Dr. Knight provided an overview of the timeline that the EOC staff is working under to meet the requirements of Act 200. Sen. Hayes asked for clarification on how the state timeline conforms to the federal timeline

Mr. Bowers asked about the assessments created under Act 200.

### **D. Science Standards and H.B.5.1**

Then, Mr. Whittemore called upon Melanie Barton to provide information on the science standards review. Mrs. Barton explained that three members of the EOC (Anne Bull, Neil Robinson and Senator Mike Fair) and three members of the State Board of Education (Traci Young Cooper, Dr. Danny Varat and Dr. Rhonda Edwards) met and unanimously agreed upon language to recommend to their respective bodies. The language is consistent with the National Science Teachers policy statements on evolution and on the nature of science.

Mrs. Hairfield asked if science teachers weighed in on the draft language. Mrs. Barton responded that the language of the standard comes from the National Science Teachers Association but not directly from science teachers in South Carolina.

Sen. Fair reiterated his position that the language requires students to be able to make conclusions based on scientific evidence.

Mr. Robinson moved that the EOC approve H.B.5.1 as proposed by the special panel. Sen. Hayes seconded the motion. The EOC approved the motion with Mr. Bowers requesting that his vote of "no" be recorded and with Mrs. Hairfield asking that her abstention from the vote also be recorded.

Then Rep. Patrick moved that the EOC go into executive session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter. Mr. Robinson seconded the motion.

At 5:30 p.m. the veil having been lifted, Mr. Robinson moved that the EOC amend the contract with the Executive Director to increase her annual salary by two percent to reflect the two percent increase granted to state employees and that a special committee composed of Sen. Wes Hayes, Neil Robinson and Rep. Joe Neal be formed to determine if any laws dictate how the salary of the Executive Director is established. Rep. Neal seconded the motion. The members unanimously approved the motion.

Mr. Whittemore announced that EOC members and staff who are interested, would be meeting at 7:00 p.m. at Alexander's, which is across the street from the hotel.

**Tuesday, August 12, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.**

Members Present: Phillip Bowers; Anne Bull; Senator Sen. Mike Fair; Margaret-Anne Gaffney; Barbara Hairfield; Senator Sen. Wes Hayes; Deb Marks; Alex Martin; Dr. Danny Merck; Rep. Joe Neal; Rep. Andy Patrick; Neil Robinson; Patti Tate; David Whittemore (Chair); and Dr. Mick Zais

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With the agenda having been amended, the EOC began the meeting with information provided by Mr. Bowers about concerns with the AP United States History framework. The College Board, along with a Redesign Commission and a Curriculum Development and Assessment Committee, re-designed the framework to encourage students to use historical facts and evidence to create deeper conceptual understanding of critical developments in U.S. History. Students will be assessed using the re-designed framework beginning in 2015. Mrs. Barton answered questions about what South Carolina students in AP US history are required to take. She responded that South Carolina AP US History students must take the state end-of-course assessment and if the student wants to take the AP US History for possible college credit then the student takes the AP US History exam.

Mrs. Hairfield explained that the framework is not intended to include every historical person to be discussed in the classroom. Instead the framework is to encourage students not to commit to memory facts and dates but to understand the broader social, political, economic and cultural issues of United States history. After much discussion, Mr. Robinson called the question and moved that the issue be referred to the Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee for additional information. Rep. Patrick seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The EOC then began a discussion on early readiness.

#### **A. Beaufort County School District**

Mr. Whittemore recognized Rep. Patrick to introduce the first speaker. Rep. Patrick expressed his great pleasure that the EOC had asked that Dr. Jeffrey Moss, Superintendent of the Beaufort County School District, address the Committee and explain the district's local decision to expand quality early childhood options for its most at-risk four-year-olds.

Dr. Moss then described that the district has four goals, one of which is that all children are at grade level in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in all subject areas. To accomplish this goal, the district will phase-in additional early childhood education programs. First, this year, the district will convert all half-day 4K programs into full day. Then next year, phase 2, the district will add 7 additional classrooms so that 883 children of the eligible 1700 will have an opportunity to attend. The third phase is to fund an additional 17 classrooms so that 82 percent of the 1700 eligible students, based on DIAL 4 screenings, are served. Finally, Phase 4 will involve partnering with private providers to provide quality professional development so that both public and private providers are committed to having quality standards. The total cost of the four-year initiative is \$6.7 million with local funds. School district officials are comparing cohort data to determine the impact of the program.

Sen. Fair asked Dr. Moss how readiness was being defined in Beaufort. Dr. Moss said that as of now, the district is using the DIAL4 screening tool to determine eligibility.

#### **B. Overview of Early Readiness Assessments**

The chairman recognized Joe Waters, Vice President for the Institute for Child Success and Katy Sides, Director of Research and Grants for the Institute for Child Success (ICS) to update the EOC on research and efforts to improve early readiness of children. Mr. Waters provided the EOC with an overview of the activities and initiatives of ICS including:

1. Defining school readiness with experts, higher education, pediatricians, etc. and emphasizing the importance of family engagement and empowering parents and caregivers. The definition was used in the reauthorization of the Office of First Steps.
2. Accountability in early learning – ICS has promoted effective programs like Reach Out and Read and Nurse Family Partnerships
3. Working with officials from the state of Maryland on determining quality readiness assessments and learning more about the Maryland Model for School Readiness.

Ms. Sides discussed the upcoming work of ICS in September on defining the domains and evidence of the domains in early readiness. The EOC staff is participating in this endeavor.

#### **C. Folk Legends and Facts: Using data to Vanquish Myths about Education in South Carolina**

Dr. Zais then provided a PowerPoint presentation that used data from state and national sources to dispel several myths including the following: (1) Every student should complete a college-prep study; (2) South Carolina needs more individuals with

baccalaureate degrees; (3) a four-year degree is a ticket to the middle class; (4) teachers with masters and doctorate degrees are more effective; (5) high poverty districts and schools are failing; and (6) high poverty districts are least funded.

Rep. Neal asked why the state hasn't put more emphasis on teacher salary increases. Dr. Zais responded that we needed to have a teacher evaluation system in place first that measured the annual growth of children.

There being no further business, the meeting and retreat ended.