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◆ MINUTES ◆

3rd Meeting for Phase II

November 8, 2011

Londergan Hall ◆ Room 15

The meeting opened at approximately 4:15 with Commissioner Barry asking Joe Miller, Director of the Division of Instruction, to introduce both himself (!) and our guest, Karla Baehr, Deputy Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Joe had heard Karla speak about the Massachusetts teacher effectiveness plan at a national forum in Washington, DC, and thought that her message would be helpful to this group.

The New Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Regulations

Karla Brooks Baehr, ESE

Karla brought handouts of her PowerPoint presentation (hopefully everyone got one, if not, we emailed out very similar PowerPoint files the day after the meeting). She gave an hour-plus talk about the work done in Massachusetts, the difficulties they encountered, the rich conversations, the hard work and the outcome, which will be piloted in some urban schools and a few other communities. She went into the details of rubrics, levels of performance, standards, indicators, elements and descriptors, and how all of these work to create both summative and formative performance ratings. These two are put together to come up with the final rating. They are using phased implementation, starting in January 2012, with the plan being that there is flexibility enough to tweak things that are not working before all districts must use it, in September 2013.

Karla took questions during her presentation, and there were many thoughtful questions for her from the many different points of view of the stakeholders in the room. It was interesting how the questions varied according to where the person "comes from." After about an hour and a quarter,

Scott thanked Karla for coming, and thanked everyone for their questions. Karla agreed to stay during the break in case anyone had further questions.

Break

Commissioner Barry

SIG Pilot – of teacher evaluation system. SIG schools *need* to have an evaluation program by virtue of the federal money they have gotten. They are using the Charlotte Davidson model and are going through training this year. They have gotten a waiver so that they can implement the model next year. Their model needs to be tied to the Accountability system. This is a great opportunity for research into how the Davidson method will work for the state.

Other pilot – Other schools (non-SIG) will also start to pilot our model. By 2015 everyone in the state will have developed a model. The department is a conduit so that SIG schools and the other schools know what we are working on, and can utilize our work.

Blueprint – The “house” model – re-explained. The NH process is very different from others, because of the state determination to have local control. So we need to provide a framework for schools to work from. We are trying to work simultaneously on the four pillars – but don’t worry – the task force doesn’t do every piece. Teacher Preparation is being handled by the schools that provide teacher prep and the IHE network. Induction with Mentoring is handled by the individual schools with support from the department and those schools who already have a successful program. Professional Development is also something that has to be done at the school or district level, with support from the department. The current task force piece is Teacher Evaluation.

There are people on the task force who reach out to the other areas and “keep the balls in the air” and make sure that the decisions made by the task force are heard. We want a “collaborative culture” within the state – teachers, principals, superintendents, school boards, other leaders, IHEs, etc., working together towards a common goal.



“Debriefing”

Scott explained how we can go to his company’s web site to get links to other state departments of education. Go to: <http://www.nciea.org/resources-state.php>

Scott then went on to talk about what we hope to do in our next meetings. We have been talking about a system made up of multiple parts (like MA and other states), but OUR system doesn’t have to be like any other system already devised. We have the leeway to shape it as we think best. We have the advantage of being a non-RTTT state in that we have no federal expectations to comply with (although with the disadvantage of no dollars). At the December meeting we will visit our timeline with the above in mind. (We will be setting a schedule for meetings from January to May, 2012, which will be sent out next week.) In December we want to identify the ideal system that we would like to design (as some groups started to do at the last meeting). We should keep in mind what other states have done. In Scott’s opinion the MA system errs on the side of improvement rather than on the side of compliance and regulation – generally a good thing. Other states have a system that is regimented, with little flexibility. We should start thinking about and comparing some other systems (as we can find on his web site, address above).

No, let’s hear what you saw as the opportunities in the MA plan: (the following was compiled by Carol Keirstead – with additional pieces added by me in italics)

Opportunities:

- Identifying excellent teachers (*rather than simply adequate*).
- Brilliant solutions to the state mandate versus district determination:
 - State rubric as model;
 - *State standards but local descriptors*;
 - Require recognition but not how.
- Student growth was not the sole determinant.
- The whole mystery piece – you need time to explore them.
- Balance of inputs, growth of the educator, outputs looking at student achievement.
- Tying individual goals to team goals.
- Cycle of evaluation – teachers as active assessors.
- Slide 16 – Can this be done? Eight ingredients that can support the efficient and effective implementation of the plan. I also see these as promoting teacher growth.
- Like the top to bottom from superintendents, to administrators, principals, teachers – all working to benefit students.
- Exploring how teams work, how educators work together. People with needs can partner with expertise.
- Elements of differentiation *between new and seasoned teachers*.
- Balance of types of evidence.
- Paid attention to unintended consequences *especially for the group of educators who might fear this type of system*.
- Piloting in urban districts - not trying it in the easy places.
- The appearance of uniformity may engender *public* support.
- Focus on *both* student and educator growth.
- Goal setting – having instructional and learning components as a framework for continuous improvement.
- Trends and patterns in student growth measures. *Adds to the fairness of the system*.

Scott - There are several advantages to not being first out of the gate – and what we have just seen is one of them. Now on to the challenges:

Challenges:

- Calibration – within a school and district calibration of evaluation.
- Clear mandate re RTTT – not as clear for NH as to why we are doing this.
- Commissioner response – agreement that overall NH does well. *But*, we are in danger of losing our workforce, the need of a system that prepares students for 21st century learning. *We need to attract business to our state. Pivotal issue for every school district. Need to ensure that the public education system is not just adequate. We are losing public confidence. Doing pretty good is not good enough anymore. Why not have a system that*

supports high quality teaching? *This is an opportunity for the profession to bring itself to a higher level.*

- Tenet – the teacher identifying the goals that they want, but ultimately in the hands of the evaluator. *What you have is insistence on a goal that the teacher may not have as a personal goal.*
- Value added measures – every child’s homelife, for example, is a variable we cannot control – how do you account for that?
- How to effectively address discrepancy in judgment when student achievement is good? *How do you argue with success?*
- Scott Marion – we can work around these complexities and don’t have to fall into traps. EG, aggregating data, using multiple years of growth, team data, etc.
- *There are* things that staff need to learn as staff – and then there is individual development.
- Goal setting meetings enable people to learn from multiple data perspectives *and observations.*
- Principal – struck by asterisked statement on administrator side – Instructional Leadership. For a long time, we were seen as managers. *We manage the building, but we lead people, we don’t manage people. We need training on growth plans, etc. “Instructional leaders” are valued and trusted more by their staff.*
- Is there leverage to be gained – asking people to reach for excellence so that they can help others to grow, *i.e., being an expert in some specific area, being a resource.* We could build that in – something that supports and learns from excellence. *Scott – Interesting – it seems like we have gotten back to OPPORTUNITIES.*
- Faculty are getting nervous about this – can teachers be open in the same way (*regarding their weaknesses*) given implications? How to keep the trust going?
- Standards and indicators of effective teaching practice. This is the complexity of teaching laid bare here. How this is bite-sized or right-sized for the purposes of learning and evaluation.
- Scott Marion – “Can’t let the perfect become the enemy of the good.”
- PD Master Plan – districts setting goals. Where do these goals come from? I can see cases where the decision will be made “everyone will adopt this goal *this year (because we didn’t make our goal).*”

In the interest of respecting people’s time, the meeting was brought to an end at about 6:35.

Commissioner Barry thanked everyone for coming and gave a “pep talk” about how important the work is and how important it is to get the message out. As Commissioner she can’t say that something “must be done,” she can only make suggestions and facilitate... you help in that mission.

She also explained what the SCEE team is... the State Coalition for Education Effectiveness (part of CCSSO) – a national networking system – a conduit to let the rest of the country know what NH is doing. Also a venue to let us know what is going on nationally. They get access to national research for us. The members are part of the Phase II group, and they are: Karen Soule, Janet Valeri, Randy Bell, Ashley Frame, Emma Rous, Kathy Dunne, Irv Richardson, Deb Connell, Judy Fillion, and Commissioner Barry.

*Submitted by Cindy Rosborough
November 10, 2010*