

**Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership  
August 25, 2011 (9:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.)  
Conference Center A, Room 14  
Minnesota Department of Education**

**Meeting Notes**

**Members/Designees Present:**

Bill Blazer, Paul Cerkvenik, Bob DeBour, Jennifer Godinez, Robert Jones, Rep. Deb Kiel, Joann Knuth, Charlie Kyte, Scott McMahon, Robert Meeks, Leslie Mercer, Jo Olsen, Sen. Gen Olson, Katy Perry, Chancellor Steven Rosenstone, Sen. Chuck Wiger, Sheila Wright, and Jeanne Herrmann

**Others present:**

Beth Aune, William DeJohn, Jennifer Dugan, Angie Johnson, Geoff Maruyama, Kent Pekel, Lois Pollman, Nancy Walton, and Cliff Wittstruck

**Guests:** Julie Sweitzer, Rose Hermodson, and John Olson

**Chair:** Dr. Brenda Cassellius, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Education

**1. Introductions of new members and approval of minutes (May 5, 2011)**

New members were introduced, and the Minutes from May 5, 2011 were approved. The chairmanship transfers to Chancellor Rosenstone, who will chair the next meeting.

**2. Workgroup meeting updates from co-chairs**

**Workgroup #1: College and Career Readiness Communications Campaign**

Julie Sweitzer, presenting on the behalf of Co-chair John Manning, reported that the group has been actively working this summer, addressing the following areas:

- reviewing research tied to targeting and strategy development,
- setting out a framework for planning in terms of focus areas and audiences, and
- identifying key content areas for the final plan.

A lack of clarity in Minnesota exists about *how* students become college-career ready; no consistent and clear information is shared broadly on this topic.

Significant challenges are created by a lack of common understanding of *why* it is critical for more students to become college-career ready; this means there is a need for a shift in culture if Minnesota is to successfully encourage more students to become college and career ready. The workgroup is using the definition of readiness from the *Road Map to College and Career Readiness for Minnesota Students* document.

A variety of partners within and outside the P-20 structure have expressed interest in collaborating to improve communications around college and career readiness. How the action would be sustained and what resources will be needed are critical issues.

The P-20 partners and other allies will be asked to address a core set of proposals through their own individual efforts.

The workgroup will be focusing upon final recommendations, including specific strategies, messages, media outreach plans and suggestions for funding possibilities.

### **Workgroup #2: STEM Achievement Gap Strategic Plan**

Co-chair John Olson reported that in May the workgroup began subcommittee work toward the final report, targeting strategies for K-8 with recommendations for statewide focus. The subcommittees are as follows:

- 1) Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Support,
- 2) Leadership and Beliefs,
- 3) Teacher Skills, and
- 4) Cultural Aspects.

Subcommittees are meeting separately to review research and develop recommendations.

In June the workgroup convened a panel discussion on “beating the odds” approaches. The panel included representation from the University of Minnesota (STRIVE approach), the Hmong community, an elementary principal and two out-state superintendents, who addressed strategies (and struggles) as they work to raise achievement in STEM, especially for students that might typically be left behind. The next meeting is September 8, 2011.

A public event to release and discuss the findings is being considered. SciMathMN may be able to host such an event.

#### Discussion:

Concerns were expressed about inquiry science in elementary being fun but not rooted in core understanding. This “activity mania” is one of the aspects that the workgroup will address.

Members also expressed concerns about certain struggling populations who are ignored when teachers just move on, learning progression, lack of science in elementary, scaling up our work in Minnesota, bringing science and literacy together, working with thought processes, and using standards-based education, which has scaffolding. SciMath MN and MDE have created Frameworks for the Minnesota Mathematics and Science Standards, which help with scaffolding. The website can be accessed at <http://www.scimathmn.org/stemtc>.

### **Workgroup #3: Rigorous Course Taking Strategic Plan**

Beth Aune reported that Co-chairs Sally Wherry, MDE Supervisor of High School Initiatives, and Laura Bloomberg, Executive Director of the Center for Integrative Leadership at the University of Minnesota, were unable to attend the meeting today.

The draft of the work to date is provided in members' packets and includes information about communicating the importance of rigorous course taking, creating viable pathways for students, and ensuring adequate resources in schools to support rigorous course taking for all students. The current barriers, recommendations for policies and practices, and spotlights on promising practices are listed. The workgroup's next meeting will be held in September.

### **Workgroup #4: Postsecondary Completion Strategic Plan**

Beth Aune informed the group that co-chairs Valerie Pace and Dr. Leslie Mercer have reported that the work of Workgroup #4: Postsecondary Completion Strategic Plan is completed. In light of the State's recent membership in Complete College America (CCA), which has a similar goal, the workgroup has transitioned the charge of this group to the new advisory committee that is required to participate in CCA. The advice and feedback received from Workgroup #4 will provide important foundational background for the CCA Advisory Committee. Some of the members of Workgroup #4 will be named to the new CCA committee to assure continuity.

#### Discussion:

Members requested information about Complete College America. Complete College America is a national nonprofit that aims to boost the nation's college completion rate. States involved agree to set degree goals (such as 60-70%). One concern was whether the advisory committee will also address graduate degrees. Chancellor Rosenstone will reach out to each member and find out if all of the pieces are coming together, what the key projects should be as we move forward, and where do we want to be in a year.

### **3. Summary of K-12 Omnibus Education Bill**

Rose Hermodson, Assistant Commissioner, MDE, provided a PowerPoint presentation about the details of the K-12 Omnibus Education Bill. Items included the following:

- **Reading by Grade 3**

#### Discussion:

Many reading efforts are underway. AmeriCorps training seems to be targeted, explicit and accountable, and more members will be available this year. Reading coaches are in place in over 400 schools. Turnaround schools are working with the Reading Specialist at MDE. MDE applied for the Striving Readers Grant and should hear in September if the grant was received. Schools must report on their Websites and inform parents. Locally developed assessments for K-2 will be reported to MDE. Reading Corps data will be uploaded to the MDE Website.

- **Teacher & Principal Evaluation**

- Discussion:

- Members wondered how staff such as counselors and social workers will demonstrate the student growth requirement, which is to be 35% of the basis for the teacher evaluation. Districts need to bring issues to MDE.

- **Task Forces**

- **-Integration Funding**

- Discussion:

- Funding is repealed as of 2014. A task force will be formed to consider how to allocate funds. If one wants to serve on this task force, the information is posted on the Minnesota Secretary of State Website. Task forces should ask for help from the research community.

- **-Tiered Licensure**

- **Hours of Instruction**

- Discussion:

- Grades 1-6 and 7-12 require different minimum hours so K-8 schools will have questions.

- **Prone Restraint**

- **World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) for ELL Standards**

- **Home School Changes**

- Discussion:

- Home school parents and home districts need to work together to ensure records exist if students want to enter public high schools. Local districts must make sure the homeschooled student entering high school meets the graduation requirements. Assessment to determine appropriate placement is important.

- **Other provisions**

- **-Standards**

- **-Charter Schools**

- **-Athletic Coaches**

- **-Non-public**

- **-School Board Meetings**

Commissioner Hermodson reminded members that Chapter 5, Alternative Teacher Licensure passed earlier in the session and may begin with the 2011-2012 school year.

Highlights of the 2011 Education Finance Legislation included the following:

- Significant increases in K-12 Education Revenues
- Significant mandate relief
- More predictable cash flow
- Slower cash flow as a result of the 60-40 payment shift
- Outlook for FY 14 – FY 15 budget is uncertain
  - Use of one-time money to balance FY 2012 - FY 2013 budget leaves \$1.9 billion shortfall in FY 2014-15
  - Integration funding repealed after FY 2013; replacement revenue is undefined

Discussion:

-Early Graduation money goes directly to the student to use for anything related to higher education and includes out-of-state institutions. Students going into the military will also be eligible. Some issues have arisen such as what to do if students wait to go into higher education for ten years, how to track if the money is used for higher education, if this will make students ineligible for PELL grants and financial aid, how much this will cost, and how it will hurt districts financially since previously, if students graduated early, schools could use the state aid money. Higher education and school representatives will need to discuss these possible issues further.

-Literacy Incentive Aid doesn't have to be used for reading programs, but schools will be encouraged to use it for reading. Communications about literacy should include cultural groups and involve ethnic media sources. One of the Governor's 7 Point Plan initiatives is reading well by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, and information will be provided at the State Fair. Districts are required to provide information to parents, considering more than one type of communication.

More detailed summaries and spreadsheets are available on the MDE Website.

**4. Minnesota Race to the Top application and Early Learning**

Commissioner Cassellius reported that the application for Race to the Top was released August 24. Efforts have been underway in expectation of the application. Governor Dayton has appointed the Early Learning Council, which will be chaired by Barb Yates, to work on the application. Commissioner of Education Brenda Cassellius, Commissioner of Health Ed Ehlinger and Commissioner of Human Services Lucinda Jesson will lead the Children's Cabinet, addressing the application as the first item. United Way is also assisting with the application. Many of the requirements such as addressing quality and early learning scholarships are in statute.

Minnesota has applied for a state-wide temporary waiver from two provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act, the AYP targets and the NCLB financial sanctions. Minnesota will continue to test students every year, release data, and work with schools in stages of corrective action. Notification of the waiver should occur in September. To be granted a waiver, states will not be required to adopt the Common Core State Standards. The waiver may ask higher education to sign off that the state K-12 academic standards are high. Minnesota has the necessary teacher and principal evaluations, college and career standards, and charter school legislation.

**Note:** The next meeting date will be determined by Chancellor Rosenstone.