

MINNESOTA P-16 EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP ROUNDTABLE

January 28, 2009

Coffman Union, University of Minnesota

1-3:00 PM

Minutes

Meeting Participants: Robert Bruininks, Paula Martin, Fred Storti, Maureen Prenn, Jane Gilles, Mary Lou Dresbach, Geoff Maruyama, Sean Lewis, Lois Bollman, Jim Meffert, Tom Dooher, Sean Kershaw, Bill Blazar, Jim Bartholomew, Jim McCormick, Jim Field, Laura Bloomberg, Beth Aune, Alice Seagren, Karen Klinzing, Susan Heegard, Mark Mitzukanis, Jennifer Godinez, Karen Klinzing, Cyndy Crist and Kent Pekel

P-16 Partnership Chair Robert Bruininks convened the meeting at 1:10 PM and guided the meeting through the following agenda:

1. Presentation: A National Perspective on Standards and Alignment

Mr. Mike Cohen, President of ACHIEVE, Inc., described the organization's work across the country to make college and career readiness the mission of K-12 education in general and high schools in particular. He shared that Achieve was founded in 1996 by governors and businesses, and that Governor Pawlenty is the current chair of Achieve's board. Through the American Diploma Project, Achieve is working with 34 states, including Minnesota, to develop consistent high standards for K-12 education. Their research has identified a common core of knowledge and skills that are needed for success in postsecondary education and the workplace. Currently there often is a gap between those standards and the requirements for earning a high school diploma. In part, this gap is due to the fact that historically the United States has expected only a relatively small percentage of its students to go on to postsecondary education. Achieve has recently launched a new Career and College Policy Institute that will provide intensive support to eight states as they work to design systems that prepare all students for postsecondary success. Mr. Cohen emphasized that postsecondary institutions must be at the table along with K-12 schools and systems as new standards are developed. He also discussed graduation testing, and said that the trend across the nation is in the direction of end of course exams, rather than more comprehensive graduation tests that measure student performance against a broader array of standards.

Mr. Cohen said in response to a question that Achieve's work to date has not focused on enhancing the knowledge and skills of adults, but that one of its partners, Jobs for the Future, does. He also noted that the California State University system exempts students from placement exams if they score high enough on the state grad tests. They use a very high cut off standards, and it has been somewhat easier to align the two assessments because both are prepared under contract by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). Mr. Cohen noted that the nation is moving toward common voluntary state standards, which are very different from national standards developed by the federal government. He noted that Achieve has not conducted research on the instructional methods and types of schools that are most successful in helping students meet high standards. He concluded by noting that for Achieve, the goal of an accountability system is to generate knowledge and insight that can be acted upon, not just to produce a hammer with which to punish schools. A copy of Mr. Cohen's PowerPoint presentation is available on the Minnesota P-16 Partnership Web site at www.mnp16.org.

2. Report of the Science Readiness Working Group

Dr. Janet Dubinsky, U of M Professor of Neuroscience, and Dr. Beth Aune, from the Minnesota Department of Education, reported on the Science Readiness Working Group they had co-chaired. Their charge was to help strengthen and enhance Minnesota's science standards. They formed working groups focused on four broad areas of science, developed consensus as a large group, and sent nine recommendations to MDE's Science Standards revision committee, which was working concurrently. There are two themes in their recommendations: 1. Science content and process are inseparable. 2. Less is more – science instruction needs to focus on the 'big ideas', and make the connections between and among strands. MDE's draft science standards incorporate many of the recommendations, although the final version has not yet been released, and the real test is how they are implemented.

There are four recommendations which support MDE's standards and are aimed at the P-16 Partnership. They are:

- i. Minnesota should structure the substance of reporting out of assessments results in a way to inform instruction. Specifically this means breaking out results at the substrand level.
- ii. The working group urges business and postsecondary institutions to develop explicit sets of competencies needed for success in first-year college courses or high-skill employment.
- iii. Minnesota should offer high quality professional development that helps teachers implement the state's K-12 academic standards in science. Two important goals for such professional development programs should be to help teachers integrate the process of inquiry and the academic content standards, and to help them implement the state's new engineering standards
- iv. Minnesota should develop a curriculum framework. The standards do not show how to translate the standards to the classroom, or how to incorporate process skills into the science content standards. The P-16 Partnership could obtain funding to support the development, much as SciMathMN did in 1995.

During questions, Commissioner Seagren suggested working with SciMathMN, talking to foundations, the MN High Tech Association, and developing a framework for math, too. Massachusetts has developed excellent frameworks which could serve as a model. President Bruininks asked Kent Pekel to take the next steps to explore developing frameworks. President Bruininks congratulated the Science Readiness Working Group for their good work, suggested P16 bring the leaders of all of the working groups together, and quoted E. F. Schumacher: "The policy is in the implementation." The Science Readiness Working Group's full report is available on the P-16 Partnership's Web site at www.mnp16.org.

3. A Framework for Thinking About Teacher Effectiveness

On behalf of the Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Maureen Prens of Minnesota State University Mankato, and Jane Gillis of the University of Minnesota presented a draft framework for thinking about and strengthening teacher effectiveness. They noted that the effectiveness of the classroom teacher is the single most influential factor within the school environment in promoting student learning. They identified four critical factors in the teacher effectiveness continuum: preparation, induction, professional development, and school leadership. A copy of their PowerPoint presentation is available on the Minnesota P-16 Partnership Web site at www.mnp16.org. President Bruininks asked Drs.

Prenn and Gillis to develop proposals for initiatives that the P-16 Partnership could pursue to strengthen teacher effectiveness along this continuum. They will work with Kent Pekel to prepare a presentation for the Partnership's April meeting.

4. Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Education Update

Bill Blazar shared the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce's legislative priorities. Concern about the future workforce remains a major concern for Minnesota businesses and has led the Chamber to increase its efforts to proactively propose strategies for improving educational outcomes. The Chamber's two primary education goals are to (1) raise overall student achievement so that Minnesota's workers are competitive in the world economy and (2) to close the achievement gap among student groups. Major strategies that the Chamber recommends Minnesota pursue to reach these goals include improving teacher quality, maintaining high expectations for *all* students, and restructuring the school day and year for students failing to meet state standards. Bill will provide a longer overview of the Chamber's education proposals at the P-16 Partnership's April meeting. In response to a question from President Bruininks, Jim Bartholomew said that the Minnesota Business Partnership's legislative proposals will have some overlap and consistency with the Chamber's proposals. Bill Blazar suggested that Peter Hutchinson, President of the Bush Foundation, attend a P-16 meeting regarding his work on teacher quality, and President Bruininks suggested the June meeting for that discussion.

5. Update on University of Minnesota Admissions Expectations in Math

President Bruininks reported back to the Partnership on an issue he initially raised during an earlier meeting of the Partnership in 2008. He informed the Partnership that after nearly a year of studying student performance at the University of Minnesota, reviewing national research and reaching out to K-12 school and district leaders, he has decided to recommend to the University faculty that the all colleges on the Twin Cities campus give an admissions preference to students who take four years of math in high school. He stressed that a student who take only three years of math (which is the requirement for earning a high school diploma in Minnesota) will still be able to gain admission to the University, but that he or she will be at a disadvantage when competing with a student who has an equally competitive application in other areas but has taken four years of mathematics. President Bruininks reported that if the faculty approves his recommendation to raise admissions expectations in mathematics, University staff will work with other members of the P-16 Partnership and leaders in the Minnesota mathematics community to provide schools and districts with guidance on effective ways to help students meet this new requirement.

President Bruininks also congratulated Minnesota Office of Higher Education Director Susan Heegaard on her new position as director of education initiatives with Bush Foundation and thanked her for extraordinary leadership on behalf of Minnesota's students and institutions of higher education.

President Bruininks also noted that due to very heavy schedules, the P-16 Partnership meetings in April and June may be extended by ½ hour each.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:15 PM.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

P-16 Executive Team conference call February 25, 1-2:00, dial 612-625-2003 and ask for the P-16 call

P-16 Roundtable Meeting: April 9, 1-3:00 PM, Minnesota Department of Education, Conference Center B-Rm 15

Agenda items:

- College and Workforce Readiness Working Group Report: Laura Bloomberg, Cyndy Crist and Karen Klinzing, co-chairs
- Science Instruction Working Group Report: Liesl Chatman, Steve Kelley and Judith Ramaley, co-chairs
- A Call to Action: Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Plan for Education: Bill Blazar
- Minnesota Business Partnership/Itasca Project World Class Schools Project Update: Jim Bartholomew
- Potential P-16 Partnership Initiatives to Enhance Teacher Effectiveness: MACTE

P-16 Roundtable Meeting: June 3, 1-3:00 PM, Coffman Union, Mississippi Room, University of Minnesota