

P-20 COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

Buena Vista Conference Center

November 17, 2009

- Dr. Teri Quinn Gray, President of the State Board of Education and co-chair of the Council, welcomed council members. Meeting highlights from the August meeting were approved. Dr. Gray expressed Secretary Lowery's regrets for not being able to attend at the last minute. She was required to attend a stakeholder meeting with the Governor regarding proposed regulations.
- Mr. Paul Harrell, Director of Public/Private Partnerships at the Department of Education, represented Dr. Lowery and provided an overview of the DOE Strategic Plan. The plan was developed over the course of the summer with input from a wide group of people and organizations and is currently in the Governor's office. The plan focuses on five areas and will be used as the model for Delaware's Race to the Top (RTTT) application. Based upon student enrollment figures, Delaware is eligible to apply for \$25M-\$75M through the RTTT application.
 1. Improving Student Readiness: Delaware needs to set high standards for what we want our children to learn. Those standards need to be benchmarked against both national and international standards to ensure that our children are prepared to compete in the world economy. Delaware also needs to measure effectively what our children have learned and use that information to ensure they are getting the best instruction possible. Delaware has joined 48 states in the Common Core Standards effort and Governor Markell is co-chairing this effort. An initial comparison of Delaware's Standards to the Common Core revealed that we are in close alignment with the Common Core and in some cases have higher standards than those in the Common Core. Participating states must adopt 85% of the Common Core by June 2010.
 2. Ensuring Teacher and Leader Quality: Great teachers are the foundation of student success. Great teachers are led by great administrators. Delaware will improve the way it prepares, hires, and supports teachers and administrators. Delaware must also evaluate how the best educators in our schools developed those skills, and apply those lessons to developing teachers of the future. We will also better compensate educators in the most challenging schools who have proven to be effective, and pursue funding capabilities to make that happen. We will continue to explore alternative routes to certification, such as Teach for America, for both teachers and administrators.
 3. Effective Use of Longitudinal Data Systems (LDS): Delaware will use the data we collect about students throughout their education careers to support decision-making in the classroom and to determine what teaching methods, teachers and schools are effectively educating students. Delaware is one of eight states that have met all of the elements outlined by the Data Quality Campaign for an effective LDS and is at the top of the class in this area. Delaware must focus more on data use, but the existing system positions us well for the RTTT competition.

4. **Turning Around Persistently Low-Performing Schools:** We need to have the ability to take action on failing schools. This has been going on for much too long. 19 schools have not made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for five years or more. Delaware must do more to target those schools needing assistance so that all of Delaware's children receive the opportunity to succeed.
5. **Consolidation of Services:** Studies will be conducted to determine what services can be consolidated for efficiency and cost savings across the state for both the DOE and districts.

Council members provided the following feedback for the Secretary and the Governor's Office:

- Understanding that Delaware must meet some assurances in order to apply for RTTT, concern was expressed regarding the use of an MOU in the place of Legislation. What force of law does an MOU bear? What action can be taken in the case of non-compliance with an MOU?
- A caution was shared that while we need to provide incentives to attract highly effective teachers to our schools, one must be careful to ensure that an incentive put in place for one not become a disincentive for others.
- There was agreement that our students cannot wait and that we must tie accountability to student growth, our RTTT application must have something about early childhood in the application. The same holds true for the DOE strategic plan. The LDS Grant is due December 4th...Delaware must ensure that we develop a plan to incorporate more data in the area of early childhood into the existing data system.
- Careful thought and consideration must be given in placing/assigning new teachers. It has been common practice in schools across the nation to place the youngest, least experienced teachers in the least desirable classrooms with students who are most difficult to teach. In difficult financial times, it is important not to cut supports such as mentoring that provide scaffolding for teachers to develop skills over time in the workplace. We should reestablish supports cut for fiscal reasons and look to additional supports such as professional development schools and early school placements in pre-service programs.

Committee Reports

DECAN Subcommittee Report

Dr. Joseph Pika, Co-chair of the DECAN subcommittee, provided a summary of the committee's work to date. The committee that been in place for approximately 22 months is currently treading water. The committee was established as an outgrowth of the work done by Achieve, Inc. examining what all students must accomplish to be successful in college or in the workforce. Achieve contends that the requirements for college and the workplace are not different. The work of this committee also ties nicely with President Obama's priorities of having every US student complete at least one year of college and to have the US regain its number one status/position in the world in terms of the percentage of the population that has completed

college. DECAN embraces these two goals and suggests that the state should also embrace them. In order to have a better workforce and economy, Delaware should adopt the goal of leading the nation in the percentage of students who have completed college.

The Higher Education Subcommittee of the DECAN Subcommittee has been working on a report that addresses questions related to college readiness and what that means. They have identified programs in the various participating institutions that are in place to help students complete degrees and have made recommendations regarding strategies that can be implemented to advance more students. The final report will be presented to the full Council and will address preparation of students from middle school to high school and high school to college more systematically. They will highlight the kinds of programs that help prepare students on their journey to college.

DECAN is working on two projects:

1. Pilot: DECAN has proposed a pilot to work with three school districts in the state to establish an advising program for students and parents in middle school and into high school. The plan is to partner educators with community-based organizations to create a network of people focus on the common goal of college access and completion. Dr. Lowery has approved the pilot. The hope is to develop effective programming that could be replicated throughout the state.
2. State-wide Conference: DECAN is working with the Regional Education Lab Mid-Atlantic (REL-MA), the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center (MACC) and the Mid-Atlantic Equity Center (MAEC) to plan and deliver a one-day statewide conference that will bring together guidance counselor led district team with staff from the institutions of higher education. The district teams will consist of a counselor, a middle school teacher, a high school teacher and an administrator (district or school). The higher education staff will be those involved with admissions and financial aid. The conference is to occur late spring or early summer and will be held on the campus of Delaware State University. Funds from the College Access Challenge Grant will support the conference. The REL-MA, MACC and MAEC will provide their services and speakers free of charge.

DECAN committee members believe the subcommittee can play an important role in facilitating conversations with the institutions of higher education if Delaware chooses to adopt the Common Core Standards. The adoption of the Common Core will likely have an impact on college admissions and teacher preparation programs.

Data Subcommittee Report

Alan Phillips, Data Analyst with the Delaware Higher Education Commission and Chair of the Data Subcommittee, summarized the prominent role of data systems in DOE's pursuit of competitive ARRA funds via Race to the Top and State Longitudinal Data Systems. He discussed the additional interagency connections the U.S. DOE was expecting states to make and the role of data governance in driving them. The P-20 Data Cube is in many ways a model for a larger-scale enterprise and interagency education longitudinal data system and the P-20 Data Committee a small-scale model for data governance. The higher education institutions and

possibly committee members may also have oversight and consultative roles in the State Education Longitudinal Data System as it comes to fruition and develops.

Mr. Phillips distributed a Data Standardization Handout prepared by Tommy Tao, Education Associate in the Technology Management and Design Workgroup at DOE, so the group could review the feedback. No institution expressed any problems with the standardization measures, but there was consensus that data providers be contacted as soon as possible if any inconsistencies are noticed in the data files submitted. Representatives from the higher education institutions stated they are glad to re-run to specifications. Alan will work more closely with Tommy during the data submissions. Data providers stated they are having difficulties logging on the state VPN/FTP sites and identifying someone that can help them resolve issues. Alan Phillips will work with Paul Pond at TMD on making this a smoother process for the next submission.

Mr. Phillips distributed the Longitudinal Data System MOU, explained that it needed to be rewritten into a new format based upon feedback from DOE's legal counsel. The new format included sections that did not exist in the previous version and did not have sections that would accommodate some of the information in the original. The additional information was move into the appendix so as not to be lost. He also shared the tight review timeline within which he would be asking the schools to review the MOU due to RTTT and State Longitudinal Data Systems (LDS) applications. The representatives from the higher education institutions wanted to have a stronger data governance section with more detail. Alan shared that the specificity they were looking for was in development and was being included in the State LDS application. It would be easy for him to copy and paste that detail into the MOU. Another concern involved the approval of human subjects committee review of the use of data. The higher education representatives will confer with their respective institutional research boards (IRBs) and get back to Alan with any concerns.

Dr. Gray proposed a timeline for review and comments regarding the MOU. No one raised any issues with the timeline and agreed to provide Alan with feedback according to the following schedule:

- November 18th- Alan will send an email to all by tomorrow outlining this schedule
- December 8th- any needs or concerns regarding the MOU emailed to Alan from the higher education institutions
- December 15th- follow-up call to address needs & concerns
- January 4th- 8th- obtain necessary signatures

Due to time constraints, the remainder of the agenda was tabled for consideration on a future agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.