

## **P-20 Council Notes October 10, 2006**

The meeting was held at the Buena Vista Conference Center in New Castle County.

Following welcoming remarks and introductions, the program was turned over to Audrey Noble from the Delaware Education Research and Development Center.

### **Performance Level (PL) 1 Longitudinal Study**

Audrey presented her research on tracking students who score below the Performance Level (PL) 3 (Meets the Standards) on the DSTP to see the percentages that are able to reach a passing score and determine any disparity between students who are minorities or at a low income level and other students.

Overall, as time goes by for all low-scoring students, the chances of reaching PL3 or higher decreases. This is especially true for math. Of the students who scored PL1 on the math section in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, only 14% of them will reach PL3 or better by 8<sup>th</sup> grade. In reading, 33% of the students will reach PL3 or better in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Although there were differences between the chances of minority/majority and low income/non-low income students reaching PL3, the differences were not as large as one would estimate. On average, there was about a 10 to 15% difference between the percentages of students who reach PL3 or higher depending upon race and socio-economic status. This disparity is less than what is seen on the national level. It was theorized that the differences between the percentages were due to differences in access to quality instruction.

Improvement seen from 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade occurs at even lower percentages than other grades, especially in math. This led to some discussion about improving the percentages reaching higher scores in math. It was felt that all intervention, including math, needs to happen at an early grade.

### **Correlates Update**

The second presentation was given by Kelly Sherretz on the correlates of achievement, a project supported by the State Board of Education in support of the work of the Achievement Gap Action Group. The correlates were adapted from the ETS report on "Parsing the Achievement Gap." The correlates will act as an indicator system to help schools and decision makers by providing pertinent data which is easily accessible. The system is entirely web-based and designed so that a school will only see their information and a district will only see the information for the schools in their district. This was done in order to insure that the system would be used only for data gathering purposes for improvement rather than as an accountability tool. It was felt that there were a number of other sources for accountability and this should be for informing decision making.

Information that is used includes curriculum rigor, class size, teacher preparation, and school safety, among others.

The progress of the correlates system has been continuing. The server should be up and running by around the end of the year and DASL has been working with the R&D Center to provide professional development on how to use the database. The professional development will be continued to teach more educators how to effectively use the database.

Kelly then gave the Council a demonstration of the database. Eventually all of the DOE databases will be linked and potentially non-education databases as well, such as information from KidsCount. Through the Higher Education Data Cube Subcommittee, work is progressing on linking the database to postsecondary schools as well.

Archived reports will be made available in order to help track progress over time but the focus is on current information being available.

Funding was brought up during the presentation. Although the cost of developing the database and buying the server have already been covered, the maintenance and further development will continue and will need to be addressed.

## **Early Childhood Update**

Ann Wick, Chair of the Council on Early Care and Education, presented the Council with an update on the progress made to increase the quality of early child care in Delaware. A summit was held recently about the subject where Governor Minner spoke about the importance of children receiving high quality care in their early years. Each of the P-20 members was given a copy of “Early Success: Delaware’s Early Childhood Plan” which promotes a holistic approach to child care and is a part of Vision 2015. It uses the equation “ready families + ready early care and education + ready communities + ready schools = ready children” in order to promote the best care possible for children. The council is working with United Way to use the Stars ranking system for child care centers in the hopes of tying higher ratings with higher reimbursement. Early care and education is a very important topic since about 70% of Delaware children less than five years of age are in early childhood centers. There are many licensed care centers and an unknown number of unlicensed centers. There has also been some difficulty when trying to regulate faith-based care centers. It was noted that anything done with regulating child care centers should be presented as tools rather than mandates. This has been the practice so far.

## **P-20 Subcommittee Status Reports**

Status reports of the various subcommittees working under the P-20 Council were reviewed with the members. The subcommittees include the Achievement Gap Action Group, the Subcommittee on Dual Enrollment, the Higher Education Data Subcommittee and the Committee on High School Graduation Requirements.

The Achievement Action Group is on target with its goals. They heard the PL1 Longitudinal Study presentation from Audrey. The subcommittee will meet again in either February or March for the discussion of the annual Achievement Gap Report.

The Subcommittee on Dual Enrollment will have its first meeting on October 12.

The Data Subcommittee has been working on the higher education data cube. They are currently talking to the department to make sure that the colleges, universities and schools will be ready to start using the database this year. They will be meeting again in November.

The Committee on High School Graduation Requirements has finished its report which was given to each of the council members at the meeting. It was noted that the State Board of Education had approved the regulations this summer implementing the recommendations for increased rigor at the high school level.

The next meeting of the P-20 Council is scheduled for Tuesday, February 6, 2007.