

# Progress Report

## P-20 Council

### NOVEMBER 23, 2008

The P-20 Council met on November 10, 2008, at the Buena Vista Conference Center. Two presentations were made to the Council in addition to committee updates. The first presentation addressed Delaware mathematics initiatives while the second addressed work being done in science.

#### **Mathematics Initiatives Presentation:**

Diana Roscoe, DOE Education Associate Mathematics, provided the update on mathematics initiatives. She shared a graphic of a piece of rope that represented the “intertwined strands of proficiency” model upon which the math efforts have been based. The five strands are: adaptive reasoning, strategic competence, conceptual understanding, productive disposition, and procedural fluency. She also stated that cognitive research findings were used to develop classroom design principles that promote the development of both mathematical thinking and mathematics skills. This work resulted in a tool to help school administrators know what evidence they would see or look for in a classroom that was implementing research-based best practices. Ms. Roscoe referenced partnerships with the Mathematics Coalition and several higher education institutions to provide quality, job-embedded professional development for teachers. In addition, she explained that the Middle School Math Resource Teachers were also part of the state’s efforts to provide ongoing professional development and to improve the quality of mathematics instruction in all Delaware classrooms. She shared two teacher tools: *Lessa is More* and a four-column lesson plan. These tools are being used to facilitate lesson studies through professional learning communities.

#### **Science Initiatives Presentation:**

Kelli Martin, DOE Education Associate Science, provided the update on science initiatives. Ms. Martin explained that the work of the Delaware Science Coalition began in 1995 with a state-wide survey designed to assess the state of science curriculum and instructional practices. The survey results indicated that science in the elementary grades consisted of the same favorite units taught at each grade level through a literature based approach with little time teaching inquiry based science content in a hands-on manner. The survey results also revealed that the middle school curriculum and instruction was text book driven with students moving page by page through the material and answering questions at the end of the chapters. High school science curriculum was also found to be text book driven and dominated by teacher lecture and “cook-book” type labs (follow the numbered steps).

The Science Coalition began in 1995 with the adoption of science standards, the formation of the Delaware Science Coalition and the National Science Resource Center

assisting in providing leadership and guidance. The purpose of the coalition was to improve the instruction and learning of science for all students in the state with a goal of making Delaware a nationally recognized leader in science education. The vision of the coalition was identified as, "Excellence and equity for all students in the teaching of science," and the mission was to build and maintain capacity at the district and school level to ensure that all students in grades K-12 met the Delaware Science Standards as part of becoming successful, productive citizens.

As a result of this work Delaware now has a statewide vision, goals and priorities with a strategic plan that addresses where we are now, where we are going and how we plan to achieve the goals. The Coalition currently has administrative and programmatic support as well as support from the community. A comprehensive science curriculum, professional development and assessment system have been developed based upon State science standards and grade level expectations. Inquiry-based science in grades K-8 now permeates the culture of science instruction. Regular diagnostic assessments allow data driven conversations to check for student understanding and guide instruction through professional learning communities statewide.

### **P-20 Committee Reports:**

#### Data Committee:

Alan Phillips, DHEC and Chair of the Data Committee, presented an update on the progress of the Data Committee. He outlined the accomplishments to date, the challenges still faced, and next steps related to this work.

#### Data Cube Accomplishments

1. Built a secure pathway to DOE server for colleges to upload student data via FTP (File Transfer Protocol- secure site for data exchange).
2. Decided on common naming conventions for grades, terms and subject areas.
3. Two pilot tests – two cohorts of entering college freshmen – Fall 2007 and Fall 2008.
4. Developed a number of reports which will be reviewed for data reliability at the next meeting.
5. Drafted an MOU document that specifies data sharing agreement between institutions of higher education and DOE for P-20 sanctioned projects.

#### Challenges

1. In order to obtain the most reliable data, colleges should add and populate the DOE student ID field to their existing systems, as agreed upon by the institutional representatives at the early Data Cube Committee meetings.
2. Wesley and Goldey-Beacom have not been participating. Alan Phillips will meet with Paul Olsen and the new Registrar at Wesley to bring them up-to-date on the project and work toward their participation. Goldey-Beacom will likely require a personal meeting in the near future to bring on board to the project.

#### Future

1. Aiming for December meeting and January 15 data upload.
2. Will review MOU and make ready for full P-20 Council review and adoption.
3. Will review existing reports to judge data reliability of existing reports and decide which are ready for release to P-20 Council and subsequently, made public.

#### Transfer of Credit Matrix Committee:

Alan Phillips, DHEC, presented an update on the progress of the Transfer of Credit Matrix Committee. The Committee met to decide how to approach the transfer matrix project. A web-based application will be developed to 1) streamline and automate the course evaluation process, and 2) furnish transfer information and policies to the public.

It was noted that a transfer matrix exists between the three public institutions of higher education. Del. Tech maintains the matrix on their web site as a fairly static document. The Committee wants to expand the matrix to include the private institutions and make a web-based matrix that is more interactive for private and institutional users.

First steps in developing a comprehensive, web-based matrix:

1. Populate a database with course descriptions from each institution of higher education.
2. Focus initially on first- or second-year courses.
3. Determine which courses presently transfer across the board.
4. Determine which courses presently do not need faculty evaluation in order to be included on the matrix.
5. Have a "starter matrix", web-based and available by the end of the year.
6. Gather transfer policies from each higher education institution.
7. Gather any existing dual enrollment/dual credit policies and compare with Guiding Principles developed by the P-20 Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit Committee in cooperation with the higher education institutions.

It was noted that information offered to the public should explain the purpose and use of college credit transfer and its relationship to using coursework from multiple institutions to apply toward a degree.

It was also noted that all the higher education institutions are on-board and contributing to this project, including the private institutions.

The information offered to the public is intended to be comprehensive and will include all opportunities or links to opportunities available to Delawareans and information about how the opportunities differ.

#### DECAN Committee:

Dr. Coffield provided an update of the status of the Delaware College Access Network Committee. The committee has established four subcommittees to accomplish the goal

of increasing the college going and completion rates of Delaware students: Actionable Networks, Communication, Data and Higher Education.

The Actionable Networks Subcommittee identified guiding principles under which they will establish grassroots efforts to engage community and non-profit organizations in the work through tiered and focused outreach efforts. This group will use the data subcommittee's indicators coupled with GIS software to identify targeted locations across the state where there is a need to engage community and non-profit organizations with highly personalized messages and outreach efforts.

The Communication Subcommittee will also use the work of the data subcommittee to geographically identify the hot and cold spots for a targeted messaging campaign. This effort is also being supported through the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) that was recently awarded to the Department of Education.

The Higher Education Subcommittee developed a matrix to gather information and to conduct a gap analysis that was used to determine action recommendations. Information was gathered regarding each institution's mission, admission requirements, first-year general education courses, retention plans and goals, first year experience programs/orientation programs, academic advising and support practices, and retention and graduation rates. A component of the analysis was to compare the findings with practices and policies taken from a thorough literature review. The findings resulted in a series of recommendations and next steps that will be presented at the next DECAN meeting on November 13, 2008.

**Informational Items:**

A copy of the blueprint for the new state assessment that was produced by the Statewide Assessment Task Force was shared with the members of the P-20 Council.