

Minutes
Vision for Excellence in Education and Arkansas Accountability System (ESSA)
Steering Committee Meeting
Wednesday, May 24, 2017

The Vision for Excellence in Education and Arkansas Accountability System Steering Committee met Wednesday, May 24, 2017, in the Arkansas Department of Education Auditorium. Ms. Ouida Newton called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

Members Present: Ms. Ouida Newton; Senator Jane English; Ima Etim; Keli Gill; Harold Jeffcoat; Joyce Flowers; Gloria Phillips; Melissa Bratton; Anthony Bennett.

Members Absent: Commissioner Johnny Key, Representative Bruce Cozart, and Ms. Michelle Hayward.

Audience: ADE staff, general public, and press.

The meeting was live streamed and the recording was posted on the ADE website at <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/public-school-accountability/every-student-succeeds-act-essa/stay-informed-archive>.

Consideration of Approval for Minutes – April 26, 2017

Senator Jane English moved, seconded by Ms. Joyce Flowers, to approve the April 26, 2017, minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Modeling of Data

Office of Innovation in Education Director Dr. Denise Airola shared Arkansas Support and Accountability System Impact Modeling data. Data modeled included the indicators, separately, as well as the indicators combined in the School Performance Rating for Vision for Excellence in Education and Arkansas Accountability System and annual meaningful differentiation among other factors.

Dr. Airola said the purpose of the support and accountability system (the School Performance Rating in particular) is to understand where support is needed. School performance rating shows the schools in need of support. The district is the major partner in this work, and this can be done in an evidence-based method. Dr. Airola said that subgroups are also factored into every indicator. The left-hand side of the model school report card reports on the School Performance Rating and its separate indicators, and on the right-hand side gives long-term goals and checkpoints for progress--our aspirations for all students for school self-reflection and pacing progress. The index has a robust set of multiple indicators.

Ms. Keli Gill posed a question on whether the report is for the public or school. Dr. Airola responded by saying that they are for both, and that the model is still in draft phase. Ms. Gill expressed concern that the information is not fully explained and that the audience will not understand what the data mean. More comprehensive information is needed. Ms. Gill also had an issue with the language "school quality" because there is a difference between government definition and parent definition of this language. Dr. Airola said that she understood and would address the matter later in the presentation. The term School Quality is used in the ESSA and that is why it is indicated in the model school report card.

Mr. Anthony Bennett asked how students in multiple subgroups would be represented. Dr. Airola responded that they will be in each group they represented according to the law.

Dr. Harold Jeffcoat asked if this is a point-in-time reference at a particular grade level, or whether a group of students' progress as a cohort was being considered. Dr. Airola responded that the long-term goals and checkpoints for progress will apply to all the students in the school, which may be different groups of students each year depending on schools' grade ranges. The long-term goals and checkpoints represented on the model school report card do not represent one cohort. Dr. Airola said the law requires that they set long-term goals and measurements.

Ms. Ouida Newton asked about the growth model and testing. The value-added growth-model is based on as much prior score information on the student as is available (score history). Expectation of growth for a student is based on each students' score history. For example, the model looks at how each 6th grade student is growing and how a particular group has grown in that 6th grade year based on expectations.

Senator Jane English asked for clarification on how students are tracked. Dr. Airola explained that from grades kindergarten to 6th grade, student progress is kept in a longitudinal record, and expectations change according to students' achievement and growth from year to year. The expectation for students is conditioned on all previous years available. Dr. Airola said this model accounts for student level factors and does not account for school-level factors.

Dr. Airola talked about the combining of indicators. The School Performance Rating includes: achievement, growth, graduation rate, English language progress in English Language Proficiency, and school quality/student success indicators.

Dr. Airola said weighted achievement gives partial credit for students in the "close" Level 2 category. Every time a school moves a student from the lowest performance category into the "close" Level 2 category, or from close to the ready category, they gain half a point. When students are moved from "ready" to "exceed", a bonus one-fourth

point is gained if the number of exceeds students is greater than the number of students in Level 1

Dr. Airola said stakeholders were most vocal concerning the school quality/student success indicator. Dr. Airola said this indicator was broken into three groups: 1) Data for indicator or proxy are available to calculate and model impact, 2) data collection can be added to existing systems, and calculations can be determined, added, and piloted for inclusion within a year or two, and 3) an instrument/inventory and/or collection/reporting system needs to be developed, added, and/or piloted and this may take two or more years. Dr. Airola said that all of the information is not currently available, and thus not all represented in the current model.

Dr. Airola explained three criteria that must be met in ESSA for the school quality/student success indicator. ESSA Criteria 1-does the indicator meaningfully differentiate schools? ESSA Criteria 2- is the indicator valid, reliable, comparable, and the same indicator for the grade span? ESSA Criteria 3-can the indicator be disaggregated by student group?

Ms. Ima Etim asked if there are support systems in place for students who may have issues with absenteeism. Dr. Airola said Attendance Works is a robust program that a number of schools in the state are using for its suggested interventions. Dr. Airola said LEAs are an important factor in helping address chronic attendance issues. Dr. Airola also shared that when she worked at Jefferson Elementary in Fayetteville, help from social workers was very important in addressing chronic absentee students.

Senator English questioned industry certification and advanced placement courses, and this relationship with non-advanced placement courses. Dr. Airola commented that the industry certification isn't in the model yet—these need to be vetted for quality/rigor before being included. Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and concurrent credit (which includes Arkansas Career Education Concurrent Credit) are included in the indicator.

Ms. Keli Gill asked whether points are subtracted when students go backwards i.e. digress. Dr. Airola confirmed that points are not subtracted. Dr. Airola said that one hundred points are possible for school performance rating with the possibility of bonus points for students who move from the ready to exceed category. Dr. Airola said the data show that there is no differential impact on subgroups which are defined as African American, White, English learner, economically distressed, and students with disabilities.

Dr. Airola said there are two weighting options for this model. In the first option, English Learners Progress would count for 10% of the school performance rating. In the second option, English Learners Progress growth is factored on a sliding scale according to a school's English learner population.

Dr. Airola said that work still needs to be done with the school quality/student success indicator for nine through twelve students. We currently have no schools with data for this indicator for students with disabilities. In data collection, if there is no minimum n of 15 and if all five indicators are not present, that group does not have a score. Dr. Airola said that the minimum n of 15 was necessary to capture some data. Ms. Ouida Newton asked whether they will be able to get special education data or not. Dr. Airola stated that she is not sure, but they are looking to secure data in the next few months. Ms. Ouida Newton thanked Dr. Airola for her and her team's hard work.

Director of Policy and Special Projects Ms. Tina Smith seconded her appreciation to Dr. Airola and opened up the floor for the Arkansas Department of Education Communications Team to show video and Facebook promotional materials on the ESSA plan. Ms. Tina Smith shared the various ways that the ESSA plan is being shared, and made a call for feedback from stakeholders.

Dr. Jeffcoat asked whether there was an executive summary coming, and Ms. Tina Smith replied that it is coming. Ms. Tina Smith also stated that there will be a Spanish translation that will take a week to be translated. The timeline for feedback would be extended by one week so that the Spanish version has a 30 day comment period.

Discussion of Second Draft of ESSA plan

Ms. Ouida Newton opened up for comments. Members of the steering committee discussed the second draft of the ESSA plan and made the following suggestions, comments, and points for clarification:

Section A

Part E: Ms. Newton stated that the move from talking about different types of support then suddenly talking about directed and coordinated intensive support seems too large of a jump. Ms. Smith explained, affirmed by Coordinator of School Improvement and Standards Assurance Mr. Elbert Harvey, that the goal is to blend together ESSA requirements and state-level supports.

Section B & C

No major concerns.

Section D

Ms. Gloria Phillips noted the page with students with disabilities was improved. Ms. Phillips also said there were 20 professional development efforts added that were included to address students with special development that was very helpful.

Sections E-G

Ms. Melissa Bratton noted the ELR form clarity issue is now clarified. She wanted to note the elaboration on the legacy screener. Ms. Bratton said a chart on criteria for initial placement was added, and it helps with clarity.

Page 88: Ms. Bratton said there is an added section on notifications for parents, and she believes that this may be too specific.

She said that exit criteria has changed from standardized testing and now uses a professional judgment rubric which she notes is a big change. Ms. Bratton noted that formatting issues in section 2 have been addressed.

Ms. Bratton said section F funding allocations have been clarified.

Ms. Bratton said Section G-2 has more clarity.

Section H, I, and Appendix

Ms. Ima Etim stated that the beginning of Section H was well-clarified.

Page 110: Ms. Etim had a question on the 5-year proposed school graduation rate. She asked for clarification on whether schools would adopt this model readily or over time.

Ms. Tina Smith responded that it will be implemented in the 2018-2019 school year.

Ms. Newton asked for additional comments from Dr. Harold Jeffcoat and/or Ms. Bratton on the two weighting choices. Ms. Bratton stated that it can be a bit confusing. She stated that in either case, it will not be 100% the best for any district, but that it is important to consider the best option for the largest amount of schools. Dr. Jeffcoat said we must talk about this system as a way to support schools. He also said he believes it will be a benefit to schools across the state.

Next Steps

a) Discussion of Future Meetings

Ms. Newton said the current draft will not be available until the end of June. She proposed that the next meeting be in July instead of June because of the public comment section will be extended because of Spanish translation.

Dr. Jeffcoat moved, seconded by Ms. Phillips, to forgo the June meeting.

b) Purpose

Ms. Smith said the purpose of the next meeting is to review revisions.

c) Dates


Ms. Newton proposed July 26, 2017 as the next meeting, then move to quarterly meetings after the July 26, 2017 meeting.

Ms. Ouida Newton stated that the steering committee would make the decision to have a meeting in August during the July meeting.

Adjournment

Ms. Flowers moved, seconded by Ms. Gill, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

Minutes recorded by Kelicia Hollis



Commissioner Johnny Key, Chair