

**Minutes of the
Committee of Practitioners Meeting
June 7, 2010
Ramkota Inn, Pierre, SD**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:40 am by Chairperson Becky Guffin.

Attendance

Members present were: Becky Guffin, Mary Schwab, Joyce Larsen, Susan Beukelman, Rebecca Eeten, and Liz Venenga.

The following Department of Education staff persons were in attendance: Diane Lowery, Dawn Smith, Shannon Malone, Betsy Chapman, Karleen Ehrenfried, and Laura Johnson Frame.

New Member

The following member was appointed by SD Department of Education Secretary Tom Oster to serve a term on the Committee of Practitioners.

- Rebecca Eeten – teacher representative from Eastern South Dakota – June 2010- June 2013

Resigning Members

Mike Elsberry resigned from the Committee as he has taken the position of Superintendent of Marty Indian School, a tribal school.

Gary Briedenbach's term ended and he did not wish to serve another term.

Recruitment of New Members

Diane Lowery, NCLB Title I Director, asked the committee to consider the recruitment of additional members to the committee to fill all of the required positions. A discussion on ways to recruit members was held.

Title I Part C – Migrant

Jenifer Palmer, State Director of the Migrant Program, was unable to attend the meeting and presented a written report. Lowery went over the report with the members. Migrant student numbers have been increasing with the recent guidance to allow inclusion of children of refugee families relocated to the state through a refugee relocation program. The MSIX tracking system has been implemented "live" in the state to better track students from state to state. Currently there are three summer school programs for migrant students. Watertown will pilot a migrant education consortium with surrounding schools to allow Watertown teachers to reach out to other districts and provide services to their students. The DOE magazine, "My Life", featuring post-secondary schools is now available in Spanish. Parent meetings have been held in various locations and have been well received. The program contracts with three to four recruiters who conduct family interviews and completes certifications of eligibility for students.

Common Core Standards

Lowery informed the Committee of the location of the Common Core Standards (CoreStandards.org) developed the past year through the National Governors Association along with the Council of Chief State School Officers as a state-led initiative. The K-12 standards in Mathematics and English/language arts have been posted. Approximately one-half of the states have adopted the standards at this time; South Dakota has not adopted the standards. South Dakota is waiting until further development of the assessment portion to make the decision. The Committee discussed how the standards will impact the current practices and the curriculum mapping process in the districts. The Committee asked for an update on the content standards and assessment portion at the November meeting.

Even Start

Ehrenfried, State Coordinator of the Even Start Program, gave an update on the program. The program was monitored by the US Education Department this spring. The future of the Even Start program on the national level is unclear under the reauthorization of ESEA. The funding of the program has been reduced over the years and the White House proposes to move and rename the program under reauthorization. Ms. Ehrenfried also works with the 21st Century After-School programs and invited the Committee to the annual conference on July 22-23.

Consolidated Application Approval Process

Lowery spoke about the process to approve applications this summer. Districts were allowed to carryover American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds from the previous year. Carryover over 15% required submission and approval of a waiver. Since the development of the eGrant system, the answers in the Consolidated Application rollover from year to year. Each district must update the information and ensure that any program language referring to expenditures agrees with the budget with special consideration to ARRA funds this year. The budgets are entered new each year. The DOE process will progress quickly when districts submit their survey of estimated carryovers and project completion reports in a timely manner.

Monitoring of District's Federal Programs

Lowery explained that the DOE will now be entering year two of a new monitoring schedule. Approximately one-third of the districts (50) are monitored each year. On-site visits are based on the Federal allocation with districts of smaller allocation monitored through desk reviews. The districts that will be monitored this cycle are posted on the DOE website and districts were notified of the posting last summer. Those that will be monitored this year will receive a letter and a self-assessment instrument prior to the start of school. Monitoring will begin around October 1.

Election of COP Chairperson/Vice Chairperson

June is considered the annual meeting of the Committee of Practitioners and the positions of chairperson and vice chairperson are elected annually. Guffin asked for nominations for the position of chairperson.

Motion by Schwab, second by Willemssen, to nominate Becky Guffin as chairperson. No other nominations were heard and the Committee cast a unanimous vote to elect Guffin as chair.

Motion by Guffin, second by Larsen, to nominate Mary Schwab as vice chairperson. No other nominations were heard and the Committee cast a unanimous vote to elect Schwab as the vice chairperson.

Title III – English Language Learners

Shannon Malone, State Title III Coordinator, briefly spoke about the Title III Advisory Board meeting scheduled in Pierre the following day. The Board will be looking at several issues including the Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs). The AMAOs are performance targets that include: 1) Making progress toward English language proficiency as measured by the state English language proficiency (ELP) assessment; and 2) attaining English language proficiency as measured by the ELP assessment; and 3) meeting AYP as measured by the state content assessment (Dakota STEP). Malone also spoke about district and consortium allowable uses of funds and ensuring that Federal funds are used for supplemental services.

The committee recessed for lunch at 11:30 a.m. and reconvened at 12:45 p.m.

School Improvement Conference

Lowery informed the Committee that DOE would not have a School Improvement Conference this year. The districts will be trained and guided through the school improvement process this year via Web trainings and other interactions.

School Improvement 1003(g) Funds

Lowery reported on the activities involving the 1003(g) funds since the last meeting. Lowery guided the Department through the application process and worked with the US Department of Education. On April 15 U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced that South Dakota will receive \$11.3 million to turn around its persistently lowest achieving schools through the School Improvement Grants (SIG) program. These funds are part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The \$11,302,905 made available to South Dakota will be distributed by the DOE to school districts.

In order for a school district to apply for these funds, it must be a state-identified "persistently lowest achieving – Tier I or Tier II" or a Tier III school—a school that has failed to meet annual yearly progress for two years and is not identified as a persistently lowest achieving school. However, Tier III schools can only receive funds once all of the state's persistently lowest achieving schools have received funds. South Dakota's application, which includes its list of persistently lowest achieving schools, as defined by the DOE, can be found here: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/summary/index.html> or <http://doe.sd.gov/stimulus/>.

When school districts apply, they must indicate that they will implement one of four models in their persistently lowest achieving schools: Tier I and II schools must use the Turnaround Model or Transformational Model.

Turnaround Model: Replace the principal, screen existing school staff, and rehire no more than half the teachers; adopt a new governance structure; and improve the school through curriculum reform, professional development, extending learning time, and other strategies.

Transformation Model: Replace the principal and improve the school through comprehensive curriculum reform, professional development, extending learning time, and other strategies.

School districts have applied to the state for the funds this spring and currently the applications have not been approved as all activities must be substantive. The schools are revising their applications now. Once schools receive SIG funds, they will be able to begin to spend them immediately to turn around schools this fall. The DOE will again calculate the “persistently low achieving” schools this fall.

Parent Involvement Conference

Dawn Smith, State Title I Parent Involvement Coordinator, advised the Committee that the DOE and Parent Involvement Resource Center sponsored Parent Involvement Conference will be held on October 15-16 in Rapid City. Anne Henderson, author of *Beyond the Bake Sale*, will be the keynote speaker. For more information, visit the PIRC website. Smith also talked about the importance of districts and schools to ensure that their parent involvement policies contain all of the required elements and that the documents reflects all of the parent involvement that is underway in the schools. Smith has been providing technical assistance to districts on the policies and has been concentrating on districts scheduled for future monitoring.

State Accountability Workbook

Each Committee member received a copy of the Accountability Workbook. The copy contains all of the new language as recommended by the committee in September and through the various Department reviews. The committee was informed that through the Workbook the DOE did request a change to a new minimum “N” of 25 for accountability purposes. Lowery reported that indications were that this request would be approved. The Committee discussed the ramifications of the increased “N” size.

School Improvement 1003(a) Funding

Lowery indicated that some 1003(a) school improvement funds that was previously allocated to schools but not used or applied for by the schools. Two of the qualifying schools declined the funds and others did not expend all of their allocated funds. These funds will be reallocated by the SEA to qualifying Title I districts (those districts that expended 95% of their regular allocation in FY09) as provided by Section 1126(c).

The state school improvement reservation for FY 2011 is \$1.75 million. Of this amount, 5% is reserved for state administration. The committee discussed the use of funds at the State level; activities include Statewide System of Support and direct support from the Department. The need for additional funds to support the School Support Team was discussed. From the remaining non-administrative amount, the Committee decided that 10% would be used by the SEA for the School Support Team with the remaining amount to be allocated out to the Title I schools in school improvement.

Motion by Willemsen, second by Schwab, to use 10% of the FY 1011 School Improvement 1003(a) funds for State level activities and award the remainder to the districts. Motion passed.

Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

The Committee members each received a copy of “A Blueprint for Reform” issued by the White House in March 2010 to demonstrate the administration’s priority areas and education initiatives.

Next Meeting

The Committee scheduled their next meeting for Monday, September 20, 2010, in Pierre.

Adjournment

Motion by Eeten, second by Larsen, to adjourn the meeting at 2:57 p.m. Motion passed.