

**ESSA School Improvement Work Group  
Pierre School District Administration Building, Pierre, SD  
June 15, 2016**

The second meeting of the School Improvement Work Group began at 10:00 a.m. on June 15, 2016, in the Pierre School District Administration Building, Pierre, South Dakota. The School Improvement Work Group was formed to make recommendations to the South Dakota Department of Education pertaining to changes in school improvement in the new reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act known as the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA).

### **Work Group Membership**

Members of the work group present were Lori Laughlin, Black Hills Special Services; Tammy Meyer, Sisseton School District; Jeannine Metzger, Oglala Lakota County School District; Lindsey Olson, Sioux Falls School District; Joan Pribyl, Rapid City Area School District; Adam Shaw, Madison Central School District; Ann Smith, Sioux Falls School District; and Jay Shillingstad, Smee School District, substituted for Karyl Knudson. Several SD DOE staff persons were in attendance.

### **Welcome**

The group was welcomed by Terri Bissonette, consultant for McRel International North Central Comprehensive Center, facilitator of the group. Bissonette asked for comments or corrections to the notes posted from the last meeting.

### **Review of the Decisions Made by Other Work Groups**

Bissonette reported that the notes from the other work group meetings may be found at <http://doe.sd.gov/secretary/essa.aspx>.

The English Language Learners Work Group made the following decisions. (See notes of the June 13 meeting for more information.)

- The work group decided that long-term English language learner students need to be identified in Infinite Campus. SD DOE will develop a system.
- The work group recommended an “N” Size of 10 students. This is current practice.
- The work group decided not to do ELA testing for new to country students and continue with the current practice of assessing only math participation. Under ESSA English language learners must take the math state assessment during the first year in the country and it counts as participation rate with states having the option of testing ELA during the first year also. During the second year, ELL students must take both ELA and math and the scores count for participation and proficiency. During the third year, the students must take both assessments and both are counted for participation, proficiency, and school/district/state accountability.

The English Language Learners Work Group will continue to look at key questions for ESSA implementation.

The Accountability Work Group made the following recommendations pending follow-up at the July

meeting. (See notes of the June 14 meeting for more information.)

- The work group recommended continuing with the Full Academic Year as October 1 through May 1.
- The work group recommended that the Gap and Non-Gap groups be retained per current practice.
- The work group recommended continuing with the high school testing in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.
- The work group recommended that the state continue with the Smarter Balanced assessment for the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.
- The work group recommended retaining our current process for calculating both a “completer” rate and the federally-required 4-year cohort.
- The work group agreed with the English Language Learners work group that the “N” size should be 10 for both assessment reporting and for accountability calculations.
- The work group decided not to recommend attaching points to science. They decided that this topic should be revisited in a couple years.

The Accountability Work Group will continue discussions at their next two meetings. The following topics will need to be discussed during the July meeting. 1) college and career ready indicator; 2) additional indicator for elementary/middle school and high school; 3) attendance; 4) maintain a normative-based accountability system or switch to a criterion based system; 5) 1% special education participation; and 6) graduation rate. In August the work group will discuss 1) participation consequences; 2) bonus points; 3) ratification of English Language Proficiency recommendations; 4) weights of indicators; 5) calculation of each indicator; 6) targeted support designation; and 7) academic growth. The group will also need to consider setting targets, i.e., the replacement for AMOs under the waiver and AYP under NCLB.

### **Review of US Education Proposed Rules and Implications**

Laura Scheibe, SD Department of Education Director of Accountability, reviewed some of the highlights of the proposed federal regulations for the ESSA. The regulations have been posted for public comments until August 1. Scheibe reported that the department will make some written comments for submission. The slides will be distributed to the members via email.

### **Discussion of the Current Improvement Plan/Process**

Bissonette ask the members to list the processes in place that are implemented as part of the school improvement process. The members met in small groups to discuss the purpose of school improvement. Comments included reducing learning gaps, providing additional support, accountability not just compliance, pushing the achievers even when that increases the gap. Bissonette also had the group go through an exercise to determine the elements needed to reach a well-planned school improvement process within a school.

### **Recommendations**

- The work group recommended creating a process where a school district must make a commitment to the school improvement process of a school identified as in need of improvement. The work group suggested several ways a district could make a commitment, however no decisions were made at this time.
- The work group recommended that the ESSA defined “comprehensive support schools” remain in school improvement status for four years after designation with the first year as a planning

year. Discussion centered on whether an intervention must be required? How can a school continue the intervention when the funds are removed upon the school successfully exiting improvement? How can we compare schools when the composition of each school is different?

- The work group recommended that “comprehensive support schools” re-designated after four years must choose between a peer review and an external comprehensive needs assessment. Discussion on this topic was that the school has changed over the four years since it was first designated. Who pays for the comprehensive needs assessment? Should the district do this as part of the commitment to the process or would this come from the top of SEA federal funds before distribution to the schools? At what point would the school/district not be allowed to choose what type of needs assessment the school must have? Would it be a more beneficial process for another school district to do a review or audit of the designated school?
- The work group recommended that ESSA defined “targeted support schools” be designated for two years, one year of planning and one year of implementation. A school that is re-designated after two years would not get a planning year, the school would go into third and fourth year of targeted support.
- The work group recommended that SD DOE provide professional development opportunities for school board members that includes Title I programming and school improvement information. The work group decided that a school board member should not be required to be on the school improvement team. Discussion on this topic centered on having a school board member serve as a member of the school improvement team and would that be logistically possible in a large district. Do school board members have enough knowledge or would they be overwhelmed?

### **Needs Further Discussion**

The work group determined that they needed more information to make decisions in the following areas.

- What does support look like after a school has been designated? More information is needed to develop a comprehensive list of supports both from the district and the state.
- Should the SD DOE maintain a watch list or alert list and how would that list be used?
- What happens when a school is progressing, but does not exit school improvement? What support is needed for a consistently under-performing school? Can SD DOE only look at the low performing subgroup and that subgroup’s progress? How many schools can the state support?
- Is there a need for technical advisors in high risk districts?

### **Next Meeting**

The work group decided to meet again on July 21 in Pierre.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.