

**Minutes of the
Committee of Practitioners Meeting
October 8, 2013**

Call to Order

The meeting of the ESEA Committee of Practitioners was called to order by Becky Guffin at 9:30 am at the MacKay Building in Pierre, South Dakota.

Attendance

Members present were: Becky Guffin, Lori Bouza, Becky Eeten, Joyce Larson, Laura Willemsen, Roxanne Lamphere, and Joan Prybl.

Staff persons in attendance were: Shannon Malone, Betsy Chapman, Jordan Dueis, Dawn Smith, and Laura Johnson Frame.

Approval of the Agenda

Motion by Lamphere, second by Eeten to approve the agenda as printed. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes – June 6, 2013

Motion by Eeten, second by Willemsen to approve the Minutes of the June 6, 2013 meeting. Motion passed.

New Appointment

The Committee was introduced to Joan Prybl as a newly appointed member of the committee. Ms. Prybl is a teacher at General Beadle School in the Rapid City School District in the western area of the state. Ms. Prybl began her three-year term in September 2013.

Public Comment

A comment was made that the committee should consider adopting rules pertaining to how the committee will accept public comment. The committee will discuss this topic at a later date.

SD DOE Assessment Portal

Matt Gill from the SD Department of Education Office of Assessment and Accountability described the South Dakota Assessment Portal (SDAP). The SDAP is an online resource used to help educators create, deliver, and track classroom and summative assessment for their students. SDAP is available at no cost to all school districts across the state. Teachers can choose to create tests using either the South Dakota State Standards or the Common Core State Standards. All math and language arts items in SDAP are aligned to the Common Core State Standards. Within the SDAP, teachers are able to administer a number of assessments, including teacher- and district- created exams, state benchmark tests, and end-of-course exams, with scores accessible almost immediately. For log-in to the assessment portal go to <https://sdap.emetric.net/Portal> For general information, user guides, and training dates go to <http://doe.sd.gov/oats/SDAP.aspx>

Assessment Update

Jan Martin from the SD Department of Education Office of Assessment and Accountability gave an overview of the various assessments.

- No changes are currently planned for Write to Learn, the science Dakota-STEP in grades 5, 8, 11, Dakota STEP-Alternate, and ACCESS testing for English language learners.
- A transition process is being implemented for the End of Course Math. The current test will be used this year. This fall 2013 the blueprints will be aligned to Common Core and through spring 2014 the end-of-course test for math will be aligned to the blueprint. In spring 2015, the new tests will be implemented.
- The National Career Readiness Certificate is new. The National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) is a portable credential that demonstrates achievement and a certain level of workplace employability skills in Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information. This certificate will become part of the College and Career Readiness Indicator under the state accountability system. During 2013-14 a pilot program will be launched by the SD Department of Labor and Regulation and DOE for high school students. In 2014-15 the program will be implemented with all students focusing on grade 12. More information may be found at <http://www.act.org/products/workforce-act-national-career-readiness-certificate/>
- South Dakota will not use the DakotaSTEP assessment for English/Language Arts (ELA) and Math in spring 2014. Students will take the Smarter Balance assessment as this assessment is aligned with the Common Core standards already being implemented in districts. A practice test is available at www.smarterbalanced.org A longer testing window will occur this year going from March 18-June 3 and district testing will be more staggered. As this is a pilot-year, problems with technology is anticipated and will be worked through. The current Science and Alternate Assessments will remain the same.
 - SD DOE will be applying for an amendment of a portion of our current approved flexibility waiver pertaining to ELA and Math only. This waiver amendment will be to hold steady the current accountability designations for two years.
 - The proposed waiver amendment will be prepared by approximately November 1 and be published for public comment. The deadline to submit the waiver amendment to US ED is November 22.
- South Dakota has joined the National Center and State Collaborative. The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) is a project led by five centers and 26 states (15 core states and 11 Tier II states) to build an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The goal of the NCSC project is to ensure that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for post-secondary options.

The South Dakota Department of Education (SDDOE) is working closely with our NCSC project liaison to disseminate the NCSC mathematics curriculum and instructional materials throughout the state. The SD Community of Practice came together in September of 2012 for a full day of training on NCSC mathematics resources. The state wide roll-out of NCSC materials was January 6-11, 2013 in 4 venues: Rapid City, Pierre, Aberdeen, and Sioux Falls. Over 300 special education teachers and others were trained on the mathematics resources. The goal is to field test in 2014 and implementation in 2015.

School Improvement Grant

Shawna Poitra, Title I, submitted the following written report. The first Cohort of the School Improvement Grant (SIG) completed their 3 year grant on June 30. There were 17 schools in the first cohort. Several of the schools showed significant gains throughout the three years. One in particular,

New Underwood High School, had their math scores grow from a baseline of 52% proficiency in 2010 to 74% on last year's DSTEP.

The second Cohort of the SIG schools is currently in their third year. The Cohort consists of 14 schools. Two of the schools, Shannon County Alternative School and Wakpala High School, are Tier I schools, which means the schools had to choose one of the four models to implement from US ED. Both schools chose the Transformation model, which included hiring a new principal to lead the turnaround effort, implementing a new evaluation system, increasing learning time, and providing professional development based on data, as well as a few other interventions/strategies. This second Cohort of SIG schools will end their grant on June 30, 2014.

South Dakota is planning to apply for a new SIG grant award for schools starting 2014-2015. The grant application is due to US ED on November 15. The application process for schools, if the state application is approved by US ED, will happen in the spring of 2014. Schools that currently have a SIG grant (ending on June 30, 2014) may not apply for the upcoming grant. Only priority schools will be eligible. More information will be given once the state application is approved.

SD LEAP

Shawna Poitra, Title I, submitted the following written report. The SD LEAP online planning tool will be used by about 160 schools across the state is some capacity. The state's Priority and Focus schools implement the system within their leadership teams as part of the requirements for designation. We also have our two Tier I SIG schools using the system for the SIG requirements. Recently, the districts participating in the MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support) project enrolled all of their schools in the system in order to assess, plan, and monitor the indicators regarding the MTSS framework. The work of the MTSS project districts is just getting underway and training with the schools will occur over the next month or so by the MTSS coordinators.

Jordan Dueis and I completed trainings for our new Priority and Focus schools using the system for the first time. We held 6 trainings throughout the state, with 14 schools implementing the tool now in their leadership team meetings. The new schools learned how to assess an indicator and plan for an indicator with tasks, as well as how to submit documents. We discussed the timeline that each school will follow, and many schools walked out of the training with a number of the required indicators assessed for the October 15 deadline.

The Priority schools and the Focus schools identified for the second year will continue the assessing and planning of indicators that they started last year. Each school team will continue to assess indicators of effective practice, giving them more indicators to choose from when they start to plan and implement the indicators in their schools. I plan to hold a few webinars throughout the year to touch base with the teams and introduce new features or "reteach" existing features.

Academy of Pace Setting Districts

Jordan Dueis, Title I, reported that six priority districts are part of the Academy of Pace Setting Districts (APD) program. Priority districts are districts with 50% or more of their schools identified as focus or priority schools. A list of focus and priority districts was distributed. The Pace Setting districts are McLaughlin, Oelrichs, Shannon County, Smee, Todd County, and White River. The Academy of Pacesetting Districts is a year-long opportunity for high level leaders in a district to explore their current operations at the district and school levels in order to develop a more robust and effective approach to supporting school improvements related to growth in student learning. District leadership teams assess,

plan, and monitor district level indicators within SD LEAP, as well as create a District Operations Manual for a District System of Support.

Since all 6 Districts have completed the first year, a new set of requirements has been established to continue with the process. District teams will: meet quarterly to assess, plan, and monitor District indicators and evaluate and update the District Operations Manual; meet twice as a cohort to reflect and share ideas regarding policies and procedures; and meet as a large group at the end of the year to summarize the year. School Support Team members and SD DOE will provide technical assistance and support to the District Academy Teams throughout the year.

US Department of Education ESEA Flexibility Waiver Monitoring - Part B

Shannon Malone, Title Administrator, reported. US Department of Education is currently monitoring flexibility waiver states for a second time. This monitoring is referred to as Part B monitoring. South Dakota was monitored the first time, Part A monitoring, via conference call in November 2012. South Dakota's Part B on-site monitoring occurred on August 26-27, 2013.

- US ED stated that South Dakota was doing well in the areas of our transition to the Common Core, work toward the creation of teacher evaluations, our new report card, the state's emphasis on the use of data by districts and schools to make decisions, our work with SIG schools, and our alignment of work with focus and priority schools to the seven turnaround principles.
- US ED would like to see increased emphasis on the following areas:
 - Monitoring of Focus, Priority, and Watchlist Schools – Watchlist schools are those schools not falling into focus or priority status, however, they are in danger of falling into those categories. Each Title I watchlist school was contacted and offered technical assistance, invited to data retreats, offered curriculum and standards assistance, and offered the opportunity to participate in SD LEAP. Progress monitoring of all priority schools and their work on the seven turnaround principles will be conducted by SD DOE on October 22-23. Each priority district will be visited by a team from the department this school year.
 - Family Engagement – Increasing family engagement is one of the primary ways to improve student academic achievement. US ED instructed our state to concentrate efforts on family populations and districts with family populations whose children are identified as underachieving. SD DOE will conduct regional family engagement trainings for districts. SD DOE is working closely with a consultant in the area of family engagement on several projects.
- Other Title I Schools – As only Section 1116 of ESEA (school improvement) was waived, SD DOE will continue to provide technical assistance and monitor Title I schools in all other areas of Title I. Over a year ago a listing of districts and when they would be monitored was placed on the DOE website. DOE determined that monitoring in the current fashion would be suspended and the schedule will not be followed. The Title I team is working on a new process for monitoring all other Title I requirements for all Title I districts/schools.

Many schools fall into the category of “progressing” on the accountability list. How are these schools ensuring that their students are showing academic improvement from year to year? SD DOE has been considering this question.

- SD DOE was able to ask US ED questions about how alternative schools fit into the accountability system, and also about school climate and accountability, and schools that do not use technology and how to implement assessment.

The committee was asked several questions about implementation of the waiver pertaining to Focus schools. A general discussion followed on the implementation of the teacher evaluation process and how evaluations are connected to hiring teachers and issuing contracts. Comments were made as to the parent/public reaction to the publication of the teacher evaluation data per district. Many comments were made about the difficulty in meeting all of the current and proposed timelines for teacher contracts, issuance of district report cards, setting goals, completion of the grant for federal funds, data retreats, etc. Parent engagement ideas were discussed along with ideas about the use of federal funds to improve learning at home, “curriculum of the home.” Discussion was held on the current e-grant web-based program and plans for possibly moving to a new program.

Technical Assistance to Districts and Schools

SD DOE is implementing several projects to provide technical assistance to districts and schools.

- The end of September a one-half day training for Title I directors new to their jobs in the last three years was held in conjunction with a one-half day training for Special Education directors. Approximately 32 directors participated in the training covering all areas of Title I related programs and fiscal requirements.
- On June 2-4, 2014, the SD DOE will hold a joint conference of the Title I, Special Education, and General Education programs in Pierre. Two of the main topics will be differentiated instruction and family/community engagement.
- Title I will continue to offer webinars as needed on special topics including egrant assistance for new users.
- Regional family engagement trainings will be offered as described above.

21st Century Community Learning Center Grants

Jill Cotton with the 21st Century programs distributed a listing of the currently funded grants and the ending dates of the grants.

Title III – English Language Learners

Malone advised the committee that Yutzil Rodriguez has been hired as the new Title III director. The North Dakota director provided training for Ms. Rodriguez the prior week.

Malone asked for comment on the following:

- South Dakota has always ordered the ACCESS test for districts. Would the districts be willing to order their own tests? This would allow the districts to have more control over the levels of tests they will be using for each student. No negative comments were received.
- In the future Title III funding will be more closely tied to student data and teacher qualifications.
- A question was asked as to whether the testing proctors needed training in the area of the “speaking” test each year prior to serving as a proctor.
- Another question was asked as to whether districts should continue to require the implementation of the W-APT with Kindergarten students in the first semester. The committee voiced their opinion to continue with the first semester requirement.
- A new work group will be formed to re-set the Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives under Title III. The committee was asked for suggests on persons to serve on the work group.

- The SD Title III program will be monitored by US ED in April.

Schoolwide Conference

Dawn Smith reported that the Schoolwide Conference will be held for any Title I targeted assistance schools that are 40% free and reduced lunch and are considering going through the planning process of becoming schoolwide.

SharePoint Site

Betsy Chapman, Title I, and Malone shared the possibility of moving to a process where districts would store their Title I required documents on a common data storage space. Benefits would be that districts would always have their documents available in a permanent location. The DOE could also use shared documents in the district monitoring process. The idea is in the very early stages of investigation. A discussion followed. Comments were made that uploading of documents could coincide with the submission of the egrant as long as the document's annual timeline happened prior to summer.

Next Meeting

The committee decided to hold its next in-person meeting on June 5. Conference calls will be held as needed.

Adjournment

Motion by Willemsen, second by Eeten to adjourn at 2:05 pm. Motion passed.