

Committee to Advance Educator Compensation & Careers

Meeting Minutes

Meeting #11: November 24, 2014

12:30pm – 2:30pm

Location 1: 12th Floor Conference Room
Carvel State Office Building
820 North French Street
Wilmington, DE

Location 2: 2nd Floor Conference Room
Tatnall Building
Dover, DE

Attendance:

Committee members present:

- Teri Quinn Gray (CAECC Chair) – President, State Board of Education
- Lindsay O’Mara – Education Policy Advisor to Governor Markell, Governor’s Office
- Mark Murphy – Secretary of Education, Delaware Department of Education (DDOE)
- Frederika Jenner – President, Delaware State Education Association (DSEA)
- Jeff Taschner – Executive Director, Delaware State Education Association (DSEA)
- Mark Holodick – President, Chief School Officers Association (CSOA); Superintendent, Brandywine School District
- Darryl Scott – Chair, House Education Committee and Representative, District 31
- Harvey Kenton – Representative, District 36
- David Sokola – Chair, Senate Education Committee and Senator, District 8
- Brian Pettyjohn – Senator, District 19
- Meaghan Brennan – Director, Budget Development, Planning & Administration, Office of Management & Budget
- Mike Morton – Controller General, Office of the Controller General

Committee staff present:

- Ryan Fennerty (CAECC Director) – Special Advisor, Governor’s Office
- Donna Johnson (CAECC Stakeholder Engagement Lead) – Executive Director, State Board of Education
- Emily Silberstein – Partner, TNTP
- Alex Spurrier – Analyst, TNTP

Others present:

- Melissa Hopkins (Rodel Foundation)
- Dr. Kevin Carson (DASA)

Welcome & Overview of the Agenda

Committee Chair Teri Quinn Gray welcomed Committee members as she called the meeting to order at 12:30pm. She noted that the Committee members were split between two locations – one in Dover and one in Wilmington, and that the meeting would proceed with each group linked via videoconference. Each room would entertain public comment for attendees in both locations.

She noted that the meeting would focus on addressing the feedback received by Committee members in response to a draft “Status Report” circulated by Committee staff on November 17. Teri then turned the floor over to Lindsay O’Mara and Ryan Fennerty to outline the next steps in the Committee process.

Lindsay proposed that the Committee convene for four additional discussions in developing its recommendations for its “Initial Report”, with a goal for having a draft “Committee Report” for internal review by December 23rd and a public release of the document by January 9th.

Ryan indicated that the focus of the next Committee discussions would be to tackle major policy areas that had yet to be addressed comprehensively by the group or needed to be revisited prior to the Committee issuing its recommendations. He described these as policy questions in the areas of implementation considerations, Teacher Leadership roles (selection process, eligibility requirements, and minimum roles and responsibilities), and compensation structure (levels of base pay, role of credential-based pay, including advanced degrees and National Board Certification, in the future system).

Part I: Overview of the Draft Status Report

Lindsay O’Mara and Ryan Fennerty provided an overview of the common themes and specific recommendations provided by committee members in their feedback to the draft “Status Report”.

Some Committee members asked that the proposed Educator Working Group and Technical Advisory Group have their scope of work, membership, and purview clarified in more detail, and that additional language be added to the report clarifying the continued role of the CAECC in the process ahead once its initial recommendations are sent to the Governor. There was a request by some members that the Committee continue to convene (though less regularly) and issue policy recommendations based on the detailed recommendations developed by the educator working groups in the proposed next phase of the design process.

Some Committee members asked that in the sections of the report that provide background information about prior efforts to address educator compensation that state investments in National Board Certification and Skills & Knowledge Clusters be acknowledged. There was also a request that the

Committee discuss how these prior investments might also be incorporated in the alternative system in future discussions.

Some Committee members asked that the report provide context about both compensation proposals presented during the educator town halls, given the Committee has not yet discussed the alternative proposal in detail and a number of members have concerns that suggest the current model might evolve further. Other Committee members asked that the “Status Report” more explicitly acknowledge the concerns raised during discussions by a number of members about the current magnitude of the state’s investment in Master’s degrees given the body of research that suggests they correlate weakly with increased student learning as measured by state assessments in reading and math.

Some Committee members pointed out that many of the comparison systems discussed in detail to-date represented large urban or suburban districts as opposed to rural districts. There was a request that the Committee explore rural examples of teacher leadership models in future discussions.

Finally, a number of Committee members suggested that the CAECC refrain from issuing detailed cost estimates in the Status Report given the fundamental structure of the alternative system was still evolving based on recent educator feedback and on-going Committee discussions. It was recommended that this detail be included in the Committee Report issued in January instead to the extent that there is consensus in regards to the details required.

Emily Silberstein (TNTP) then opened the discussion by framing the intended facilitation approach to reviewing the contents of the draft “Status Report”. She explained that the Committee would review the specific recommendations of each section of the report to clarify:

- areas of broad agreement
- areas for continued discussion
- process recommendations to resolve outstanding questions

She then presented a series of slides with proposals for what outstanding issues remained for Committee consideration and how a number of existing and proposed groups (“educator sub-committees” including an “Educator Work Group” and a “Technical Advisory Group”) might tackle those unresolved questions. The discussion focused on each of the policy headings in the draft status report:

(1) Career Ladder Framework

The Committee agreed to that an educator sub-committee (“Educator Work Group”) would be best positioned to clarify some of the outstanding questions about the Career Ladder Framework, including whether Provisional educators be protected from non-core classroom duties in their first year of teaching.

In addition, the Committee agreed that the Professional Standards Board, State Board of Education, and Delaware Department of Education should work together to explore how best to align the existing Licensure & Certification regime with the proposed Career Ladder framework.

The group also reviewed a proposal that the CAECC would work with DDOE during an extended design phase for recommendations on how to resolve placement rules in a number of special circumstances.

(2) Teacher Leadership Roles

The Committee agreed to the proposal that it would clarify the minimum state-level eligibility requirements for accessing Teacher Leadership roles, while an Educator Working Group would convene to provide recommendations on the next level of detail regarding Teacher Leadership roles in the areas of selection processes, minimum roles and responsibilities, and how performance in the role would be evaluated. Moreover, the Committee agreed that a technical advisory group comprised of district personnel and state-level staff, whose members would have to be clarified, would be needed to help resolve technical details associated with determining critical definitions and appropriate allocation rules. A number of members voiced their preference for a localized approach to developing model roles, agreeing that the Educator Working Group would be a valuable resource in helping to define model roles and responsibilities as well as “best practices” for selection processes, but that sufficient flexibility should be retained at the district level to implement based on unique school and district needs. Other Committee members asked that for any policy design questions deferred to the educator sub-committees for recommendations, there be a commitment to examining the costs associated with any changes or new ideas to the framework developed by the CAECC.

(3) Senior Teacher Leadership Roles

Committee members agreed that the definitions of “high-need school” and “high-need population” would have to be clarified in partnership with DDOE, given a number of implications for existing state and federal definitions, programs, and policies.

Moreover, while the Committee agreed that the minimum state-level eligibility requirements would be included in its recommendations to the Governor, the next level of details regarding responsibilities, selection processes, and role structure (e.g. appropriate release time from normal classroom duties), would have to be resolved with the assistance of the proposed educator work group.

Some Committee members felt that the rationale for and vision behind Senior Teacher Leader roles felt less clear and compelling to them than had been articulated for Teacher Leader roles, and asked that the Committee devote more time in the meetings ahead to exploring comparisons and exemplars from other systems. Moreover, other Committee members indicated that most discussions of Senior Teacher Leader roles to-date had implied release time for a normal teaching load or an extension of the traditional 10-month work day to account for the additional responsibilities of the role. The group acknowledged that release time has significant implications for costs associated with the roles, including at the local district level, and agreed that this issue would have to be explored in detail by the Educator Working Groups as they develop model roles and responsibilities and assessed how best to structure the roles for

multiple school contexts (e.g. elementary school teacher versus high school teacher versus specialists).

(4) Compensation Structure

The Committee agreed that it would recommend minimum levels of base pay and supplemental pay prior to turning the next phase of the discussion to the proposed educator-led sub-committees. The group broadly agreed that a technical working group, whose membership would have to be clarified in future discussions, would need to convene to help clarify the technical details required to support implementation (e.g. role allocation rules, administrative planning related to PHRST, budgeting, etc).

Some Committee members expressed discomfort with the alternative proposal presented at the most recent town hall discussions, noting that while the alternative proposal was responsive to clear educator feedback that the current levels of base pay for Master's degrees should be preserved in the alternative system, it perpetuated a significant state investment in a "credential" that research indicates has a limited impact on student learning. Other Committee members expressed concerns that the alternative proposal had not yet addressed how National Board Certification might be recognized and rewarded in a future system. Still others suggested that the feedback received during the educator working sessions and the town halls was disproportionately from experienced educators less likely to opt-in to the alternative systems the Committee had discussed so far, and thus there was a need to get more input from junior educators in helping review and shape the system design.

The Committee agreed that it would revisit the compensation structure in a future meeting so that the group could review the research, understand the Delaware and national policy context, and clarify these unresolved questions. The Committee also suggested that the proposed Educator Work Group include representation from a broad range of educators, including junior educators, to ensure a range of perspectives are represented in those discussions to the extent possible.

Public Comment Period

Dr. Kevin Carson (President, DASA):

Dr. Carson urged the Committee to consider that the enabling legislation that created the Committee used the term "educator", which includes Administrators. He urged the Committee to consider this in its report and consider using the term "teacher" instead of "educator" to more accurately refer to the target group directly impacted by these proposals.

Dr. Carson indicated that the current set of proposals and discussions implied that a number of critical questions regarding Teacher Leadership had been deferred to the proposed Educator

Work Group, and urged the Committee to consider carefully whether questions were being deferred too readily when the Committee itself should resolve them.

Dr. Carson also spoke to the need to clarify a number of critical details – for example, the definition of a Teacher Leader “work day” – and whether this should be defined as something specific to these roles or whether it will be captured in some form by the existing provisions of Title 14.

Dr. Carson also asked that a comparative chart be provided to the Committee that shows the per diem earnings for 10-month teachers compared to 11-month and 12-month teachers so that the Committee has a more accurate understanding of the implied maximum compensation offered to educators relative to administrators in the proposed alternative compensation system.

Dr. Carson also touched on comments from Committee members that suggested that Senior Teacher Leader roles and Teacher Leader roles might require release time from normal classroom duties, and that the Educator Working Group would issue recommendations as part of its work in developing and defining model roles and responsibilities. He noted that every section lost would have to be back-filled, and that there would be an associated cost, including to the local district.

Dr. Carson closed by asking if the Committee had developed or reviewed model roles for Teacher Leadership in its discussions to-date.

Next Steps and Closing

Teri Quin Gray closed the discussion, noting that the Committee would reconvene in early December once Committee staff had clarified the next set of meeting dates.