

Committee to Advance Educator Compensation & Careers

Meeting Minutes

Meeting #14: January 30, 2015

1:00 – 3:30pm

Governor's Conference Room

12th Floor, Carvel State Office Building, 820 N French Street
Wilmington, Delaware

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 – (Former) Chair, House Education Committee and Representative, District 31
- Harvey Kenton – Representative, District 36
- Kim Williams – House Education Committee member, Representative, District 19
- David Sokola – Chair, Senate Education Committee and Senator, District 8
- Brian Pettyjohn – Senator, District 19 (via conference line)
- Meaghan Brennan – Director, Budget Development, Planning & Administration, Office of Management & Budget (via conference line)
- 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

Others present:

- Kevin Carson (DASA)
- James Dawson (WDDE)
- Avi Wolfman-Arent (WHYY)
- Melissa Hopkins (Rodel Foundation)

Welcome & Overview of the Agenda

Committee Chair Teri Quinn Gray welcomed Committee members as she called the meeting to order at 1:00pm. She reviewed the goals of the meeting and provided an overview of the agenda. Teri then turned the floor over to Lindsay O'Mara, Education Policy Advisor to Governor Markell, to provide an overview of process milestones over the next few months.

Lindsay stated that the goal for the meeting is to review a revised set of compromise proposals based on reactions received during the last CAECC discussion with the intention that the Committee can take action on a complete proposal at the next meeting (likely end of February or early March) which would allow the Committee to move to "Phase 2" which would turn the work to educator work groups.

Part I: Review the primary state investments in teacher compensation

Ryan Fennerty, CAECC Director, responded to the Committee's request during its January 16, 2005 discussion that it be provided with an overview of the size of current and past investments in major compensation factors (e.g. Master's degrees, credit toward advanced degrees, National Board Certification, Skills & Content Clusters, among others) as well as a survey of the available body of research regarding the importance of each of these areas of investment on student achievement.

The discussion began with a revisiting of the initial framing laid out at the July 30, 2014 meeting regarding approaches to compensation – from a "inputs"-based system which emphasizes pay for credentials, to a "performance" based system which emphasizes pay for quantifiable results or outputs, to a "responsibility" based system which emphasizes additional pay for additional responsibilities. Ryan pointed out that most public education systems reflect a focus on credentials and that teacher leadership models have emphasized investing more robustly in "responsibility"-based incentives.

The Committee then reviewed a survey of the more recent and commonly cited national research as well as Delaware-specific research via the Harvard Strategic Data Project that examined the impact of various factors on student achievement as measured in performance on Math and Reading results on state assessments controlling for other variables. The research explored years of experience, licensure test scores, advanced degrees, National Board Certification, and student performance on assessments separately. Members of the Committee asked for clarification about some of the studies, noting that the most recent was from 2007 and asked whether there were more updated resources available. Others pointed to the fact that the research is based on student assessments and therefore arguably offers a narrow basis for assessing how much each contribute to the growth of a student if defined more broadly.

The Committee then reviewed a high-level overview of the major current investments in educator compensation from the State, excluding local district investments, for additional context regarding how various factors are emphasized in the current system. The Committee noted that the Skills & Knowledge

Clusters and National Board Certification pay had been frozen in 2008, and the figures indicated on the slide reflected appropriations in the FY 2014 budget that would no longer continue as the 5 and 10 year horizon for Clusters and NBCT certification, respectively, expire for current educators receiving the stipends.

The Committee then reviewed a highly-level approximation of the primary proposed investments implied by the most recent iterations of the working proposal, which proposed investments in raising starting salaries and in supplemental pay for teacher leadership stipends with a portion reinvested from plus credits toward additional degrees in the alternative proposal. Committee members asked for clarification on the net state cost increase indicated on the slide, and it was pointed out that the figures were intended as a theoretical comparison of the cost of the current system versus the proposed system if all educators migrated to the alternative system at a single point in time. The Committee briefly reviewed the magnitude of investments in the current system and the new investments in teacher leadership in the alternative system to get a rough comparison of the categories of investment, maximum number of educators impacted, and size of the total investments.

The Committee also discussed the research behind National Board Certification, noting that a number of studies have shown that teachers with NBCT are more effective, on average, than those who are not certified, while also recognizing that the research is less clear in clarifying whether National Board is simply identifying the most effective teachers (self-selecting) or the certification process itself makes the teachers more effective. The Committee also explored the costs of NBCT attainment, how Delaware's neighbors currently support or incentivize NBCT at the state-level, and the policy context nationally in light of other states' experiences incentivizing NBCT in multiple contexts.

Part 2: Revisit Draft Proposals from January 16 meeting

The Committee revisited a revised version of the draft compromise proposals distributed on January 16, 2015 to Committee members. Lindsay O'Mara reminded the Committee that the purpose of these proposals was to reach a compromise on specific state-level parameters that the Committee felt it was critical that it define and clarify prior to turning the next phase of the discussion to educators and district-level practitioners through the Educator Working Group and Technical Advisory Group discussed in prior CAECC meetings.

The Committee discussed Proposal #1, which concerned state-level minimums regarded Teacher Leader eligibility criteria. The revised proposal suggested that "Effectiveness" be the minimum eligibility requirement. Some Committee members reiterated their concerns that the current proposal would imply that 99% of educators (the current distribution of educators receiving an "Effective" or "Highly Effective" rating on DPAS) would have access to Teacher Leadership roles. Other Committee members pointed to the aspiration that Teacher Leadership be available to the broadest pool possible and that the selection process at the district-level was the more appropriate mechanism for determining the best candidate to fulfill the roles in their schools. It was also noted that the current proposal would allow

educators on an improvement plan to be eligible for Teacher Leadership, and thus a requirement that an educator at least receive a 4 out of 4 rating on Components I through IV in addition to Satisfactory on Component V seemed warranted. It was proposed that a 4 out of 4 rating on Components I-IV and a Satisfactory rating on Component V. Individual Committee members were asked whether they could agree to the proposed changes and it was agreed that while many had reservations about this specific proposal, they would be willing to agree to it in the context of a “package” of compromises reflecting a balance of the priorities of the Committee.

The Committee discussed Proposal #2, which concerned Senior Teacher Leader roles, with members asking for clarifications on the wording in the handout. It was asked how “has demonstrated excellence in leading other adults” would be determined for Teacher Leaders, and the Committee agreed that this question would be added to the list of questions for the Educator Work Group to explore during its discussions. The question was asked whether Senior Teacher Leader roles would be confined to High Need Schools or whether the focus was on Senior Teacher Leaders having demonstrated ability serving in a high-need school or with a high-need population to become eligible. The Committee clarified that in prior conversations, the focus of the discussions had been eligibility, and that the current vision was that districts would have flexibility to determine how best to allocate their Senior Teacher Leader roles across schools. The Committee agreed that this was a question for the educator working groups to explore in more detail in the next phase of discussions.

The Committee discussed Proposal #3, which addressed opt-in opportunities. The Committee noted that the Technical Advisory Group discussed in prior meetings would recommend a specific time period for the provision that “those who are currently employed or have been employed in a Delaware public school within [X] years of the implementation date shall be considered “current employees” and retain the right of voluntary opt-in to the alternative system”.

The Committee discussed Proposal #4, which addressed additional opportunities for educators with a Bachelor’s degree to earn bumps to their base salary that over time build toward the level of pay associated with a Master’s degree by successfully completing multiple terms of Teacher Leadership. While some Committee members reiterated their support for this proposal in order to provide educators with more options beyond attaining a Master’s degree to reach a competitive salary level after their 10th year of teaching, others expressed concerns that some educators would see this as an increase in earnings only available to a certain subset of the population despite the fact that Master’s degree holders may also be demonstrating a commitment to Teacher Leadership while not being equally compensated for that same commitment.

The Committee discussed Proposal #5, which offered a series of proposals articulating the role that National Board Certification might play in the new system. Some Committee members recommended that the proposal to have the state offer partial reimbursement for the first attempt at certification be restructured as a partial reimbursement once the credential has been successfully obtained to better incentivize educators to persist in their efforts to become certified. Other members asked whether the proposals offering increases to base pay for NBCT educators who choose to serve in high need schools or with high need populations would apply to all educators or only those who opt into the new system.

It was clarified that that proposal as written intended for these incentives to only apply to those opted-in to the new system. Some Committee members expressed concerns that the stipends should also be extended to current educators who choose to not opt in to the alternative system. The Committee agreed to revisit this issue during its next meeting.

Public Comment Period

Dr. Kevin Carson President of DASA:

Dr. Carson asked whether this proposal had resulted in a placeholder in the current Governor's budget [Lindsay O'Mara clarified by saying no, there is no placeholder], asked that prior meeting minutes be posted as soon as possible, and asked that the CAECC website be updated in addition to the public meeting calendar with meeting location and time information prior to the next discussion. He asked for clarification as to whether there would be one or two working groups in the next phase of the Committee [Ryan Fennerty clarified that there would be two] and expressed his hope that those working groups have appropriate administrative representation.

Next Steps and Closing

Teri Quin Gray closed the discussion, turning the floor to Lindsay O'Mara, who clarified that a revised compromise proposal would be sent to the group based on this discussed, followed by a comprehensive outline of the agreements to-date, with a full week of lead-time for the group to review prior to convening next. The Committee did not set a specific date to reconvene but indicated that last week of February or early March were the likely windows for the next discussion.