

Committee to Advance Educator Compensation & Careers

Meeting Minutes

Meeting #15: March 30, 2015

1:30 – 4:00pm

Cabinet Room

Townsend Building, 401 Federal Street

Dover, Delaware

Attendance:

Committee members present:

- Teri Quinn Gray (CAECC Chair) – President, State Board of Education (via conference line)
- 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
- 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:

- Mike Jackson (Office of the Controller General)

Welcome & Overview of the Agenda

Lindsay O'Mara, Education Policy Advisor to Governor Markell, welcomed Committee members indicating that Committee Chair Teri Quin Gray would be joining via conference line a few minutes into the discussion. Lindsay called the meeting to order at 1:40pm. She reviewed the goals of the meeting and provided an overview of the agenda.

Lindsay explained that CAECC Director Ryan Fennerty will provide an overview of those changes that were made in response to the discussion at the January 30th discussion, then walk the group through the proposal section by section, asking members to raise questions and issues that must be resolved for them to support the package of recommendations. She noted that the Committee would take action on specific proposals for amendments to the draft language before moving to a group vote on the recommendations as a whole at the end of the discussion.

Part I: Review the Draft Proposals Document

Ryan Fennerty, CAECC Director, introduced a revised version of the Draft Proposals document that had been discussed at the January 16th and January 30th meetings. He relayed that the areas highlighted in yellow indicated revisions to the language and/or new proposals for consideration in light of the issues raised by the group at the last discussion.

He provided a summary of each proposal for the primary "unresolved questions" the CAECC had agreed to resolve prior to issuing its initial recommendations in the areas of 1) eligibility requirements for Teacher Leader positions, 2) eligibility requirements for Senior Teacher Leader positions, 3) opt-in opportunities for current educators, 4) levels of base pay for educators at all steps in the career pathway, and 5) whether the future system would recognize other credentials beyond a Master's degree for additional compensation.

Ryan noted that the revised language in the Draft Proposal handout was also included verbatim in the CAECC Draft Summary Recommendations document and that rather than debate the substance of these policy adjustments now, the goal was to ensure common understanding of the adjustments and answer any clarifying questions before tackling the issues in more detail in the context of the full summary recommendations.

The Committee reviewed the following:

- In the area of Teacher Leader eligibility requirements, the Committee reviewed language that eligibility would require "a 4/4 rating on Components I through IV AND an Effective summative rating in their most recent evaluation cycle"
- In the area of Senior Teacher Leader eligibility requirements, the Committee noted that the Educator Work Group would clarify how to evaluate whether a Senior Teacher Leader candidate has "demonstrated excellence in leading other adults"

- In the area of opt-in opportunities for current educators, the Committee reviewed language clarifying that a Technical Advisory Group would help issue recommendations on how to define “current employee” for the purposes of determining whether an individual has the right to opt-in to the new system
- The Committee reviewed a proposal to extend the proposed incentivizes associated with National Board Certification to all current members, including a \$3,000 annual supplement for those National Board Certified educators serving a significant high need population or in a high need school and 50% reimbursement for the cost of attaining National Board Certification upon successfully attaining the credential

Seeing no additional clarifying questions to the revised proposals, Ryan Fennerty directed the Committee to the CAECC Draft Summary Recommendations document for review.

Part 2: Discussion of the CAECC Draft Summary Recommendations document

Ryan Fennerty provided a brief overview of each section, noting the requested adjustments to the language received from Committee members. Proposed amendments to the language were opened to group discussion, followed by a Committee vote on whether to adopt the proposed change. Committee members were asked to object to a proposed change in those cases where it would prevent them from supporting the overall package of recommendations. The goal would be to quickly reach broad consensus on the majority of the draft language and dedicate the Committee’s attention to a handful of specific issues requiring significant attention before moving to a vote on the summary recommendations as a whole.

Summary Page

Committee members proposed that the introductory language be adjusted to articulate more clearly that Senate Bill 254 charged the Committee with offering recommendations for a new career pathway and compensation system to Governor Jack Markell.

Committee members proposed an extension of the proposed timeline of “Phase 2” to August, 2016, and proposed that language be included to note that while the Educator Work Group and Technical Advisory Group may meet concurrently, the Technical Advisory Group would require a number of details from the Educator Work Group for it to fulfill its scope of work and thus may need to meet beyond the anticipated timeline to support implementation.

The Committee agreed to adopt these changes to the existing language.

Career Pathway Structure

The Committee considered a proposal to insert language that would open it to considering alternatives to the Educator Career Pathway model outlined on Section I of the report during its discussions in Phase 2. The Committee debated this proposal, with some members expressing concerns that considering

alternative proposals would call into question a significant portion of the Committee's work at a late stage in the process and make any concrete recommendations difficult given the Teacher Leader and Senior Teacher Leader roles had been crafted after reaching broad agreement on the outlines of a core career pathway. Others noted that exploring other career pathway models would require significant new analysis and public vetting as had occurred with the current model. Still others noted that while appropriate levels of compensation at the various steps of the career pathway had been an issue of considerable debate during the educator work groups and public town halls, the fundamental structure of the career pathway, which ties progression to common career milestones, had never been a major area of debate, especially given it mirrored the NEA model very closely.

Others noted that while the Committee had surveyed a number of career pathway models in its first meetings, there had not, in their opinion, been serious consideration of alternatives since, and that the Committee should remain open to compelling alternatives should they emerge during future discussions in Phase 2. Some suggested that a compression of the steps of the current state scale similar to the process undertaken with the Paraprofessional state scale could achieve the same objective without having to create dual systems. Others noted that a core commitment throughout the CAECC process had been to allow current educators the option to remain unaffected by any changes and remain in the current system for the duration of their careers – a commitment which would be difficult to keep should the state pursue a compression of the current state scale. An alternative proposal was offered by a Committee member suggesting that it emphasize its commitment to developing a proposal that would allow current educators to remain in the existing compensation system, but that it would remain open to consideration of alternatives during Phase 2 that meet the parameters and spirit of Senate Bill 254.

The Committee agreed to adopt this second proposal and amend the existing language accordingly.

Teacher Leadership Roles

The Committee discussed a proposal to include "evaluation" among the broad responsibilities that a Teacher Leader role could be crafted to address (Section I.a.i). There was a second proposal to broaden the language "evaluation" to "including but not limited to, observation, coaching, and evaluation" and that language be added to Section I.a.iii as a specific area for Educator Work Group consideration given the range of roles that a Teacher Leader might play in supporting administrators in the evaluation process. The Committee agreed to adopt each of these proposed adjustments.

The Committee considered a proposal to add clarifying language to Section I.a.ii, which would amend the language to "Teacher Leaders should retain ["a foot in the classroom"] and significant direct responsibility for student academic growth...", and add a language to Section I.a.iii that the Educator Work Group develop guidelines for what "foot in the classroom" and "significant direct responsibility for student academic growth" might constitute in the cases of traditional classroom educators, specialists, and educators in other non-traditional classroom roles. The Committee agreed to adopt the changes.

The Committee considered a proposal to amend Section I.d.ii to read "school districts should not be required to include additional contract days for educators serving in Teacher Leader roles" to ensure the

language did not restrict school districts from including additional contract days if they wished to do so. The Committee agreed to adopt the changes.

The Committee considered and agreed to a proposal to insert language charging the Educator Work Group with offering comment on appropriate compensation for a Teacher Leader position while also having the Committee's report elaborate on its rationale for recommending a \$5,000 stipend.

The Committee considered a number of minor proposals to ensure language in the document was consistent with phrasing already existing in Senate Bill 254 and to ensure that the same language clarifying minimum parameters for on-going service requirements and selection processes for both Teacher Leader and Senior Teacher Leader roles was consistent. The Committee agreed to adopt these changes.

Senior Teacher Leadership Roles

The Committee considered a proposal to adopt the same wording changes to Section I.a.i, Section I.a.ii, and Section I.a.iii. in the description of Senior Teacher Leader roles and responsibilities as had been adopted for the same sections regarding Teacher Leaders. The Committee agreed to adopt these changes. The Committee also considered and adopted a proposal to adjust the language in Section I.c.i. which referenced a state-level "selection process" to refer to a state-level "screening process" instead.

The Committee considered a proposal to amend the language in Section I.d.ii to "Senior Teacher Leader roles should be structured to allow for flexibility in performing their duties during critical planning periods prior to and following the school year" from the original language that referred to Senior Teacher Leaders as 11-month positions. The rationale for the change was to ensure that the language clarify the Committee's intention that Senior Teacher Leaders be expected to contribute substantial time and energy outside of the standard 10-month work year – and that they have flexibility in performing their additional responsibilities during critical planning periods during, prior to, and following the school year – while also not imposing a financial burden on the district that is not fully supported by the state supplement. Some Committee members expressed their concern that the proposed new language did not go far enough in articulating that expectation, and asked the Committee staff come propose alternative language that made those expectations more explicit. The Committee agreed to adopt alternative language that 1) communicated the expectation for significant additional time beyond the traditional work day and 10-month contract, 2) clarifies that the duties can be performed flexible during, prior to, and following the school year, and 3) makes clear that the state supplement fully support these additional responsibilities with no assumption of additional financial obligation from the local school district.

The Committee considered and agreed to a proposal to insert language charging the Educator Work Group with offering comment on appropriate compensation for a Senior Teacher Leader position while also having the Committee's report elaborate on its rationale for recommending a \$17,000 stipend.

Career Pathway Compensation

The Committee considered and agreed to a proposal to adopt language that mirrored the new language to Section I (Career Pathway) that emphasizes the CAECC's commitment to developing a proposal that will allow current educators to remain in the existing compensation system, but that it also remain open to consideration of alternatives to the new career pathway during Phase 2 that meet the parameters and spirit of Senate Bill 254.

The Committee considered and agreed to a proposal to adjust the language in Section III to charge the Technical Advisory Group with recommending appropriate compensation levels for those educators who are required to obtain credentials beyond a Master's degree to become licensed and/or certified to practice in Delaware (i.e. Audiologists).

The Committee reviewed Section IV, parts a, b, c, d and e in detail, which refer to state-funded incentives to reward and recognize National Board Certification. While acknowledging the proposal extends \$3,000 annual stipends to National Board Certified educators serving in high need schools and significant high need populations in addition to 50% reimbursement of the costs associated with achieving National Board Certification, DSEA noted that one of the core requirements for their support of any proposal is that it restore the suspended state funding that had supported stipends for all educators who achieve National Board Certification. The provision that the annual stipend be extended only to educators serving in high need schools or serving high need populations would not be enough to secure the support of their members as a result.

DSEA noted that when state funding supporting base pay supplements for National Board Certification and Skills & Knowledge clusters were suspended in 2008, there had always been an expectation that those incentives would be restored at a point in the future, though not necessarily in the same form. Other Committee members noted that part of the context for the Joint Finance Committee suspending funding to support incentives for NBCT and Skills & Knowledge clusters was a perception that there was little evidence that they provided significant measurable benefits for students. Committee members did acknowledge, however, that additional research since 2008 has shown NBCT to correlate with more effective educators across multiple school systems.

Committee members noted that the framing for their discussions of a future compensation system throughout the CAECC process had been an emphasis on compensating on the basis of "additional pay for additional responsibility", noting that the \$3,000 stipends for National Board Certified educators serving with a high need population or in a high need school fits this paradigm given those contexts inherently lend them themselves to greater challenges and responsibility. Some Committee members noted that they would find it challenging to support a proposal that offered significant state compensation for credentials if there was also no assumption of additional responsibilities that would allow them to share their expertise beyond their classroom.

Committee members offered a compromise, suggesting that the Committee move beyond a narrow focus on "full restoration" of stipends for NBCT in its prior form given budget constraints and valid concerns that the prior structure could be improved upon, and instead have Committee staff explore how else to offer compensation to all educators who achieve National Board Certification in a way that

fits the “additional pay for additional responsibility” paradigm while also ensuring that the stipend not detract from proposals that would help encourage more of Delaware’s National Board Certified educators to serve in high need settings and with the children who need them most. Committee staff agreed to explore alternatives for CAECC discussion, noting that an additional meeting would have to be scheduled as soon as possible so that the Committee could come to a vote on the proposal and issues its recommendations.

Public Comment Period

No public comment.

Next Steps and Closing

The Committee agreed to hold another meeting as soon as possible, with April 15th noted as the earliest next opportunity to meet given Spring Break schedules, and complete its review of the CAECC Draft Summary Recommendations and vote on a final set of recommendations. The Committee agreed to not revisit prior agreements addressed during its March 30th discussion and to immediately pick up the conversation from where it had ended this discussion (Career Pathway Compensation Section IV, subsections a, b, c, d, and e) before addressing the remaining sections of the document (Opt-in Considerations and Implementation). Lindsay O’Mara, Education Policy Advisor to Governor Markell, adjourned the discussion at 4:15pm.