



KANSAS P20 EDUCATION COUNCIL FEBRUARY 15, 2010

MINUTES

Bill Wagon opened the meeting of the Kansas P-20 Education Council at the Kansas National Education Association (KNEA) office in Topeka, Kansas, at 8:30 a.m.

Members present:

Bill Wagon, Co-Chair	Christine Downey-Schmidt, Co-Chair
Diane DeBacker	Doug Penner
Brenda Dietrich	Reggie Robinson
Dick Hedges	Sue Storm
Deena Horst (Clay Aurand designee)	William Thornton
Claudette Johns (Blake West designee)	Janet Waugh
Gail Kuehl	

Members Absent:

Barry Downing	Melissa Ness
Terry Dunn	Linda Robinson
Janis Lee	Pam Robinson
Jan Long	Jean Schodorf

Staff Present:

Gary Alexander (KBOR)	Jean Redeker (KBOR)
	Penny Rice (KSDE)

Observers:

Doug Moeckel

Bill Wagon distributed information on the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), drawing special attention to the 2008-2009 state report on Kansas. MHEC is a compact created by the Midwest Legislative Conference of the Council of State Governments in the early 1990's. Twelve states passed legislation to become members. MHEC advances Midwestern higher education through interstate cooperation and resource sharing through cost savings, student access, and policy research. Bill noted that MHEC provides international comparisons for our state. Kansas has the highest percentage in the region of adults age 25 and over with some college but no degree. Doug Penner noted that he recently attended a meeting sponsored by MHEC in Chicago and much of their work focuses on completion.

Charge for the Day

A review of the data presented and discussion from the January gap analysis leadership meeting will be presented by Gary, Diane and Jean. Next steps will be discussed. Christine and Bill will present an update of their recent visit with Governor Parkinson. Diane will give a brief update on the Kansas Race to the Top application.

GAP Analysis Update

Diane distributed copies of the Achieve Side-By-Side Comparison of the Common Core Standards for Reading Writing, Speaking and Listening and the Side-By-Side Comparison of the Common Core Standards for Mathematics. Kansas was given the opportunity to provide feedback on the first confidential draft and reports that most of our changes were incorporated into the second draft. Chief State School Officers as well as Governor's received a confidential draft. The hope is that the standards will be open for public comment and to our state board for approval by April.

Regarding the state Gap Analysis IHE survey, Gary reported the following:

- Approximately 70 requests were sent out with 43 responses received, split relatively evenly between math and English.
- 11 community colleges, 6 state universities and 4 independent colleges rated the Math standards
- 10 community colleges, 6 state universities and 4 independent colleges rated the English standards
- There was a strong overall support for the standards
- Some commented they feel they are idealizes but nonetheless necessary
- General concern that students are not being prepared in middle and high school – which more or less begs our question
- Several comments from both math and English faculty that students are not learning the nuts and bolt (e.g., basic arithmetic, grammar)

Jean explained the methodology and reviewed the process of compilation and computed averages. Discussion proceeded. It was noted that the survey was not sent to high school faculty but that their input was needed and they should be included in this discussion. Gary and Diane will work to bring all these folks into the discussion. Gail noted that it would behoove the council to work with their workforce representatives to put something similar to this survey together for that group as well. The survey would reflect a different perspective from those in the world of work. Bill also felt including discussion of the core competencies project here would also be appropriate. The council felt that this is where the focus should be in bringing all these groups together to discuss ways to move forward.

The Gap Analysis committee met on January 25 at the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE). Diane distributed the following summary of what was discussed at the meeting.

1. Common Core Standards are a given. Kansas, along with 47 other states, signed onto the CCS in May 2009 with the MOU signed by then-Commissioner

- Alexa Posny and Governor Parkinson. Our K-12 standards will change as a result of the CCS which are to be released by the end of March 2010.
2. A survey conducted by the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) with select individuals from 11 community colleges, six state universities and four independent colleges for the math standards and 10 community colleges, six state universities and 4 independent colleges for the English language Arts standards.
 3. There was strong overall support for the standards.
 4. There is not that big of a gap.
 5. Some commented they (standards) were idealized but nonetheless necessary.
 6. The general concern was that students were not being prepared in middle and high school (which more or less begs our question).
 7. Several comments were made from both the math and language arts faculty that students are not learning the nuts and bolts (of basic arithmetic and grammar).
 8. Technology needs to be utilized more at the higher education level – P12 students have more access to technology.
 9. Instructional practices need to be aligned. K-12 uses cooperative learning, small class sizes, professional learning communities, technology, engagement, building relationships, etc). These are not commonly found in large collegiate classes.
 10. Need to be more honest and forthright as we counsel students at both the secondary and postsecondary levels. Is this student really prepared to study a certain subject?
 11. The use of inventories such as the Kuder would assist at the K-12 level.
 12. Model the “pathways” of career clusters model for all students.
 13. Should KSDE consider different diplomas for students taking different paths?
 14. Need to increase opportunities for concurrent enrollment and transfer of credits between and among IHE’s.
 15. Recognize the need to demand more is real –more students want to have a postsecondary education.

Diane asked the council if any of the areas rose to the top as priorities that they should address. Areas discussed include: (#8) the technology that seems to be present at the K-12 level but not utilized at the higher education level; (#9) instructional practices needed to be aligned; (#10) counseling students; (#12) career clusters as a model for students. Additionally, it must be understood that ultimately we are preparing students for the workforce and technical education should not be looked at as a second choice. The importance of moving from K-12 to the world of work is as important as moving from higher education to the world of work. Agreement on the level of mastery for students should be addressed. Focus on soft skills is missing and must be focused on as well. Much of what is important is addressed in the 21st Century learner profiles. The next step will be to keep focused on moving forward with this ground work that has been laid and to develop a next steps document.

Discussion regarding how P20 will work with our next Governor was addressed. Businesses need to come forward and let the Governor know that we all need to come together, K-12, post-secondary and the business community, this will speak volumes. Having a conversation with the Governor candidates to sustain the structure of the P20 council is important. Needs to be said that the Kansas State Board of Education (KSBE) and the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) can move policy and practice with those

entities and absent the P20 council conversations will not continue. P20 must point to things they have learned and those which they want to move forward.

Update on Visit with Governor Parkinson

Christine, Bill, Diane, Reggie and Gary met with the Governor in December to provide an update on the work of the P20 council. They also presented the Early Childhood Recommendations which the Governor fully supported.

Discussion regarding Senate Bill 447, which moves in the direction of the P20 recommendations, ensued. Christine asked if the council wanted to pursue any role in regard to the bill. The council agreed to support the bill, without the mention of funding, and have staff from both KSDE and KSBOR put a statement of support together.

Diane distributed a list of possible cuts by the Governor. Parents As Teachers is noted on the list. KSDE provided comments suggesting this is not a good move.

Race to the Top

Diane distributed a summary on the Race to the Top application submitted by Kansas. She reviewed the 4 reform areas, 1) adopting standards & assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workforce and to compete in the global economy; 2) building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction; 3) recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and 4) turning around our lowest-achieving schools. Kansas has the opportunity to receive \$166 million (505 to be distributed to participating districts) if the application is approved. A total of forty states plus the District of Columbia submitted applications in Phase I. Phase 1 applications were due January 19, 2010. Notification of Phase I recipients will be received by April 2010. Phase II applications (for states that were unsuccessful in Phase I or waited until Phase II) are due by June 1, 2010. Notification of Phase II recipients will be received September 2010. Funding will be available 2010-2014. We expect Kansas to be a standout application as districts came together to sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was a part of the Race to the Top application process. The following statistics were reviewed:

- Participating districts – 283
- Percentage of participating districts – 97% (283/293)
- Number of districts declining invitation – 6 (Bluestem USD 205; Smith Center USD 237; Belle Plaine USD 357; Eudora USD 491; Ft. Larned USD 495; Lewis USD 502)
- Number of districts not respond (MOU returned) – 4 (Northeast USD 246; Souther Cloud USD 334; Chanute USD 413; Stanton County USD 452)
- MOU's returned without teacher association representative – 8

It was noted that with this many districts signing on without seeing the application speaks volumes for the confidence that districts have of KSDE.

In addition, Diane reviewed the thirty-one projects KSDE has included on the Race to the Top application. The projects should be familiar as KSDE has talked about them for

years. Areas of the application that Kansas may lose points are the teacher compensation models and charter schools. KSDE's application is posted online at www.ksde.org under the ARRA link.

Where do we go from here?

- Continue focus on the Gap Analysis Survey areas of concern bringing together representatives from higher education, K-12 and business and industry
- Develop a next steps document/list based on conversations with Gap Analysis committee as well as P20 council areas of concern
- Possible meetings with Governor candidates regarding P20 council
- Councils agreement on Senate Bill 447 and providing a statement of support

As the meeting came to a close, Bill informed the council of the recent announcement from Reggie that he would be leaving the Kansas Board of Regents, taking a new position as Professor of Law at Washburn University. He will assume his new position July 2010.

In addition, the announcement was made of the Kansas State Board of Education to suspend the search for a new Commissioner of Education and have Diane assume the responsibilities of Interim Commissioner of Education on an indefinite basis. This decision came from the Board at their March meeting.

KSBOR will host the next meeting on April 20 at the KNEA building. The meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.