

Performance Evaluation Advisory Council Meeting

Minutes from the July 20, 2012 meeting

Illinois Education Association Professional Development Center
3440 Liberty Drive
Springfield, Illinois

Meeting Called to Order

The following PEAC members were present: Amy Alsop representing Kristen Adams, Dr. Bette Bergeron, Ben Boer (by phone), Dr. Gail Fahey, Joe Matula, Steve Ponisciak, Dr. Diane Rutledge, Jodi Scott, Mitchell Roth representing Audrey Soglin, Dick Spohr, Michelle Standridge, Dr. Linda Tomlinson, and Dr. Richard Voltz.

Also present were: Don Daily (Regional Office of Education 27), Erika Hunt (Center for Study of Education Policy Illinois State University), Ernie Morgan (Value-Added Research Center), Mary Jane Morris (Consortium for Educational Change), Mrs. Kay Sylvester (SIU Edwardsville), Gretchen Weber and Larry Stanton (American Institutes for Research), Ryan Lei and Henri Fonville (ISBE).

Also present by conference phone were: Christi Chadwick (ISBE – Chicago), Nick Montgomery (University of Chicago), Emily Cummings and Ivan Montoy (Teachscape), and Margery Yeager (Education Council).

Mitch Roth made a motion to approve the minutes from the May PEAC meeting as written. This was seconded by Gail Fahey and approved by the Council.

5Essentials/Illinois Survey of Learning Conditions

Nick Montgomery from the University of Chicago was introduced. Mr. Montgomery and his staff have been awarded the RFSP contract to provide a survey of learning conditions for Illinois public schools. Mr. Montgomery made presentation explaining the 5Essentials which are survey tools used to predict school success. The Illinois Survey of Learning Conditions is a research based reporting system which will measure the following indicators: safety, student discussion, English instruction practices, math instruction practices, course clarity, collective responsibility, academic press, post-secondary orientation, college expectations, teacher professional development, teacher collective responsibility, teacher commitment to school, teacher influence in decision, program coherence, teacher outreach to parents, principal instructional leadership, parent involvement, and community resources. The survey benchmark will be the same statewide. Mr. Montgomery explained the Illinois timeline. Outreach will begin fall 2012 with getting the word out so schools and districts can register. The actual surveys will be conducted during February and March 2013 and will include students in grades 6-12, all teachers, parents and community members. The scoring will be done during April and May with the final reports available June 2013. Survey results will go to schools, school districts, as well as ISBE. Reports can become public whenever the entity decides to release the findings.

During the discussion that followed members had several questions. How will communication with parents and teachers be done throughout the state? Mr. Montgomery answered that ideally

a school's administration will be responsible for getting teachers, parents, and community members to participate in the survey. How this is done will depend on the administrative structure within a school or school district. Will survey results become a part of the School Report Card? PEAC was told that discussions concerning this are ongoing. Many realize it is desirable for these results to be shared so building and district personnel can improve. One member voiced that the timing of this sharing is important and that teachers should be shown the results prior to them being released to the public. A member also stated that principals should not make school improvement decisions in isolation. Another member asked if the questions align with the Common Core. What is the rationale for not including the principal's perspective? In reality this is their school. Mr. Montgomery responded that teachers are the best respondents from a measurement perspective. How often will the survey be conducted, every year or every other year? Mr. Montgomery replied the RFSP states this will be done every year with the results to be reported in June. February and March are the best times to do the survey because school has been in session for several months and from a research point of view it is best to conduct the survey prior to staffing decisions for the next school year. Will there be training when the data is released on how to interpret the results? Mr. Montgomery stated that materials and resources are built in to guide schools and districts when interpreting survey results. The RFSP contract does not provide for "what do you do with this data" help. One member is concerned about the lack of coherence with reasons for change; this needs to be shared, this needs to be connected to the school improvement plans, Common Core, and there is a need to follow-up so you can see coherence. The data also needs to be transparent with those who teach, work, or have students in the school system. There needs to be a collaborative working relationship within the school community.

Update on Race to the Top

Christi Chadwick spoke concerning a RFSP that has been released looking for a contractor to conduct an Implementation Study. The study will look at how PERA is being implemented in the Race to the Top 3 (RTT3) districts across the state. The first report is due September 2014 and based on the results recommendations for improvement will be made. Participation is not limited to RTT3 districts, other districts may volunteer to participate and will remain anonymous.

Ms. Chadwick also spoke on a second RFSP that will be released looking for a contractor to organize vendors of commercial assessment materials so local districts can buy through approved providers at a good price. The contractor will also search for materials from universities and others that can be shared at no cost. We will enter into an agreement with the Colorado Department of Education to combine efforts for getting assessment materials. This is being done to keep the cost to districts in both states at a minimum and allow the school districts to choose from a wide variety of assessments and materials.

Update from CEC on Evaluator Training

Mary Jane Morris gave an update on the teacher and principal evaluation training modules. To date 8829 teacher evaluators and 2154 principal evaluators have registered for training. Modules 1, 2, and 3 have been released for both trainings. Modules 4 and 5 are ready to pilot and will be released to the evaluators by month end. Remediation began last week offering face to face

training. CEC is aware there is a need to do a better job of messaging to users and Growth Through Learning is working on improving communications.

Erika Hunt gave an update on the last meeting with the advisory council that is partnering with this work. The advisory council realizes the need for constant communication with the school districts. Assessments are being updated and a webinar is being created to help explain the training difficulties. Ms. Hunt stated that people in the field think this whole evaluation thing is going away and that they are wrong, they must do this training in order to comply with the law. Face to face remediation sessions are being scheduled for those who need it. They are also working with Teachscape about providing more supports. One of the PEAC members stated that union members are really concerned about the latest changes to the trainings namely module 3 being a self assessment and multiple attempts to pass are allowed.

Dr. Rutledge gave an overview of the work PEAC has accomplished over the past couple school years and asked members to make note of what changes to rules and legislation might need to be made as PEAC moves forward.

American Institutes for Research (AIR) Work Plan

Gretchen Weber gave an overview of who and what the American Institutes for Research is. Ms. Weber also explained AIR's work plan for PEAC and listed the challenges for 2012-2013. AIR will facilitate and coordinate PEAC meetings, provide specific content resources and technical assistance, support communication strategy and actions, and report on progress. Larry Stanton has been assigned to move this work along.

Learning Assessments

Steve Ponisciak and Ernie Morgan gave a PowerPoint presentation concerning student growth. Mr. Ponisciak and Mr. Morgan are from VARC (Value-Added Research Center). They discussed Evaluation Requirements, Introduction to Growth Measures, Assessment/Model Selection, did a Review of Assessment Types, presented a case study on Type III Assessments, and discussed key concerns moving forward. Their presentation gave insight on how important it is to get this right and that there are many factors to be considered. Key concerns moving forward included the need for more precision in defining "growth," development of a standard definition of "acceptable growth," the need for greater guidance in the development of Type II and Type III assessments, and the need of a fuller understanding of which models can and cannot be applied to which assessments. It was suggested that as this is developed PEAC keeps track of ideas or components of what training and professional development will need to include.

There was no public comment. The next meeting is scheduled for August 24 at the Parke Hotel in Bloomington. There being no other business this meeting adjourned.

These minutes were recorded by Henri Fonville and approved during the August 24th PEAC meeting.

Henri Fonville