

Advisory Team: Accountability Task Force

MINUTES

APRIL 15, 2016

9:00AM-12:00PM

OFFICE OF THE NH DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

ADVISORY TEAM LEADS	Scott Mantie, Paul Leather, and Sandra MacDonald, NH DOE
CONSULTANTS	Scott Marion and Susan Lyons, Center for Assessment
NOTE TAKER	Susan Lyons, Center for Assessment
ATTENDEES	Marie Blanchard, Heather Cummings, Terri Forsten, Deborah Fleurant, Ellen Hume-Howard, Jerry Frew, Nate Greenberg, Carl Ladd, Lorraine Tacconi-Moore, Mary Clary Barry, Irv Richardson, Mary Moriarty, Patrick Connors, Nancy Stiles, Chris Demers, Mark Conrad, Rob Malay, Mary Wilson, Dave Backler, Jim O'Rourke, Patrick Connors, Jerry Frew, Tammy Davis, Mike Jette, Mary Conrad, Donna Crook, James O'Neil
OBSERVERS	Keith Burke, Lauren Heiter, Aaron Hughes, Dina Rabuck
PRE-READ MATERIALS	ElmoreTheInstructionalCore.pdf ; PB-LB-DDIA-POLICY-FINAL-EMBARGOED.pdf ; Theories of Action for ESSA_040516.docx

DISCUSSION	
	<p>OBJECTIVES FOR MEETING:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of goals for students and schools from previous meeting. 2. Outline goals for NH's school accountability system. 3. Begin developing a theory of action for a NH ESSA accountability system.
9:00	<p>Welcome and review agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Paul Leather and Scott Mantie, NH DOE <p><u>Discussion:</u> Deputy Commissioner Paul Leather reminded the task force members that this is a unique reboot opportunity for the state and that the task force has been commissioned to purposefully represent many different voices. The activities that were planned for this meeting were designed to bring to light and value those differing perspectives.</p>
9:10	<p>Reflections from the readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Scott Mantie, NH DOE and Scott Marion, Center for Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Instructional Core ○ Improvement and Accountability ○ Theories of Action for ESSA <p><u>Discussion:</u> Scott Marion asked the task force members to share their reflections from the advance reading materials. To start off the discussion Irv Richardson pointed out that New Hampshire is smaller than Finland, and therefore there is no reason that we cannot set a high bar and hold ourselves accountable. Nate Greenberg urged that as we think about accountability, we look at what we are expecting from districts in addition to what resources they can expect from the state. If there are going to be additional costs to meet the expectations of the new accountability system, we need to identify who is going to be responsible for that burden. Scott Marion responded to this concern by emphasizing that the system we design should be in alignment with high quality teaching and learning. In this way, the accountability system does not impose new requirements over and above what schools should already be doing. Following that point, another task force member added that the new system should be within the bound of our current resources. This is an opportunity to shift and re-allocate resources and find multiple measures that districts find relevant. Mark Conrad noted that he felt like the statewide assessment (Smarter Balanced) provides redundant information because of their use of an interim assessment system. Addressing this redundancy could provide for a better use of instructional time. This task force member advocates for a system that can be flexible enough to support the work around assessment that schools are already doing. Scott Marion pointed out that we will be having deeper discussions into assessment systems in subsequent meetings. Paul Leather concluded the discussion by expressing the need for a coherent and comprehensive system that is maintained through reciprocal accountability. Mr. Leather said that one of the decision points we will have early on is how far we want to pursue the development of a comprehensive, balanced system to create a more coherent experience at the classroom level. He posed the question, how would an accountability system work if it used local, benchmark assessments? The hope is that both the local and state systems can work together.</p>
9:30	<p>Creating our touchstone—what are the highest priority purposes of our accountability system and what are the intended uses of the results?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Scott Marion, Center for Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Activity #1 from handout

For this first activity Scott Marion asked that the task force members first work independently, then in pairs, and lastly in groups to identify their highest priority purposes and uses for accountability results. In other words, what uses do the task force members want the accountability results to be able to support? The agreed-upon purposes in each of the groups were written on butcher paper and posted around the room for the full-group to see. Photos of each group's paper are included in Appendix A. Cross-cutting themes for the desired uses included: 1) ensuring that students are learning and 2) informing continuous improvement (e.g., highlighting best practices, identifying schools for support and also helping schools to identify their own areas of focus). Throughout the responses there was overwhelming support for designing a system that is embedded in practice in that the measures are connected directly to classroom teaching and learning. Additionally, there was a desire to incorporate multiple measures that reflect the values of the community (e.g., focusing on more than just academic achievement).

10:15 Outlining a Theory of Action for the NH ESSA Accountability System

- ✓ Scott Marion and Susan Lyons, Center for Assessment
 - The theory of action will both guide our system design and serve as a framework for evaluation into the effectiveness of the system we implement. A theory of action should outline the specific mechanisms and processes that must be in place in order for our system to be able to fulfill the goals, purposes, and uses.
 - Activity #2 from handout

For the second activity, Scott Marion asked task force members to divide into five new groups by counting off. Each groups' task was to identify one big picture goal of the accountability system and begin to build out a theory of action of how the accountability data will be used to help realize the goal. Dr. Marion worked through an example of how the accountability system will be used to meet the goal of educating the community about school quality. With task force input, three mechanisms were identified to support this goal which included designing a system that is reflective of community values, providing clear and accessible reporting, and building credibility from within (i.e., among students, teachers, and leaders). Groups were then given time to work independently and with facilitators to begin articulating their own theories of action.

11:15 Sharing out from theory of action activity

- ✓ Sandie McDonald, NH DOE and Susan Lyons, Center for Assessment

The goals identified by the set of groups were: 1) integrating the assessment system into competency-based education, 2) maximizing student learning by highlighting growth, 3) creating a system that is built on relevant evidence that is intrinsically valuable to stakeholders, 4) increasing student engagement, and 5) creating a system that is reflective of community values. Electronic notes were received from groups 2 and 3 and are included in their unedited form in Appendix B. General consensus was that while the theory of action activity was challenging, it was valuable in the task force members were able to think creatively yet explicitly about how a new accountability system will achieve the desired outcomes for students in New Hampshire. To conclude, Scott Marion noted some groups used this activity to draw a bit outside the lines (i.e., going beyond ESSA provisions) to imagine an accountability system that reflects New Hampshire's innovative spirit. Drs. Marion and Lyons will work to write a draft theory of action for the new accountability system that reflects the ideas brought forth at this meeting. This meetings' work and the theory of action will lead us to the discussion about which indicators to consider including in the accountability system next time.

11:55 Next steps and next meetings

- ✓ May 26: 1:00-4:00 PM
- ✓ June 10: 9:00-Noon
- ✓ July 7: 1:00-4:00 PM
- ✓ August 16: 9:00-noon
- ✓ September 9: 9:00-noon
- ✓ October 4: 9:00-noon
- ✓ November 2: 1:00-4:00
- ✓ December 8: 9:00-noon

Noon Adjourn

CONCLUSIONS

Thank you for the valuable participation and input from the task force members. We will work before the next meeting to provide you with a draft theory of action document that reflects the priorities you identified at this meeting. At the next meeting we will be discussing in more detail the indicators that will comprise the new accountability system. As with this meeting, pre-reading materials will be sent to you in advance. We will also be working to schedule additional task force meetings that will go beyond June to continue this work.

ACTION ITEMS

PERSON RESPONSIBLE

DEADLINE

Draft theory of action & indicator readings

Center for Assessment

May 19

Pre-reading

Task Force

May 26

Appendix A: Task Force Members' Identified Priority Purposes and Uses for Accountability Results

INDIVIDUAL: • Ensure student growth
• Means something to stakeholders (students, teachers, parents)

SCHOOL: • Ensure schools move students (ALL)
• Ensure standards alignment
• Guide PD (strengths, weaknesses)
• Fit into school business - not a "done to" • encourage collegiality

DISTRICT: • Support/allocate resources
• Yields evidence of teaching and learning that matters.

STATE: • Identify districts/schools that need support
• Supportive vs. punitive
• Shines a light on what's working

• What is college ready?

• How do we provide incentive?
- School
- Individual students

• Balance of local control + broader accountability

• Strong Commitment to Plan

• Systems to Compile + report

• P D link

- instructionally meaningful for educators + students
- more appropriately adaptive
- timely results (immediate for objective items)
- measure proficiency + growth
- understandable results/data
- HS-differentiate college vs career-readiness
- progress monitoring component
- formative short + long-term assess + term growth
- sufficient detail (data) relative to measured standards

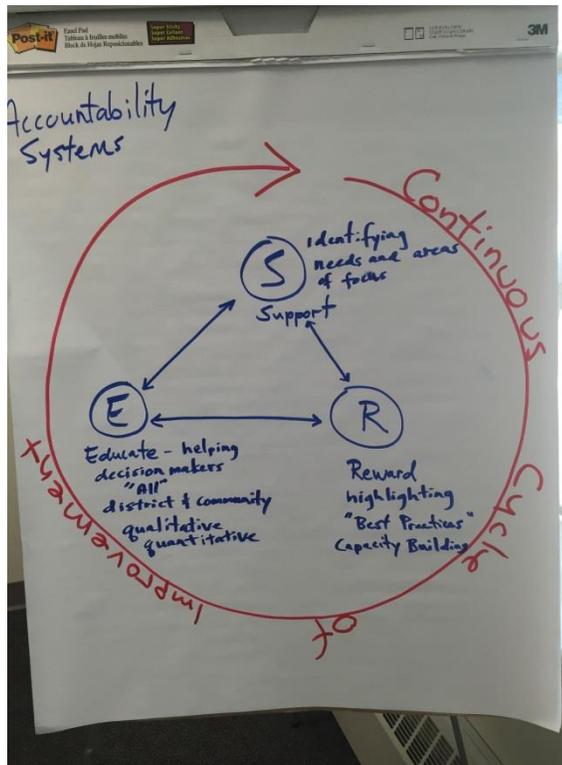
- System signal what we value
Multiple measures

Ex.

- Multiple content areas - ach. level
- Student Engagement
- Parent Involvement
- ~~assess + term growth~~
- Formative Practices, Professional Growth

- Inform continuous improvement

- Embedded in practice



- o> Menu of assessments for districts to consider using
- o> Combination of standardized assessments and locally created processes to assess student learning at points in time
- o> Professional growth is closely connected to student growth
- o> Used for the betterment of our communities (good, not evil).
- o> Must be cautious connected, seamless for students to drive their learning on their continuum of learning.
- o> A competency based system assesses on a continuum of learning; we need a system that honors that.

The Data Group's Input ☺

- Synchronous Data Inputs.
 - Including Results for multiple tests.
 - Demographics.
- Account for All
 - Midyear testing with only By/EOY Data
 - Roster submission validation
- Subgroup Identification
 - Count everyone
 - Identify Business Rules

Appendix B: Sample Theory of Action notes from Activity #2

Sample 1

GOAL: Establish a system that highlights *growth* on the learning continuum

- Create a learning continuum connected to standards, common core state standards
- Communicating student performance regularly, based on standards
- Professional Development to support understanding the learning standards
- Use multi-dimensional assessment tools (inquiry - collaborate)
- Assess regularly, locally to guide instruction on the trajectory
- Maximize Learning Trajectory for each Student
- Assessing to the Standards; standards-based report cards, grade level standards
- Transferability of skills
- Measure **GROWTH**
- Professional Learning - differentiated instruction to support *growth* for all
- Moving toward a meaningful post-secondary experience

Sample 2

Goal - An accountability system that is built on relevant evidence that is intrinsically valuable to stakeholders - students, educators, and the community.

How do you envision using accountability data to realize this goal?

- We intend to use these data to determine the degree to which instruction results in students reaching performance targets.
- These targets need to be clearly articulated and hold value for students, educators, community.
- If we are going to rely on multiple measures, we are going to have to ensure reliability across measures, scorers, evidence.
- This information needs to appropriately inform administrators to target resources and support for educators.
 - Real evidence that points to instruction
 - Purposeful for various stakeholders
- Body of Evidence
 - Qualitative - what makes the school unique?
 - Quantitative
 - Not just test scores
 - Student attendance
 - Staff attendance
 - Advanced degrees for staff
 - Per pupil budget
 - Growth model - not comparing different cohorts
- Universal data that means the same thing across schools and districts

- Common PD for analysis and interpretation of results
- Reported Results
 - Tool for educators to determine instructional implications
 - Read it
 - Know what it says
 - Make the necessary changes
 - Reports that are mindful of confidentiality requirements
 - Common understanding of "good enough" - competence
 - 50th percentile? 70th percentile
 - Level 3 - do we all have similar definitions of a 3
- Multiple points of time - not once a year - with timely turnaround of results
- Combination of local and state assessments
- Unintended negative consequences
 - Confusion
 - Uneveled playing field across districts
 - Actual progress may hide behind results
 - Funding to cover things like PD
 - Attaching funding to "priority status" discourages getting off the list
 - False positives
 - Some schools aren't as good as they think they are