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**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, N.H. 03301**

**Task Force to Develop a Performance-Based School Accountability System
May 14, 2010, 9:00 am – 12 pm
Department of Education Board Room**

NEXT MEETING: Friday, June 11, 9 am – 12 noon

Attending:

X	Virginia Barry, Ph.D.	Commissioner of Education
	Brian Cochrane	Director of Assessment and Accountability Nashua School District
X	Paul Couture	Principal, Stevens High School, Claremont
X	Jerome Frew	Superintendent, Kearsarge Regional School District
	Molly Kelly	Chair, Education Committee, NH Senate
	Daphne Kenyon	NH State Board of Education
	Paul Leather	Director, Division of Adult Learning, NH Department of Education
X	Scott Marion	National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, Dover
	Deborah McNeish	Principal, Conant/Rumford School, Concord, NH
X	Judith Fillion	Director, Division of Program Support, NH Department of Education
	Edward Murdough	Bureau of School Approval
X	Kathleen Murphy	Director, Division of Instruction, NH Department of Education
X	Emma Rous	Chair, Education Committee, NH House of Representatives
	Vincent Spiotti	Bethlehem School Board, Bethlehem, NH
X	Deborah Wiswell	Bureau of Accountability, Curriculum and School Improvement, Division of Instruction, NH Department of Education

Guests

Representative Franklin Gould, NH House, Lebanon, NH
Dean Michener, Executive Director, NH School Boards Association
Karen Laba, New England Comprehensive Center (NECC), RMC Research, Portsmouth, NH

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NOTES:**1. Welcome and Reflections:** Deb opened the meeting at 9:25 am.

She described a grant proposal to fund a consortium of states to develop/ use the Student Growth Percentile model developed by Damian Bettebenner, Center for Assessment. Federal funding is available through EAG (enhanced assessment grant). These short term grant funds would be used to build on the technical components of the system, as well as enhance development of the supporting materials/ documentation. Scott added details about the designs being considered. The Center for Assessment is now recruiting expert panels, participating states to finalize the submission.

Deb indicated that some funds are included in the second round application for Race to the Top for continuing work on Student Growth Percentile (SGP).

Attendees shared their current thinking about the performance based system and its elements.

Brian Cochrane, Nashua, representing the DOE AYP Task Force – moving toward some conclusion with some of the decisions to be made about the performance based system; optimistic that this group will be able to consolidate many of the elements of the system at the June meeting.

Paul Couture, Claremont – missed previous meeting, but reading notes; still feel a need to re-familiarize with the conversation

Dean Michener, NHSBA – interested in learning more about the EAG grant effort.

Frank Gould, NH House – immersed in legislative discussion of gambling; distracted from attention to this committee

Emma Rouse, NH House – presentation to the legislative committee went well; good questions from legislators;

Deb reported on her presentation to the Senate committee on May 4, which came about because Senators couldn't attend the April 20 session due to a conflict. Much discussion focused on the level 2 optional component of the performance based system, with good support.

Commissioner Barry – reiterated praise for the quality of the presentation to the legislators; shared thoughts emerging from a recent discussion with Charlotte Danielson around teacher evaluation models using multiple sources of information and looking at school level performance measures as more informative than individual teacher measures as a tool for accountability

Jerry Frew, Kearsarge – pleased to hear good reception of the level 2 component; on reflection, it feels like we're headed in right direction, toward the practical application of this in the schools

2. INPUT System: Deb reported that OIT (Office of Information Technology) has been able to upload the system into the NH DOE servers; checking final edits on language, etc., in time for implementation before Sept. 1 start of next school year.

Piloted with a few schools (beta test), shared the plan for launch of the system with other schools.

Jerry suggested outreach to principals featuring presentations by the principals involved in the beta testing/ pilot. Karen offered NECC services to host a webinar for all principals and superintendents.

TO DO: Deb and Karen will draft a plan to conduct such a presentation.

3. Subgroups: Scott began a discussion of whether to hold schools accountable for serving selected student "subgroups" as a component of the performance based system. Does the committee wish to include subgroup data to make a judgment about the "opportunity to provide an adequate education."

Deb offered an overview of the decisions to be made around judging "gaps" among subgroups.

Discussion:

- the existing (NCLB) expectation that ALL students achieve at the same levels in the same period of time raises concerns
- concern about the ability to fairly judge gaps at the high school level since can't apply the "growth" model due to data limitations
- will federal expectations change regarding ALL proficient? Unknown as of today
- subgroups are a valuable piece of information because they help districts identify where they are falling short; but can the system provide enough growth information to judge fairly, particularly at the high school level
- schools currently gather portfolio evidence of student growth in learning but it's difficult to translate that into measures that "fit" into a standardized system;
- consider the phrase in the legislation, line 97, "totality of performance" measures – what does that mean in terms of subgroups? Is examining subgroup performance more than a question of 'adequacy' -- the legislation - is asking?
- when we get to the ratings, when we reach the summary statement, do we check off "adequate" for 34 of 35 indicators then NO on subgroups? Would that result in a determination of NOT MEETING adequacy?
- details about how to "count" subgroups are important, though complex
- the proportion of the subgroup in the school matters also; if high proportion of school is classified as a subgroup, then what should be its impact on the adequacy determination? Tim offered an example of this impact on NAEP grade 8 mathematics in NH and MA, where subgroup performance is higher in MA than NH, but overall performance in NH is higher;
- the student growth percentile (SGP) may minimize the appearance of gaps among subgroups; for example, SGP ranks students against those with

similar score history; the median SGP for each group of students would be/ should be 50th percentile; for example, individual students with disabilities are likely have a similar assessment history to others with similar learning challenges; comparisons within that group of "peers" would appear to be "fair"

- Brian reported that he has modeled the subgroup data for Nashua schools using SGP and his results reveal the effect Tim described in showing "subgroup" growth accurately presented
- Frank posed an option that perhaps we want to look at the whole school as "adequate" or not, but to break out the subgroups to inform the school whether it is attaining the target for all students
- example of low SES as large percentage (example = 70%) of population, where the 30% of high SES students; what would count as the "subgroup"?

Discussion of implementing a growth model at the high school level:

- Tim suggested reconsidering the data limits as an impediment to assigning a SGP to high school students;
- Example from pre-NECAP years -- used to administer CAT or similar standardized tests; tried to identify predictors of high school achievement; after analysis determined that a measure used in 6th grade was the best predictor of high school performance; able to reallocate testing dollars to intensive support and intervention to students identified as at-risk in 6th grade
- if large span between data points, the challenge is how to attribute responsibility for student success or not; e.g., Are students performing a certain way on a test because of what you've done or because of what someone else has done? Claremont example of student movement in and out of a school over the years between middle school and high school graduation – how can the high school measure allocate responsibility for student success or lack of success.

DECISION: Do we want to hold schools accountable for subgroup performance?

Consensus: Yes, incorporate subgroups in the system in some way.

Comment: What is the reason for creating the accountability system and designing it in this way? Consider this discussion from a pragmatic focus – including subgroups in the system because it responds to a need to inform districts, schools and teachers where they should allocate resources, what to look at and look for, to determine what the growth trajectory of each student looks like and examine what the conditions are that contribute to each student's learning. The data from the system also serves to inform the district whether the teachers they have assigned to particular students are skilled enough to provide what the students really need. Far too often, there is a tendency to pull "those students" from the population to demonstrate "we're doing well except for 'those' students." Including subgroups in the accountability system raises

the question, what programmatic changes does a school need to take to improve the performance of all students?

4. Gaps: Scott turned to the presentation of gaps considerations.

Examples of ways to think about gaps:

- small gap because school does inadequate job with high achieving students
- large gaps but small numbers of students in subgroups
- when is the gap sufficient to raise concerns?

5. Types of Subgroups: Scott presented some options for creating subgroups --

- use some or all of NCLB groups, highlight some
- "Super" groups – aggregate NCLB subgroups (e.g., white, non-low SES, non ELL, non SPED, non-ethnic as one group – other = any S with a classification)
 - + = Allows more schools to be held accountable because N is large enough to yield valid data
 - = Could lead to combining groups with different performance patterns; is that acceptable?
- "Limited" group option – low SES with similar performance patterns, such as minority groups, ELL status, SWD

Scott presented data from current NECAP results – NH Combined Reports (slide 11).

These results show similarities in the performance patterns statewide for some subgroups. Performance patterns for the Asian subgroup is unlike the other ethnic groups.

Bar graphs showing same data (slides 12, 13)

Discussion:

- suggestion: what about dividing into "historically low performing" and "historically high performing" as subgroups?
- problem with sorting by high and low performing is that it doesn't add more information to the status measures that already show student results as high or low performing
- discussion of recommendation to include ELL as separate group with specific targets in language proficiency (reading?); rationale -- the conditions for serving ELLs is specific and actionable for schools; there are reasonable and realistic steps schools can (and are obligated to) take to build language proficiency for ELLs; one option is to consider including a way to hold schools accountable for moving students toward English proficiency
- diversity within the ELL population is dramatic (Nashua example); may be misleading to present them as a single group and judge schools on that subgroup when there are such varied needs for services
- possibility of using service to ELL students as a Level 2 indicator;

DECISION: What is the preference of the committee:

- (a) limited groups? or
- (b) super groups?

Additional Discussion:

- Limited would serve the state best
- Will need to ensure that students do not appear in multiple groups
- limited groups IF they can be created in ways to account for disproportionate percentages

Consensus: Limited groups: low SES, ELL, SpEd, with some S counted more than once

TO DO: Scott and Deb will look at current data to determine "over count" or duplicate counts

6. Comment: Concern about the differences in "grain size" between Input and Level 1 systems; Input asks big picture questions and yet performance based system, Level 1, examines what can turn out to be small populations of students.

TO DO:

1. Plan webinar presenting INPUT system with Beta principals sharing experiences. (Deb and Karen)
2. Develop a presentation on high school growth percentile options. (Tim and Scott)
3. Review the slides and bring additional thoughts, questions on subgroups, gaps, and student growth percentile (SGP) to next meeting. (ALL)

NEXT MEETING: June 11, 2010

- * Deb will send out a Meeting Wizard invitation to schedule future meetings after consulting with the Commissioner.