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**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**
101 Pleasant Street
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**Task Force to Develop a Performance-Based School Accountability System
October 2, 2009, 9 a.m., Legislative Office Building, Room 207**

Attending:

X	Virginia Barry, Ph.D.	Commissioner of Education
X	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
X	Daphne Kenyon	NH State Board of Education
X	Paul Leather	Director, Division of Adult Learning, NH Department of Education
	Scott Marion	National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, Dover
X	Deborah McNeish	Principal, Conant/Rumford School, Concord, NH
X	Judith Fillion (for Edward Murdough)	Director, Division of Program Support, NH Department of Education
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

Sarah Browning, Special Assistant to the Commissioner of Education
Dean Michener, Director of Governmental Affairs, New Hampshire School Boards Association
Mike Fournier, Principal, SAU 25 (Bedford, NH)
Karen Laba, New England Comprehensive Center, RMC Research, Portsmouth, NH

NOTES:

1. Commissioner Barry convened the meeting at 9:13 am. The Commissioner reviewed the charge to the committee as defined in SB 180.

Deborah Wiswell explained that the members of this Task Force represent various constituencies who are affected by SB 180. The Task Force members will provide a variety of perspectives as decisions are made about the composition and protocols for the Performance Based Accountability System.

2. Representative Emma Rous described the origin of the legislation which came about as the third part of the Supreme Court judgment (known as the “Claremont decision”) to require schools to demonstrate they have provided the opportunity for an adequate education to all its students. The “performance based” system is in addition to the “input” system, also defined in SB 180, which is currently in development at the Department. Both the input and performance based systems are designed to allow schools to demonstrate they provide the opportunity for an adequate education.
Deb Wiswell informed this Task Force that they will be provided support in their work and recommendations from the existing DOE AYP Accountability Task Force. Deb distributed a listing of members of that group to the panelists.
3. Deb Wiswell directed the Task Force to review the list of suggested indicators (lines 108-120) in the legislation, pointing out that the primary responsibility of this Task Force will be to identify which indicators are to be included in the system and whether/how they will be used to determine whether adequacy has been met. Deb reminded members of the Task Force that the legislature requires there may no additional burden on the schools, that the system should include data that is already collected and / or reported to the Department.

Timeline: SB 180 requires that the Commissioner’s Task Force report to the legislature the progress of the performance based system in April 2010.

Discussion highlights:

- a primary responsibility of the Commissioner’s Task Force will be defining what is acceptable evidence of “adequacy”
 - in contrast to the criteria in NCLB that classify schools and districts in ‘corrective action’ based only on student outcomes, SB 180 focuses on whether “the opportunity . . . exists” whether or not all students have taken advantage of the opportunities provided to them (Paul Couture)
 - legislators recognized that a school can have all the pieces in place to provide an adequate education or that a school may be lacking some of the pieces yet students are achieving at high levels; in either case, the school meets the requirements of the law (Representative Rous)
4. The “input” system: Deb Wiswell described the current activities of the DOE AYP Task Force in developing the input system. Based on the 12 school approval standards listed in SB 180, members of the AYP group have drafted an online reporting tool that asks school leaders to provide narrative evidence of their attention to the required elements of each of the twelve ‘adequacy’ standards.

5. Discussion of the “performance based” system: Scott Marion of the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment in Dover, NH, who serves as a consultant to the NH DOE and to the DOE AYP Task Force, prepared a presentation capturing some of the important ideas the Commissioner’s Task Force will need to consider as it conducts its work. While Scott could not attend today’s meeting, he provided the presentation handouts. Deb Wiswell directed attention to some of the slides and invited members’ comments and discussion.

Discussion highlights:

- it would help to know if other states are using a performance system and what models are might be available for the input or performance systems (Daphne Kenyon); Deb responded that Scott’s work and the work of his Center provides him access to many examples across the country which he has mentioned in some of the slides and for which he can provide additional details as needed
- Slide 25 mentions using growth measures, which, over time, can give important information about the impact of school efforts on student achievement; growth is now part of the national conversation about school performance, along with discussions of teacher effectiveness (Commissioner Barry)
- Center for Assessment staff members have worked with Colorado to examine growth data in a variety of informative representations and will bring that information to the Task Force for consideration (Deb Wiswell)
- an additional argument for using growth data is to avoid the problems of differing expectations on state assessments when assessing accountability using the status models as currently required under NCLB (Brian Cochrane)
- goals of an accountability system must meet the requirement of SB 180 but can also be broader, for example to inform local improvement efforts, to allocate state supports, to identify and disseminate desirable practices (slide 15) (Deb Wiswell)
- considerations of the system (slide 8) should include utility (usefulness), fairness, and how the findings/ results will be communicated
- categories for the indicators (slide 16) can serve to organize the many types of data already collected; examples detailed on slides 17+ (Scott M/ Deb W)
- some pieces of data may be desirable but not yet collected; can work with state data team to develop procedures to collect and report; for example, following students beyond high school, a measure that is being asked on federal grants (Representative Rous, Paul Leather)
- caution about inaccurate inferences from data, using data as proxy for other issues; examples include administrator turnover, which can be both beneficial and disruptive, depending on other aspects of the school; other examples include climate measures such as tardiness, suspension and expulsion data, since variations can represent variations in the strength of policies and / or the fidelity of application; all data points will need to be considered for potential to be misinterpreted (Brian Cochrane)
- concern about too may local options; must be able to compare across schools (Daphne Kenyon); will need to standardize some elements yet leave options for local measures

-- ultimately, this Task Force will need to make wise decisions about which indicators to use, how to measure them, and how to weight them to derive an adequacy judgment (Representative Rous)

Action Items:

1. Task Force members are asked to review the slides and consider particularly the questions on slide 30 – what do we value and what do we want to measure?
2. The DOE AYP Task Force is scheduled to compile a list of indicators at its meeting Oct. 8. Deb W will provide a summary of their discussions and “list” to this Task Force for discussion at the next meeting.
3. the URL of the Accountability Website was distributed. Notes from this meeting and other resources/ references will be posted in that space.

NEXT MEETING: Deb will send out a “Meeting Wizard” invitation to all via email. Complete your availability and submit.

Notes compiled and submitted 10.04.09, Karen Laba, NECC