



**NOTES**  
**Joint Meeting of the**  
**Commissioner's Task Force to Develop a Performance-Based**  
**School Accountability System and the**  
**NH DOE Accountability Task Force**  
**November 1, 2010, 9:00 am– 12:00 pm**

**Next Meeting: Monday, November 29, 9 am – 12 pm, Room 15**

**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
	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
X	Judith Fillion	Director, Division of Program Support, NH Department of Education
X	Edward Murdough	Bureau of School Approval
X	Kathleen Murphy	Director, Division of Instruction, NH Department of Education
	Emma Rous	Chair, Education Committee, NH House of Representatives
X	Vincent Spiotti	Bethlehem School Board, Bethlehem, NH
X	Franklin Gould	NH House of Representatives, Lebanon, NH
X	Deborah Wiswell	Bureau of Accountability, Curriculum and School Improvement, Division of Instruction, NH Department of Education

**Guests:**

Irv Richardson, NEA NH

Dean Michener, Executive Director, NH School Boards Association

**Accountability (AYP) Task Force** (in addition to those on the Commissioner's Task Force)

**District Representatives:** Helen Bickford (SAU 53) Patrick Connors (SAU 53 Epsom); Heather Cummings (Gov. Wentworth); Donna Crook (MSD); Kathy Stavenger (SNHU), Steve Zdravec (Portsmouth); Chris Demers (Concord)

**NH DOE:** Sally Fellows, Susan Randall, Mary Lane, Merry Fortier, Cathy Higgins, Tim Kurtz, Ginny Clifford

**NH DOE Consultants:** Keith Burke, Karen Laba

**Center for Assessment:** Scott Marion, Damian Betebenner

**Meeting Objectives:**

- ◆ Examine state and school data for an attendance indicator
- ◆ Review sample performance based reports for elementary and middle schools
- ◆ Confirm decisions about weighting of ES and MS performance based indicators
- ◆ Review state and school data for high schools
- ◆ Reach decisions on indicators to include and possible cut points
- ◆ Resume discussion of locally defined indicators

**NOTES**

1. Deb Wiswell opened the meeting with *thanks* to those attending for their commitment to this challenging process. She invited Frank Gould to introduce himself since he was not in attendance last meeting. Frank offered his hope that the conclusions of this committee be more than a process but that it makes a difference in the way schools educate children.
2. Vincent Spiotti asked Deb to review the *timeline* for the task force's work. She indicated that a progress report is due to the legislature in November. However, we have asked for an extension until January 2011. The Legislature must approve the plan for the system before it goes into full implementation.
3. In an update, Deb reported that the statewide *ELL (English language learners) Task Force* met last week for the first time. Input is being gathered from districts on issues related to measuring accountability for ELL students. The recommendations of the ELL Task Force will be considered in decisions by this group on the performance indicators for ELLs.
4. Deb reviewed today's *meeting outcomes* and provided an *overview of the agenda*. She reminded all of the difference between (1) reporting information about a school's performance indicators and (2) evaluating adequacy. While all values for each indicator for a school will be *reported*, the judgment of the "opportunity for an adequate education" will rely on the criteria this committee defines based on those values.
5. Scott Marion reported on a discussion among Department staff of shifting from using "percent proficient" as the reference to using "*index values*." In previous discussions, the data presented has used "percent proficient and above" to allocate points based on a rubric.

In the NH accountability system as it currently operates, schools are credited for the NECAP performance of all students using the "index" system, not just those reaching proficiency. When Scott compared the results using "index" values and "percent proficient" values, there was no significant difference in the rubric points schools earned. The benefits of using the index system, which include its familiarity to NH educators and recognition of student performance even if less than proficient, argues for changing the reference for all measures to index values rather than percent proficient. A few clarifying questions were asked, but no objections were offered.

Scott proposed using the following rubric to allocate points according to index values:

index value 90-100 = 4 pts;

80-89 = 3 pts;

60-79 = 2 pts;

less than 60 = 1 point.

This will include all HS indicators that previously had been discussed as 'percent proficient.'

For ES/ MS, the change will affect science and writing NECAP performance indicators.

The vertical axis on the student growth percentile bubble charts will remain percentproficient because the x-axis shows growth.

6. Scott transitioned to a discussion of **attendance** as a performance indicator. Recent articles (*Education Week*, Vol 38, No. 8, October 20, 2010, page 1) highlight the impact of attendance on student achievement. Last meeting, Task Force members started to examine data across schools for students missing 10% or more of enrolled days.

Statewide data (slide 5) show that the average rate is 9% of students absent 18 or more days (10% of 180 days) across all elementary schools. In middle schools, the average rate of students absent 18 or more day is 12%. For high schools (slide 7) the average rate is 20%. This average is a non-weighted average. Schools were identified as ES or MS for the purposes of this presentation using the state defined code which ensures that schools appear on only one graph. Attendance data is reported for only whole school, not for any of the subgroups the committee has chosen to use for reporting other performance indicators.

Question for the committee: should attendance be calculated for subgroups and assigned values for the accountability system?

***Discussion:***

-- Kathleen Murphy asked if it would be possible to consider Teacher Attendance as a factor in the accountability system. She proposed that this task force might make a recommendation to the Commissioner's Teacher Quality task force. Teacher attendance coupled with student attendance can have a dramatic impact on learning opportunities.

\* (to do)

-- One major concern is that attendance is not consistently measured at the high school level.

-- Is there a plan to create a state-defined measure to ensure consistency across all schools? Deb responded that this task force is not charged with that responsibility, but the quality of the data will be an important consideration in whether to use the data.

-- Kathleen Murphy proposed that ES and MS use the attendance as described and change plans for using attendance in high schools until the variations are considered.

- Ed Murdough provided current rules for counting attendance, including flexible options for the 180 days requirement, adjustments for extended learning opportunities, dual enrollment, among other additional factors. All these variables create a wide range of ways to count "attended" or truant.
- For high schools, the movement toward a competency based system reduces the meaning of 'attendance'; perhaps this task force should consider defining the indicator differently for high schools versus elementary/middle schools.

Deb volunteered Ed Murdough to chair an attendance subcommittee to examine the concerns raised in this discussion and report at the next joint meeting.

(slide 8) Scott proposed a rubric for allocating points for truancy/ attendance: (percent of students absent 10% or more days)

5% or less = 4 points;

6-10% = 3 points;

11-20% = 2 points;

21% or greater = 1 point

Scott's data was calculated using a minimum n of 20 for these calculations. (slides 9, 10, 11) Scott presented results when these rubric points are allocated. One concern is that a high percentage of high schools earn the fewest possible points because of high numbers of students absent 10% of enrolled time.

Question: Should we use n=40 as the cell size as we currently do for federal AYP?

**7. *Graduation and Dropout Indicators:*** Scott turned to slide 12 to review how graduation and dropout are calculated for state/ federal purposes. For instance, students who earn GED or enroll in college are NOT included as dropouts.

Comment: The current federal cohort rate uses 4 year cohort. This Committee *could* choose to design the system to use a 5 year rate or any other value. Currently, the state does not collect or calculate data on 5 year rates but will have the capability to do so in near future. Scott proposed that the NH system use a 5 year cohort rate

*Question:* The special education subgroup can receive education services up to age 21. Will it count "against" the school if it has students who continue beyond the typical 4 (or 5) years?

A: Yes, since the student won't have graduated in 5 years (if using that as the measure), then they will be reflected in the graduation rate calculation. However, they will not be included in the dropout rate.

*Question:* Would those who graduate in 3 years count for graduation rate?

A: Yes, the 4 year cohort rate includes all those who graduate in 4 years or less

*Comment:* NH state law requires communities to educate ALL students to the age of 21, not just special education students. Not all communities exercise that obligation to the same degree. Will this affect a school's "adequacy" determination?

A: As indicated above, students will not be counted as "graduated" unless they do so within the 4 or 5 year cohort calculation, though they may not be counted as dropouts if they continue as students.

Deb reported that Paul Leather met with the Governor and recommended that this committee use the same calculation as that for the federal reporting requirements -- the 4 year cohort rate. Paul's recommendation should be considered in reaching a decision.

(slide 13, 14, 15) Scott showed the statewide distribution of graduation and dropout rates by school using 2009 data. The four schools with 0% dropout rate skew the data, as did the schools with high dropouts which skewed the data toward the right. Scott used the state data to propose a point allocation (slide 16) for the graduation and dropout data.

**8. Participation:** (slide 19) Scott summarized previous discussions about participation values. Because almost all schools meet the federal requirement of 95% participation, there is little variability across this indicator. Using this indicator does not distinguish between schools providing an opportunity for an adequate education and those not. He proposed awarding a point for each subgroup for reading and mathematics participation and no points if not meeting the federal standard. He reminded the committee that participation rates for science and writing will still be reported, but do not need to be used in the adequacy determination.

*Discussion:* Tim wondered about the difference between a 0 or 1 for participation in contrast to the allocation of 1 to 4 points for all the other indicators. Helen pointed out that schools in fact do earn up to 4 points, since they can earn 1 point for each of the four subgroups. Differences occur when a school does not have all subgroups reported.

**9. Composite Scores for HS:** (slide 20) Scott began a discussion of ways to aggregate scores across indicators to derive a value for a school that could be examined to determine "adequacy." To arrive at the totals on the sample set of schools Scott allocated points for (a) reading index, (b) math index, (c) science and writing indexes, (d) math participation, (e) absence/ truancy, (f) graduation rate (times 2) and (g) dropout rate (times 2). Scott ran the analysis for all those schools with valid scores on all 9 indicators.

Deb distributed a chart listing all the indicators (salmon handout) for high schools and for ES-MS with potential points for each. Scott showed the distribution of high school performance scores (slide 21) and a data chart showing 25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, and 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles (slide 22). Scott reminded members that a decision about what counts as adequate will need to be reached by this committee based on its analysis of the data across all schools.

Scott displayed the results for 5 selected high schools across these indicators. The average rubric scores are presented as well. Total averages results: 22.50, 28.25, 22.83, 22.83, 23.00. When examined for the whole state, with all data verified, the committee will have to set "cut" points. On slide 20, Scott presented the total results for all schools with values in 9 categories (71 schools). When identified by percentile, 25<sup>th</sup> is at 20.16 points; 50<sup>th</sup> at 24 points; and 75<sup>th</sup> at 27.75 points. Range of all high school totals = 12.08 to 31.75.

*Comment:* The committee might consider the "GPA" analogy to describe the point values; or the system can multiply the 2-digit, 2 decimal values in this draft by 100 to make the results familiar to the public.

**Elementary and Middle Schools:** (slide 23) composite scores for ES-MS include index scores rubric points for science and writing for each subgroup, rubric points for reading and math growth scores, participation in reading, participation in math, and absence. Slides 24, 25 show the histogram and data for summaries for the 319 schools which had values for each of these indicators.

**10. Next Steps:** (slide 26) Scott reviewed the tasks to be addressed before next meeting, including

- (a) checking the accuracy of the data,
- (b) deciding on ELL indicators,
- (c) determining what to do if a school is 'missing' subgroups, and
- (d) examination of schools in the extremes of scoring to determine if their placement is related to performance .

**11.** The committee revisited its earlier discussion of using **attendance** as an indicator: Deb reported a discussion during the break about how important on the job attendance is to employers. Since attendance is an indicator for future employers, is that a reason to include attendance at the high school as an indicator for adequacy? A subcommittee will consider the concerns raised about the quality of attendance data currently collected and prepare a recommendation to this Task Force.

Another open question is whether to consider attendance for each subgroup or only for the whole school. Keith Burke proposed to examine the data to see where schools fall if using whole school or subgroups. Actual data across the groups will help lead to a decision whether to include them or not. (Subgroup attendance data is being calculated for the 11/29 meeting.)

**Homework:**

1. Consider what terminology to use to describe the judgments about adequacy. Suggestions were offered and included:
  - use existing terminology such as "substantially below" adequate"
  - "inadequate, partially adequate, adequate, above adequate"
  - "adequate with distinction"?

Send your suggestions to Deb Wiswell or bring to the next meeting.

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