



**Joint Meeting of the Commissioner's Task Force to Develop a Performance-Based School Accountability System
and the NH DOE Accountability Task Force
January 21, 2011, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, Board Room
NOTES**

Next Meeting: Monday, February 14, 2011, 9:00 – 12:00 pm, Room 15

ATTENDING:

X	Virginia Barry, Ph.D.	Commissioner of Education
	Brian Cochrane	Director of Assessment and Accountability Nashua School District
	Paul Couture	Principal, Stevens High School, Claremont
X	Jerome Frew	Superintendent, Kearsarge Regional School District
	Molly Kelly	Former Chair, Education Committee, NH Senate
	Daphne Kenyon	NH State Board of Education
X	Paul Leather	Deputy Commissioner, 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, NH Department of Education
X	Kathleen Murphy	Director, Division of Instruction, NH Department of Education
	Emma Rous	Former Chair, Education Committee, NH House of Representatives
	Vincent Spiotti	Bethlehem School Board, Bethlehem, NH
	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

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

District Representatives: Chris Demers (Concord)

NH DOE: Steve Bos, Merry Fortier, Mary Lane, Marcia McCaffery, Ginny Clifford, Tim Kurtz, Ken Relihan, Mike Schwartz

NH DOE Consultants: Karen Laba

Center for Assessment: Scott Marion

Meeting Objectives:

- ◆ Review discussions and options for “Level II” (locally defined) performance indicators
- ◆ Review corrected data reports, weighting decisions, adequacy determinations
- ◆ Discuss dissemination options

NOTES

- 1. Welcome and Updates:** A substantial snow storm reduced the attendees at today's meeting. Those attending are congratulated for their durability. Deb reviewed the expected agenda for today.

Deb asked all to review the latest version of the Overview document. She noted that highlighted terms will be links to other sections when posted as an electronic document. Additional work is now being done to create the graphics for some of the concepts, including those showing subgroups and the rubric for growth percentile points. Even in its current stage, committee members suggested posting the overview on the home page of the state web site. (done)

2. Locally Defined Indicators – Performance Based Accountability System, Level 2:

Karen reviewed the information on the handouts – the Level 1 and Level 2 comparison chart, and authentic assessment background information. The background is primarily for those who aren't familiar to these terms.

Q: Who will submit locally defined measures?

A: ALL 17 K-1, K-2 schools will have to do Level 2 because they do not have two years of NECAP data available. Other schools may OPT to present locally defined measures to supplement or amend results on Level 1 of the Performance Based System, state-defined performance indicators.

Q: Would it ever be that the measure proposed by a school is considered invalid?

Q: Who would evaluate the submissions?

A. Options vary, but could use a peer review process, or assessment against a rubric, as in the example on the authentic assessment handout or as in the current process for AYP appeals.

Q: If a school currently has a requirement of competencies for students to graduate, doesn't that mean that acceptable performance is already captured in the graduation rate?

A: That will have to be a consideration in defining what are acceptable measures.

Discussion:

- presentations by schools choosing to submit Level 2 will have to reconcile the two types of data, e.g. the state defined indicator which shows inadequate performance with local performance measures that show progress, for example;
- there is a concern about a local indicator becoming too easy a target if established by a school board without external standards or guidance;
- one option the Task Force could allow is accepting NEASC accreditation as evidence of adequacy; current HB 130 offers NEASC as a third way to demonstrate the opportunity for adequacy
- there are some peer review concerns— the resource demands of a peer review process; , not always satisfactory results/ conclusions;
- any accountability system will always produce some false positives, and some false negatives;

- the law (RSA 193-E) defines what the state must report; current design of school reports likely will be posted on the school profile website as the "State Accountability Report"; looking for ways to fund the production of these reports
- suggestion to offer an "acceptable" list of measures that can be used for Level 2
- how will the measure be judged as "adequate"?; do we know enough about the suggested measures to make that judgment?;
- perhaps the Dept. could begin examining the likely measures and enlisting local experts to weigh in on what's "adequate" performance on them, in anticipation of their selection by schools
- it might be reasonable to consider Level 2 as a two-year limited option; if schools are still not showing adequate performance using state indicators after 2 years of using Level 2 as an alternate demonstration of adequacy, then limit that option for those schools;
- in early grades' schools (K, K-1, K-2), we can look at scores at the receiving school where students are tested; current practice with federal accountability is if the receiving school made AYP, then the sending school is considered to have met AYP; could use this model to determine adequacy for those schools without NECAP data;
- one situation in a high school might be that a school initiates a re-engagement strategy to bring dropouts back into the school, but that "lowers" their NECAP results because the returnees are typically low-achieving students; should they get credit for putting into place strategies that will likely show results in two years' time?
- Paul Leather reported that a current i3 (Investing in Innovation) federal grant involving a number of NH schools is making use of a performance assessment using validated panel or peer review processes; he offered to provide additional information about the processes they are developing for possible use for the accountability system.

Recommendations

- establish a subgroup to define standards for Level 2 indicators/ measures;
- set up a system similar to AYP appeals, where a panel reviews the evidence and documentation to determine if it meets the standard (in this case, standards = adequacy)

3. Legislative Update:

Commissioner Barry and Deb Wiswell are trying to schedule review of the current work of the Task Force by the Attorney General's office which is critical before moving forward. Commissioner Barry reported conversations she is having with legislators who are concerned about adequacy funding. Additional questions are being raised about how the accountability system will be defined/ designed.

Deb reported one proposed legislative action (HB 39) that reduces the number of input standards in the adequacy system from 12 to 5 (reading/language arts, mathematics, ~~math~~, science, social studies, physical education). The proposed bill includes language that encourages districts to address the other standards but does not include them in the adequacy definition.

*This legislative action does NOT change the existing "minimum standards" for school approval.

Deb reported that HB 164 and HB 39 both include language that says the common core standards will not be adopted unless the legislature approves.

There is evidence of some mistaken assumptions about the common core's impact on NH schools. The Commissioner encouraged a common effort across professional organizations and associations to voice a unified message about the quality and value of the common core standards.

Paul Leather reminded the Task Force that bills take time to move through the complex process, they will likely undergo many changes, and none are certain to be acted on.

4. Dissemination Plan

Karen shared the draft plan for disseminating information about the state accountability system to various audiences (orange handout).

The current plan is to post documents electronically, with each section of the contents linking to a separate section of the website. The collected set of documents can be printed as a single handbook if desired, or users can select particular sections of interest.

There are two sections for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) – general and technical. Committee members are asked to look through the list of FAQs in the handout, offer suggestions for additions, deletions based on their own experience of their work on the task force.

The growth percentile is in its own section because of the detail needed to explain and interpret the concept and the calculation. This section will require both visual and narrative pieces.

The glossary is intended to be comprehensive. Other documents will incorporate links to the terms defined in the glossary. Members are asked to review the listed terms and to suggest additions, deletions, or terminology suggestions to Karen.

5. Update on Latest Data Discussions

Deb reported on a conversation last week among Dept. staff and task force consultants to confirm that all are using the same data sources. Some adjustments were made to the cell size (the minimum number of students counted in each group). For all the academic measures, the number stays at 5 as discussed previously. The minimum number of students counted for dropout, graduation rate, and participation will be set at 20 students. None of these changes affect the Federal reporting which is fixed by agreement with USED.

Deb reported on a recent proposal to visualize the SCP information (i.e. bubble charts) using an external developer. Current discussions indicate this should be possible at a very reasonable price. Plans are to include Department information technology (IT) staff and accountability staff to decide how to sustain and maintain the reporting mechanism after initial development and launch. None of the school reports are required by the legislation, so addressing the reporting function of the system is a Department role. Deb commented that she sees the reports as related to the school improvement role of the Department. Marcia offered the idea that the integration/ coordination of the reporting mechanisms across the Department makes a persuasive case for the use of assessment funds to support the contract to produce the reports in the level of detail needed.

Next Steps

1. Deb requested volunteers for a subcommittee to work on Level 2 indicators before the next meeting, Feb. 14. Steve Bos volunteered, and other members of Dept. will be involved. If task force members know of common measures that might be proposed by schools as Level 2 indicators, please forward information about the measure to Deb.

**Next meetings: Monday, February 14, 2011, 9:00 – 12:00 pm, Room 15;
Monday, March 14, 2011, 9:00 – 12:00 pm, the Walker Building (Fruit Street)**