NH Accountability Task Force Meeting May 12, 2009
NH DOE Room 15 1:00 - 4:00
Next Full Task Force MEETINGS: June 9, 2009, 1 pm – 4 pm Room 15
(work session 9:00 am – 12 noon) Room 12

Present:
NH DOE: Deb Wiswell, Ed Taylor, Cathy Higgins, Mary Lane, Ginny Clifford, Ed Murdough, Helen Schotanus, Sallie Fellows, Ken Relihan, Jan McLaughlin
District Reps: Jerry Frew, Gail Paludi, Steve Zadravec, Nicole Heimark, Chris Demers
Center for Assessment: Scott Marion
New England Comprehensive Center (NECC): Karen Laba

1. Deb opened the meeting introducing Ed Taylor from NH DOE - CTE who is sitting in for Steve Bos. Participants introduced themselves. Deb reviewed the agenda.

2. Ginny Clifford asked for volunteers to participate in an advisory group regarding the visibility of data in the Performance Tracker tool in light of issues of privacy in state and federal rules. The group's recommendations will go to the DOE i4see/Data Warehouse Advisory Group. Follow-up work will include recommendations for school level data use policy.
   Q: when need to identify group?  A: probably within the next two weeks.
   Q: Time commitment?  A: One meeting to start, periodic meetings after; not a high demand commitment
   IF INTERESTED, SEND EMAIL TO GINNY (VCLIFFORD@ED.STATE.NH.US)

3. Status of SB180: At Senate Finance now, has to go to conference committee next because two versions (House and Senate) differ. Committee tried to move everything out a year, but Atty. General advised likely not to be approved, per court order.

Timeline benchmarks in latest draft:

2009-2010 -- Input/ Part I Method -- implement; **Interim Report April 1, 2010 (NEW)**
2010-2011 -- Performance Method/ Part II: Nov 1 = Final Report
2011 – 2012 – All schools submit I and II; Jan 1 2011 report to Legislative Question

Deb noted that the list of data sources for the performance part in the draft legislation are mostly related to high schools, not elementary schools.
4. **Quick Look** at early draft of input tool (Part 1) being developed by Keith Burke and associates: Deb explained several features of the online tool --

* School number – automatically puts correct tabs for your school

Sample: Mountain Valley School

* Introductory statement, naming the standard – a hover/click on would open up samples of ‘adequate’ evidence

* Standard section number, then buttons YES, NO, Other *(may change to match School Approval language “alternatively met”)*

* When OTHER selected, will open a text box for entry of information

* At the end of each section, place to insert links (electronic) to evidence such as curriculum documents, policy docs, etc

* Summary page allows school name, number, person responsible, number of YES, number of NO, and then a standard by standard listing of whether YES or NO.

**Discussions during the presentation of the draft input method:**

-- consider use of “alternative compliance” as substitute for “other” which is consistent with the school approval standards language; note differences between overarching School Approval standard as “alternatively met” versus each subparagraph in each standard on the sample tool being just YES or NO without an option for “alternative compliance” -- no consensus achieved

-- Discussion of adding a text box that opens when NO selected to provide evidence of any alternative compliance

-- Extended discussion of the ultimate standard of adequacy – should it be based on the number of Yeses in each sub-part of each standard?; Ed M explained that the sub-elements of the standards are NOT measured during a school approval visit; only the overall standard is judged;

Concern expressed that NO school would be deemed adequate if ALL Yeses was the requirement;

Suppose tied to a percentage? If so, that would assume all sub-parts are equally weighted; Ed Taylor described a ‘quality indicator’ system used in the early days of vocational education which identified important or essential indicators that must be evident;

Some have previously offered that the criteria should be ‘a preponderance of evidence’

Other options offered: 80% of standard is ‘adequate’; proportion/percent linked to percent of state adequacy funds that constitute the average per pupil expenditure; change to a Likert scale inviting judgment between 1 and 5, asking for evidence to support relative rating;

-- *Idea*: when both systems in place (input and performance), use the Performance system as the filter to identify those who should be selected for a site visit, or of concern; concerned about possibility of “passing” input and “failing” performance;

-- **Bottom line**: adequate DOES NOT mean perfect, we and schools both need to understand what needs to be in place as representing adequate

-- *Idea*: gather several content specialists from each area for one day on site and invite them to select the top 5 (or other #) indicators that are most representative of adequacy; over the summer; phrase it to identify what ALL schools in NH could / should provide as an adequate education;

**General agreement** that the identification of five key indicators by content area practitioners would be a positive step toward making the input system realistic. Then use the Curriculum,
Instruction and Assessment representatives in the Superintendents’ Association to assess whether the tool is workable and/ or recommend adjustments.

**Proposal:** Deb W recommended having Keith finish what’s been produced by the subject area writers, then this larger group can decide at the next meeting if the level of detail is too much or satisfactory; work groups for each content area will be advised to focus on those indicators that ALL schools in NH should meet.

5. **Proposals for Adjustments to AYP**- Presentation but no decision until next meeting
   - **averaging participation rates:** Measured Progress ran sample reports to see effect; many schools have “no decision” because of small numbers; Deb circulated the MP chart that shows changes in the participation ratings if two years (or three);
   - Q – is there any talk of differentiating participation rates for hs and elementary schools?
     - A – not likely, 95% is in the law;
   - **definition of “full academic year” or “continuous attendance”** – presupposes no withdrawals or that the district data system can accommodate; DOE proposes using a half-day count (320 e.g.) as used now (as in Oct 1 through end of year); for example, if a student starts the year with a school then leaves in May, starting school ‘owns’ the student for accountability purposes; agreement that this seems fair; question about impact on this of waivers to 180 day calendar; discussion of average daily membership (ADM)
   - Feds require **change in treatment foreign exchange students** – must participate in testing if entered as at grade 11, though don’t count for performance; recommendation from DOE is to list foreign students as grade 12 when possible
   - **students who skip grades** – have to take test even if “skipped” grade 11; participation guidelines text says “grade 11 or higher”
     - Q – what about a third year “10th grader”?
     - A – do not take the test until pass the 11th grade at beginning of year

6. **Considerations in Developing the Performance Based Accountability System** – Scott Marion

   Key ideas (ppt slides attached and will be posted on Accountability section of NH DOE website)
   - begin by thinking about what needs to be reported; “end in mind”
   - goals set by legislation, but committee can propose more goals
   - consider usefulness of system for educators in the field to inform decisions, instruction
   - challenge will be finding balance between requirements of the legislation and usefulness of the system
   - simple isn’t the only end in mind; too simple may be ‘wrong’ or lead to wrong conclusions;
   - start with establishing goals for the performance system that will do what the task force wants the system to accomplish; what values? what goals? Should the performance system reflect?

   **Comments on data to be collected listed in SB 180** – Sallie Fellows reported that most of this data is already collected
-- (a) “other local assessment” issues include “with dept. approval” and “aligned with state curriculum standards”
-- (b) AP participation numbers and %ages already collected
-- (c) graduating pupils going on to post sec and military – have more than 10 years; reported by guidance counselors, checked against NH state university system; out of state isn’t completely accurate, but national clearinghouse; could do an audit if suspect mistaken data
-- (d) attendance rates – for all three levels of schools
-- (e) cumulative dropout rates – have the data by student; might want to verify for students across income levels and other subgroups
-- (f) environment – some data collected for some schools, safe schools data, e.g.
-- (g) days expelled in and out, ask if do have policy; no consistent definitions
-- (h) HQT annual survey; Title IIA program
-- (i) turnover rates for teachers and Administrators – problem with ‘turnover’ not being defined; not yet collected; will be collected and available when new data system comes online

OTHER data not listed in the bill but gathered already:
-- NECAP Growth data; e.g. cohort data for individual students
-- SAT, ACT, PSAT collect numbers of students, average score by school
-- educational level attained by teachers and administrators
-- CTE program data

7. Closing and Next Steps:
* Use June 9 meeting, 1 pm – 4 pm to design
  (a) regional CIA focus group sessions
  (b) content specialists meetings to identify “adequacy” indicators in each content area
* June 9, 9:00 am – 12 noon still on the calendar for those working on the INPUT system

Additional post from Ed Murdough:

First, I want to apologize for my limited involvement in the work of the task force.

I had some thoughts after yesterday’s meeting that I’d like to share.

My proposal is that we identify five critical questions to ask for each of the standards. If the school adequately answers four of the five questions, then the school is meeting the requirements for an adequate education for that standard. For each question there should be three possible answers:

Meets 100%, meets 75% or more, meets less than 75%

75% or more would be considered adequate.

For both the 75% or more and the less than 75% choices there should be a comment box for the school to explain their situation. Among other comments they should provide the actual numbers, i.e. 2 of 3 teachers are certified, the third is working on alternate 4 and expects to be certified by (date).

We would need to word the questions carefully to make this work.

I suggest that two of the questions for each standard should be:
Are teachers certified in the appropriate content area?

Are you following the GLEs?

I’d like to keep it down to five questions, but if there is strong feeling that we need to go to ten I would not object. More than ten is too many. I would stay with the 80% yes is adequate formula.

Perhaps the questions should be slightly different for elementary, middle, and high school levels.

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