

JOINT MEETING JUNE 12, 2014

Present: Bob Lokken, Co-Chair; Senator Roy Lacey; Senator Steven Thayn; Representative Reed DeMordaunt; Representative Donna Pence; Dr. Corrine Mantle-Bromley; Anne Ritter, Alan Millar, Cheryl Charlton, Valerie Aker, Tom Taggart, Cindy Wilson, Bill Brulotte and George Harad

Not Present: Don Soltman, Chair; Jason Hancock

Others Present: Marilyn Whitney and Tracie L. Bent, State Board of Education

Co-Chairman Bob Lokken called the meeting to order and thanked all committee members for their hard work and dedication over the past two months. Mr. Lokken described the structure for the day's presentations: each work group would have a total of 30 minutes to present their work and preliminary directions. Committee members were directed to listen carefully and provide feedback at the end of each presentation. One hour would be devoted in the afternoon for topics needing deeper discussion.

High Expectations Work Group:

Members: Jason Hancock, Senator Dean Mortimer, Senator Steven Thayn, Cheryl Charlton, Alan Millar, Cindy Wilson and Tom Taggart

Areas of Focus, Governor's Task Force Recommendations:

1. **Shift to a Mastery Based System** where students advance based upon content mastery, rather than seat time requirements.
4. Ensure all students have access to **Advanced Opportunities** by expanding offerings.
13. **Shift from Average Daily Attendance (ADA) Funding Model to Enrollment/Membership** to enhance fiscal stability and remove current barriers to personalized and/or mastery learning.

Cheryl Charlton provided an overview of the group's work:

- Outreach in and out of state to assess best practices - Maine, Oregon, Washington, South Carolina and others
- Experts consulted - various state representatives, generating feedback for additional expert references
- Field Trip - Eastern Idaho to visit Compass Academy and Eastern Idaho Technical College
- Brought in presentations - Various Idaho School Districts presented, various presentations targeting best practice programs

Cindy Wilson described some of the mastery based approaches that the group had studied:

Maine began in 2008 by developing cohorts or districts. Students use “experts” who have mastered the subject, and teachers work with small groups. Students are grouped based how they are doing in a given subject, both horizontally and vertically. Once a student has demonstrated proficiency, s/he can move on. The Maine model stresses local control in determining formative and summative assessments. The goal of the mastery-based model is not to leave high school quicker, but to create time for dual credit courses. On the positive side, the Maine model promotes proficiency in content and critical thinking skills. On the negative side, the system imploded: it is expensive and costly to start. A change in Maine’s political leadership ended the state-wide program. Some districts have continued on their own with local funding.

Idaho contains pockets of excellence all over the state. One of the most impressive is the AVID program, a national model, which has been used in the Boise School District since 2006. AVID is a structured, college preparatory system providing a direct support structure for first-generation college goers.

AVID students generally demonstrate academic potential and may be the first in their family to attend college or come from a lower socioeconomic setting. Participation is voluntary.

The goal of academic rigor is to help students develop the capacity to understand content that is complex, ambiguous, provocative and personally or emotionally challenging. In order to help students do rigorous work, AVID helps students develop as readers and writers, develop deep content knowledge, know content specific strategies for reading, writing, thinking and talking, and develop habits, skills and behaviors to use knowledge and skills.

AVID’s go-on success in Boise is extraordinary.¹ However, it is expensive, and requires that teachers receive special training. After full implementation, the program requires an average of \$4,200 per year per school. In the Boise School District, the General Fund AVID budget was \$200,000 to pay for training, supplies and benefits.

Vallivue School District is also implementing AVID in their district, not for remediation, but for acceleration. “If Idaho Core is the what, AVID becomes the how.”² At Vallivue, cost of the program is approximately \$600 per student. George Harad offered that that the cost is not so expensive when the success rate comes from students in broken families and recent immigrants with language barriers.

¹ AVID's first graduating class had a 94% college going-rate with two of those non-college-goers serving in the U.S Military. The return rate to sophomore year of college was 88%. The second class, class of 2012, had a 88% going rate with a few of those in the U.S. Military and missions. The total number of students enrolled in the AVID program for the 2012-13 school year is approximately 1,100. Source: Boise School District Website.

² Gary Johnston, Vallivue School District, April 30, 2014, to the High Expectations Work Group.

Tom Taggart discussed changing the State's funding model from Average Daily Attendance (ADA) to an enrollment based model. Jason Hancock has provided three scenarios for how that might be accomplished. One system created a \$74 million expenditure. A second model was revenue neutral but created winners and losers. The third hybrid model was also revenue neutral and seemed the most fair. Whether or not a model needs to be revenue neutral is open for discussion.

Mr. Taggart said that the group will be researching how funding models work in other states. He first wants to have a clear picture of the problem that a change in model would solve. Secondly, the group needs to study how a change would work in a mastery-based system or with online courses. Mr. Taggart wants to convene a group of legislators, business people and superintendents to discuss these issues.

Senator Thayn briefly reviewed the current Idaho Advanced Opportunity Programs. The programs were created one at a time, and the group feels strongly that they could be consolidated and simplified so that they would be easier to manage at the state level, and would create more incentive to promote at the school level. Simplification might cost the State \$6 million, but it could save parents over \$100 million. Senator Thayn's goal is that 60 percent of high school students graduate with one year of college credits.

Feedback:

Representative DeMordaunt suggested that a mastery approach might require a seat-time waiver. He would be hesitant to mandate a program across the state; instead, he would like to see a state policy for districts to implement individually. Representative DeMordaunt suggested that the group look at Utah and Washington's advanced opportunities programs. In Utah, if a student earns an associate's degree in high school, the state pays the next two years of college. As to funding models, Representative DeMordaunt suggested that knowing the advantages to be obtained will drive the solution.

Alan Millar said that few barriers exist to mastery advancement; a solution simply might be to remove those that exist. Dr. Cori Mantle-Bromley offered that at the elementary level, multi-grade classes for mastery are easy to set up.

Marilyn Whitney said that the impetus to move from ADA to enrollment based funding was the uncertainty and fiscal instability causes by an ADA model. Alan Millar noted that Jason Hancock's first scenario would cost the State \$74 million, and suggested that a change to enrollment funding might bear a price tag to do it right. Bob Lokken noted that Massachusetts uses a per student funding model with a block grant for everything else. George Harad thought a comparison would be useful that measured the cost of administering and managing each system. Also, if the attendance hovers between 93-96 percent, he asked why bother taking attendance?

Bob Lokken suggested that a survey of superintendents and board members concerning the amount of work involved in ADA calculations might be useful in determining advantages of enrollment model funding. He also noted that some programs, like AVID, are

very effective in limited scope, and asked if AVID is scalable; could it become standard operating procedure. Tom Taggart replied that the group had not discussed a one-size-fits-all approach. Bill Brulotte said he would like to see a comparison between Boise and Vallivue. He stated that AVID is an intrusive counseling model; the State might make a commitment to more intrusive counseling as opposed to a particular program.

Dr. Mantle-Bromley noted that the push for dual credit affects the universities. If the State takes away all the freshmen and sophomores, then the universities will be strapped for cash.

Autonomy and Accountability Work Group

Members: Bob Lokken, Chair; Representative Reed DeMordaunt; Representative Donna Pence; Superintendent Gaylen Smyer; Anne Ritter, Valerie Aker and George Harad.

Areas of Focus: Governor's Task Force Recommendations:

5. Revamp the State's Accountability Structure Involving Schools

"We recommend the state revamp the accountability structure involving schools. The existing structure that relies on compliance mandates should be replaced with a system that is based on accountability for student outcomes."

6. Empower Autonomy by Removing Constraints

"We recommend the Governor's Office, State Board of Education, and State Department of Education evaluate existing education laws and administrative rules and work with the Legislature to remove those which impede local autonomy, flexibility to adapt to local circumstances, and the ability of the schools to be agile, adaptive, innovative, and drive continuous improvement."

7. Annual Strategic Planning, Assessment, and Continuous Focus on Improvement

"We recommend each district be required to have a strategic plan (and to renew it annually) that identifies and focuses district-wide continuous improvement toward statewide goals. Both the local board and the state should provide oversight to ensure that the plan is appropriate to local circumstances and aligns to and supports the state's goals. The plan forms the basis from which accountability will be structured and the superintendent will be evaluated."

Bob Lokken reviewed the overall direction of the group to date:

- Plan: Research, consider options, and make recommendations
- Research work to date
 - Research Massachusetts and Louisiana
 - Review Idaho's current accountability system (5 star system)
 - Interview group of Idaho Superintendents
- Upcoming
 - Survey of Idaho School Board Trustees and Superintendents
 - Review of existing State laws and rules for Idaho Schools
 - Draft recommendations

Accountability:

Mr. Lokken stated that a system of accountability needed to be focused on student achievement and progressing toward the 60 per goal.³ The current 5-Star System is comprised of a cadre of metrics and weighting that does not align to the 60% goal. An accountability system must include assistance and support. It must be clear, concise, uniform, simple and transparent, and it must be focused on leadership.

Mr. Lokken reviewed the work group's recommendations for a state-wide accountability system:

1. "Good -to-great" system
 - Focused on continuous improvement on a cyclical basis (annual)
 - Accountability system is clear; measures are transparent – and managed locally
 - State's role is clear: uniform measurement, and support of collaboration / innovation
 - Basis should be % of students achieving the go-on level of learning;
 - Progress measures need to support continuous improvement - clear, focusing, and granular
2. "Intervention System" for struggling schools
 - Defines triggers for episodic intervention by the State into struggling schools
 - Defines what "interventions" are needed at different stages
 - State's role is to provide outside assistance to support turnaround
 - Accountability focused on people – not institutions
 - Must not allow perpetual failure
 - Basis is the 5-star system ... with some key adjustments

Mr. Lokken said that it was not the intervention system that allowed Massachusetts to become No. 1 in the nation, but the Good-To-Great system. What each district needs to do cannot be managed statewide; it needs to be built at the district level based on continuous improvement. Intervention begins with understanding how the State can help a struggling school with their problems. Idaho's mistake with the 5-Star system is that it tries to accomplish both of these different areas of accountability.

Autonomy:

Autonomy empowers local people to make the changes they need to improve performance. By owning the outcomes, people are accountable. Determine the criteria for what is necessary. Determine the validity of proscriptive or restrictive funding and reporting requirements.

Annual planning:

Continuous improvement should be the operating framework in every school. The most precious resource is people's time – harness it by focusing on clear, transparent and measureable goals for improvement every year.

³ By the year 2020, 60% of Idaho adults, age 24-35, will have achieved at least two years of postsecondary college or PTE training.

Supporting needs:

- Professional Development training should focus on continuous process improvement, not on how to write a strategic plan. Training on data and understanding metrics is useful.
- Alignment of superintendent evaluations to academic outcomes and annual plan achievement – a material part of the evaluation is progress toward the 60% goal.
- Changes to the 5-Star System: adjust the balance of metrics toward achievement, especially at the high school level; provide clarity that the 5-Star system is an intervention system rather than a scorecard; address special needs schools.

Feedback:

Dr. Cori Mantle-Bromley liked separating the two systems. George Harad said that the goal of the elements is different, but connected. The State's concern is sorting and ranking to allow identification of schools that need assistance, but all districts should have a management methodology that creates improvement which will further allow schools to gain in ranking. Tom Taggart noted the need to find more time for people to do this right. The Task Force recommended setting aside time for collaboration.

Innovation and Collaboration Work Group:

Members: Cori Mantle-Bromley, Chair, Don Soltman, Roy Lacey, Bill Brulotte, Mary Anne Ranells, who resigned as of June 2014

Areas of Focus, Governor's Task Force Recommendations:

8. Statewide electronic collaboration system.

"We recommend that a statewide electronic collaboration system be adopted for educators to share ideas and resources across the state."

10. Educator and student technology devices with appropriate content. "We recommend that every educator and student have adequate access to technology devices with appropriate content to support equal access and opportunity. Educator professional development is critical to the effective implementation of technology."

17. Site-based collaboration among teachers and leaders. "We recommend providing training models to districts for their use in training the members of the professional learning communities, and courage models that focus on team outcomes and collective responsibility."

18. Training and development of superintendents and school boards. "We recommend continued training and professional development of school administrators, superintendents and school boards."

Statewide electronic collaboration system:

Dr. Cori Mantle-Bromley reported on the continuing challenges with Idaho's longitudinal data system. The K-12 portion of the system, known as the Idaho System for Educational Excellence (ISEE) requires sophisticated and very detailed monthly uploads. The J.A. and

Kathryn Albertson Foundation (Albertson Foundation) granted \$21 million to Idaho's SDE to link the ISEE data to an Instructional Improvement System or IIS. The state selected the IIS known as SchoolNet, in part for its lesson planning and assessment functions.

School district personnel have been unsatisfied with SchoolNet, listing numerous frustrations, including accuracy of data. As a result, some superintendents designed Milepost to provide a much simpler platform with the capacity for districts to pull ISEE data for their use. There are now several IIS systems in use in Idaho. Small districts especially have found SchoolNet cumbersome and they have had great difficulty with its use. Meridian School District and Post Falls School District are two that have invested considerable time and money to get to the point where SchoolNet is supporting their needs.

Just recently, the Albertson Foundation received a commissioned evaluation of the Idaho's IIS and concluded that the funds being spent were not yielding results they had hoped for. They have pulled their final payment of just over \$1 million. Pearson (owner of SchoolNet) has provided what they can to Idaho and will no longer service or upgrade the system.

The committee is evaluating whether or not Idaho should have one system for their ISS. If so, districts will struggle as they have spent much time and money getting to where they are with the systems they are using.

Educator and student technology devices with appropriate content:

Issues of infrastructure must be addressed before 1:1 devices are discussed. While every district can connect to the internet through the Idaho Education Network or IEN, the connections are often inadequate. Further, it is only the state's high schools that are guaranteed access through the IEN. Many elementary schools lack connectivity. Some classrooms lack even the basic teaching tools such as projectors.

Once infrastructure is accomplished, there are two needs for every district. Districts need technology experts who understand the various tools used by the school, understand the infrastructure system, and who can provide support and can trouble shoot. Teachers need to know that devices will work in their classrooms. Second, teachers need pedagogical leaders who can mentor, demonstrate, and support the integration of technology into instruction. Teaching with technology demands different skill sets than many teachers have. Increasing technology literacy will take time.

A critical focus at the elementary level is keyboarding skills. The new SmarterBalance assessment requires keyboard responses from third graders.

Emerging recommendations

1. Install wireless infrastructure in every school. Devices need content and connection is critical to content. This may need to be a coordinated effort with entities such as the Idaho Rural Partnership. There are some districts without connectivity. Others have such slow connections that teachers can't stream content.

2. Schools need two types of technology leaders: those with the technical skills to support devices and infrastructure and those with the pedagogy to lead integration efforts.
3. The state needs to define what is basic to every Idaho classroom. What defines a “21st century classroom?”
4. Schools should have leeway to determine what devices will work for their students with their infrastructure.
5. Elementary students need regular access to keyboards in order to develop skills for testing.

Site-based collaboration among teachers and leaders:

The committee affirms the need for and importance of site-based collaboration. Lakeland School District uses one hour per week for collaboration. It is not enough (MA Rannells). They would like to see more time for in-depth training, collaboration, research, and guest speakers. There are districts that cannot afford even this minimal collaboration time as it expands the teachers’ contract days.

Agreements:

1. Site-based collaboration and job-embedded professional development are vital to improvement.
2. The professional development dollars provided by the state have been invaluable, but insufficient.
3. Technology can be a major boost to teacher collaboration: Outlook, Edmodo, Google Plus, BBL, Brain Honey, Milepost, SchoolNet all being used as collaboration tools.
4. Milepost advantages: user-friendly, low on bells and whistles, easy to access student data, good for RTI or response to intervention.
5. SchoolNet—folks are still learning. Key will be usefulness tied to curriculum.

Emerging Recommendations:

1. Add a minimum of 16 hours of professional development time for teachers, per calendar contract.
2. Ideal job-embedded professional development would be 1.5 – 2 hours per week.
3. Provide stipends for teachers for some in-house after hours professional development.

Training and development of superintendents and school boards.

The committee discussed HB521, which provides the opportunity to offer training to school boards and to provide funding for that training as an incentive. Executive Director of ISBA has worked to develop criteria for trainers with regard to strategic planning.

Emerging Recommendations:

1. Track the impact of HB521 to determine next steps.
2. Determine if programs preparing school leaders require strategic planning coursework

Feedback:

The committee discussed the ISEE/SchoolNet situation, which Bob Lokken characterized as a “trainwreck.” The SDE now owns SchoolNet on its servers, but without support or upgrades from the developer. The State wants to continue with SchoolNet, but great lack of confidence exists in the field. DeMordaunt said that it is not the committee’s job to determine what system is used, but rather what is the value of a statewide system. Is it worth the pain? If it is, then we figure out the system. He suggested that a list of reasons why Idaho should have a statewide system would help to determine which system should be chosen and who can best make it happen. Gaylen Smyer said that Idaho needs a statewide system because kids are so mobile. Anne Ritter said that Idaho also has a mobile teaching core. If Idaho had one system, it could be taught in pre-service. Tom Taggart suggested that the State select one system to support which the districts can choose on a voluntary basis. Representative DeMordaunt noted that Schoolnet is the only scalable system from a technology point of view. SchoolNet worked in Colorado on a county-by-county basis. Idaho tackled the entire state at once. Alan Millar, Bob Lokken and George Harad discussed the need for a project management methodology with a governance structure. The cost may be great, but the cost of failure would be greater. Bob Lokken said that any system needs to be optimized for the end user, not the back office. Alan Millar noted that local control would equate to spending more. Anne Ritter said the system would need a commitment for long term funding, and Alan Millar said that the recommendation would need to come from this committee.

Tracie Bent and Marilyn Whitney reviewed the timelines for administrative rule changes and new legislation. The deadline for administrative rule has passed. The committee should target early September for final recommendations, which identify any legislation that needs to be changed. Any change in the funding system would require legislation. Ms. Bent has until early September to write language for Board approval in mid-October, however, if a legislator were to carry a bill, additional time would be available. The committee’s final recommendations might include pilot programs, legislations, rules and a temporal guideline for items that will take more time. Mastery will not likely have recommendations, whereas streamlining advanced opportunities and the 5-Star system may.

Bob Lokken suggested that as the committee looks to the future, continuity of its membership would be helpful.

Next Meeting of the Joint Committees: July 28, 2014