

**Structural Change Focus Area  
Task Force for Improving Education  
March 15, 2013**

Present: Cheryl Charlton, Corrine Mantle-Bromley, Skip Oppenheimer, Reed DeMordaunt, Anne Ritter, Tom Luna, Ken Edmunds, Roger Brown, Alan Millar, Mike Lanza, Cindy Wilson

Rep. DeMordaunt began the subcommittee discussion by advising the group they had three tasks for the day: decide on a subcommittee chair and vice-chair, review community forum dates and who can attend, review and refine recommendations for upcoming community forums.

The subcommittee discussed the work they'll be doing over the next few months. The group anticipates having conference calls or virtual meetings to hear presentations and research from experts on topics more information is needed on.

The subcommittee discussed the level of detail they needed to go into at this time on the recommendations. Recommendations will inform legislation the State Board of Education may choose to bring forward next year, but Mike Rush encouraged the subcommittee to not limit their recommendations to legislative outcomes. There may be recommendations for the State Department of Education or local school districts.

*Task #1: Governance- Decide on chair and vice-chair.*

There was consensus among the group that Rep. DeMordaunt should continue as chair of the subcommittee. The group nominated Doug Baker to serve as vice-chair. Mr. Baker wasn't present at the meeting, but Ms. Mantle-Bromley will communicate the nomination back to him.

*Task #2- Community Forum Dates*

The subcommittee reviewed the dates and locations of the community forums and indicated which forums they would be able to attend, as reflected below:

- April 10- Caldwell Community Forum- Brown, Lanza, DeMordaunt
- April 11- Twin Falls Community Forum- Brown,
- April 15- Coeur d'Alene Community Forum- Brown, Millar, Baker (tentatively)
- April 16- Lewiston Community Forum- Brown, Baker (tentatively), Millar (tentatively), Wilson (tentatively)
- April 22- Idaho Falls Community Forum- Brown, DeMordaunt
- April 23- Pocatello- Brown, DeMordaunt (tentatively)
- April 24 Boise-Brown, Lokken, Demordaunt, Ritter, Lanza, Wilson

The subcommittee discussed what their role will be at the community forum. Someone from the State Board of Education will briefly present the subcommittee recommendations to date at the first of the forum. The task force members will listen to public input and ask questions as necessary.

*Task #3- Review and Refine Recommendations*

Since the subcommittee was a merge of the structural change and technology subcommittees, the chair asked the members of each subcommittee to update the other subcommittee on their work to this point. Ms. Wilson told the group her subcommittee discussed the importance of a statewide infrastructure—such as bandwidth, Wi-Fi, technology specialists, etc.—to implement technology. Supt. Luna told the group the subcommittee focused on equal access, meaning a

student should have access to technology no matter where they live. They also discussed the importance of technology being considered a utility, rather than a one-time expense or something that's nice to have.

The group then discussed the bandwidth and wireless infrastructure in schools statewide. The Idaho Education Network (IEN) has bandwidth going into every high school, but it hasn't been expanded to elementary or middle schools. The funding for the wireless feasibility/gap study that's included in HB65 this year is also just for high schools.

*Action Item: The State Department of Education will share the SBAC IT Readiness Report from December 2012 with the full subcommittee.*

Ms. Mantle-Bromley shared that teacher preparation programs are required to make sure their teachers can integrate technology into the classroom; however, they're finding their students are going into classrooms without any technology infrastructure. The teacher preparation programs are using the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards.

Rep. DeMordaunt reviewed the recommendations to date of the structural change subcommittee. First, this group recommends a consistent, reliable data system to base decisions about accountability measures upon. Second, the group had discussed optimizing individual student outcomes through a flexible decision making model at the lowest, most practical level possible. By driving decisions to the lowest levels, you create empowerment. Third, the group had discussed the importance of creating structures and incentives to provide collaboration and innovation to drive continuous improvement. The group recognized that this will vary across districts, but there needs to be a way to share best practices across the state.

The group then discussed education service districts (regional service centers) as a way for districts to work with universities and to share services. There are not statutory limitations on the creation of education service districts today; it just hasn't been done in Idaho, yet. The State Department of Education is currently analyzing the fiscal cost to these centers. Education service districts could also provide tailored professional development and curriculum development.

The group then moved to discussing funding districts based on enrollment, rather than attendance, and whether this would fit into the purview of structural change. Since the funding formula is codified in Idaho law, changing the basis for funding for have to be recommendation to the Idaho Legislature. Superintendent Luna shared with the group that funding on enrollment, rather than attendance, has an estimated \$60 million fiscal impact and would result in some double funding because of student mobility throughout the school year.

Another alternative, funding schools based on outcomes, was discussed. The state already allows districts to award high school credit based on mastery, and it's up to the district to determine how a student demonstrates mastery. Because the current funding formula is based on attendance, there may be a disincentive to award credits for mastery. There were some concerns expressed about funding based on outcomes due to disagreements over measurements and variations among schools in the same district. A blended model was suggested, where fixed costs are funded, but variable costs are based on outcomes. Concerns were expressed about demographics affecting outcomes and therefore funding. Measuring on growth, rather than proficiency, answers many of the concerns about demographics, because it compares like students.

The discussion then shifted to eliminating grade levels. Ms. Mantle-Bromley shared with the group that there are some excellent non-graded classrooms models, although most were done in the 1990s before accountability models.

*Action Item: Ms. Mantle-Bromley will find the literature around non-graded classrooms and a school that's currently doing it to share with the committee.*

The group then discussed what further data, research, or presentations it needed to continue working on the recommendations. There was interest expressed in learning more about Finland's decentralized model, how Georgia has become one of the states with the highest college going rates, value-added analytical tools, and collaboration models.

Ms. Ritter brought up the importance of preparing students for post-secondary professional technical education (PTE), in addition to preparing them for college or university. Mr. Edmunds explained to the group that the State Board of Education's goal is based on the statistic that 60% of jobs require a post-secondary degree or certificate. 44% of the 60% of jobs require a certificate-level or below. Therefore, we also need a system in high school that prepares students for a seamless transition to PTE.

Supt. Luna pointed out that many of the structural changes that the subcommittee had discussed through the day don't take structural change, just a willingness to try something different. He used the example of the Kootenai Technical Education Campus (KTEC) in north Idaho, where high school students can earn PTE certificates. Many of these changes require a change in culture.

Mr. Lanza suggested that more counselors may be needed at the middle level to talk to students and parents about career paths and what courses are needed in high school to pursue that career in postsecondary education. Supt. Luna argued that in many cases it's not that students aren't aware, but rather that they don't have the opportunity. Once an opportunity presents itself, students flock to it. In the case of KTEC, the opportunity was made available at the local level through interested business owners and a consortium of school districts.

The notion of local control led to a discussion of things that could be done at the state level to incentive innovation at the local level. Suggestion included pilot programs and parent leaders.

At 12:00 pm, the subcommittee took a break for lunch, and reconvened shortly after 1:00 pm.

After lunch, the subcommittee took each recommendation and recapped what they knew and what they needed to find out about that recommendation.

**Recommendation #1:** Define, implement, and utilize a consistent and reliable data system. The group decided to include the word "utilize" in the recommendation. Rep. DeMordaunt suggested learning more about value added models and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). Luna reminded the group that having access to data is critical, but knowing how to use it is vital. The group also discussed learning more about the Idaho System for Education Excellence (ISEE) and Schoolnet.

**Recommendation #2:** Define key measures of growth and success.

The group discussed the importance of measuring outcomes and making like comparisons. The Smarter Balanced assessments will allow states to make like comparisons.

*Action Item: State Department of Education to present to the subcommittee on the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.*

Ms. Mantel-Bromley suggested looking at the health of the child. There were some concerns expressed from the group that this was outside their scope.

The group then returned to discussing measuring outcomes. Supt. Luna volunteered the State Department of Education to present to the subcommittee on the new five star rating system and how it measures schools.

*Action Item: State Department of Education to present to the subcommittee on the five star rating system.*

Another suggestion was made to focus on early indicators, which led the group to discuss whether there should be a recommendation about early education, such as eliminating the school age requirement. No consensus was reached.

Chairman DeMordaunt suggested the group conduct a conference call with the teacher effectiveness subcommittee to learn more about the findings of the MET study and how it relates to measuring outcomes.

*Action Item: Conference call with teacher effectiveness subcommittee to review MET study research.*

Recommendation #3: Evaluate current accountability system and make necessary changes. Supt. Luna told the group the current accountability system for student achievement is the five star rating system, now that the state has an ESEA waiver. When it comes to funding, attendance is the current accountability model.

Recommendation #4: Continually refine the accuracy, effectiveness of the data system.

Recommendation #5: Study decentralized models to determine the appropriate model of decision levels.

*Action Item: Presentation on Finland's decentralized model.*

Mr. Millar told the group it took Finland decades to get to its decentralized model. They had a very top down model when they started in the 1960s. He offered to share information he's read with the group via email.

Ms. Ritter asked Mr. Oppenheimer whether there are decentralized models in the business world that would apply. Mr. Oppenheimer said there are model, but the group would be better served at looking at decentralized models within education.

*Action Item: Ms. Ritter will contact the National School Boards Association (NSBA) for decentralized models in other states and/or countries. Mr. Edmunds will check with the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), and Supt. Luna will check with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).*

Recommendation # 6: Study what is working locally and in other states to drive structure that promotes collaboration and innovation.

*Action Item: Ms. Mantle-Bromley will send the group the name and contact information of an expert on educational service agencies.*

The group discussed the importance of collaboration being individualized at the local level, but also the importance of having a way to share innovative practices.

Mr. Lanza asked if the group would be willing to add researching whether other states have added more counselors. Ms. Ritter pointed out that it should be a broader question about staffing models and whether they meet our goals.

Mr. Lanza then returned the conversation to local control and how you balance local decision making with getting public buy-in for the recommendations of the task force. Ms. Ritter suggested a press release and posting the recommendations on the State Board of Education's website in advance of the community forum.

Recommendation #7: Evaluate adopting the International Society of Technology Education (ISTE).

The Idaho standards for technology are already based on the ISTE standards.

The group then discussed their messaging for the community forums around technology. The group sees technology as a utility, believes every student should have equal access to technology, and thinks every district needs the infrastructure to support technology.

Ms. Ritter then told the group she'd like input from the public around PTE skills. Rep. DeMordaunt would like to ask the public what they think we should be measuring when it comes to student achievement. Ms. Charlton expressed her hope that the community forums would begin with a presentation of data around where our schools currently are, areas of commonalities found in the task force, and areas for further research. Mr. Millar would like to ask the public, "Given a finite amount of funding, how would you like the funding spent in your school?" Supt. Luna would like the public's feedback on technology delivery models.

The subcommittee then adjourned to meet with the task force as a whole.