

## Effective Teachers & Leaders / Fiscal Stability

Meeting Notes  
July 12, 2013

Members Present: Linda Clark, Wayne Freedman, Roger Quarles, Alex LeBeau, Mary Huff, Karen Echeverria, Bert Marley (proxy for Penni Cyr), John Goedde.

Joining by phone: Phyllis Nichols, Geoff Thomas, Mary Ann Ranells, Katie Pemberton

Others present: Paul Headlee, Eric Milstead, Jason Hancock, Luci Willits, Christina Linder, Marilyn Whitney

Christina Linder, with the State Department of Education, presented information on tiered licensure (see presentation for July 12<sup>th</sup> meeting). She shared models from New Mexico and Ohio.

Dr. Clark asked about the evaluation model and ensuring inter-rater reliability. If there is more emphasis on a teacher's proficiency level, it has to be fair and reliable.

Ms. Linder explained that the states moved to the Danielson framework and started training on that framework 2-3 years ago. Based on MET study, does teacher performance impacts student achievement. There have been 300 administrators who have taken the training.

Dr. Clark commented that it's necessary to be able to tell teachers the evaluation is fair and appropriate.

Ms. Linder explained that there will be a trained cadre of evaluators. ETS and the MET study both have determined that this is legally defensible. If someone is certified and calibrated, they know what they are looking at and can assess it.

Bert Marley asked how teachers can appeal their evaluation. Ms. Linder explained that the evaluators are not the administrators the teacher has a relationship with. There may be a need to rework the policy on due process. Districts will be required to maintain proficiency of their evaluators.

Dr. Clark commented that having a process to train evaluators is important for inter-rater reliability. She asked if it would be possible for principals to take a refresher course as part of their re-licensure. That would put all districts on a level.

Mr. Marley noted that the experience in the legislature with mentoring program was that funding was discontinued because there was no consistency in the programs and the legislature didn't think they were getting true bang for the buck. There must be a consistent foundation and ongoing support for programs to work.

Ms. Linder commented that in the past, there were a lot of rubber stamp programs. There are now more opportunities to provide monitoring and support so that foundational pieces are in place and there is consistency.

Sen. Goedde commented that he heard from districts that just wanted the state to send the money with no strings, which was another reason the funding was cut. He would love to see

funding for good mentoring. With technological tools, there is no reason a video of a classroom situation couldn't be shared with evaluators. This could be a great professional development tool for the teacher and the administrator. It also provides a permanent record and sharing among administrators helps them become more competent in evaluating.

Roger Quarles commented that this is a good idea. He referenced work by Steven Fink, which shows administrators lack the ability to identify excellence in teaching. But this can be corrected. Having a teacher they respect as part of the process or peer evaluation is effective and can make the evaluation more meaningful. There should be a conversation about what excellence looks like – e.g. they get results in student achievement, continuing education, etc. Tiers of licensure could work.

Mary Ann Ranells asked if there could be consideration for the models that lean on collaboration and teacher teams that have identified learning targets for which the team is mutually accountable. They are seeing tremendous results with that framework where the teacher teams are identifying areas for growth and how to provide feedback to students and other teachers. Individual excellence is one part, but another part of the equation is team growth.

Dr. Clark commented that Cherry Creek Colorado had an option in its pay for performance plan to allow a teacher to choose whether to be evaluated as an individual or a team.

Katie Pemberton asked about the tiered licensure and what it would look like as they transition.

Dr. Clark walked through the career ladder proposal (see PowerPoint for notes).

Geoff Thomas noted that this is a big departure from the way we have been doing things. The reality is that this provides teachers a competitive wage. It keeps Idaho competitive with other states. It's a significant investment which teachers need. It also provides for accountability. This is completely voluntary. For an experienced teacher, they don't have to be a part of this. The tradeoff is perhaps they may not have all of the protections. On the other hand, there is a greater financial reward. The vast majority of teachers are excellent. This provides the legislature with assurance that education believes in accountability. It will be important to train administrators on evaluations so that teachers feel confident they are skilled in evaluations. Patrons and taxpayers can feel confident we have good teachers and we reward good teachers.

Dr. Clark noted that the plan is still a draft and has not been refined yet.

Ms. Pemberton asked about advanced degrees. If teachers earn a master's or doctorate, is there extra incentive pay? Dr. Clark indicated that is not built in to the model yet.

Rep. Ward-Engelking asked if the group can we do some additional revision. If someone who enters the profession with a master's degree they should receive additional compensation.

Dr. Clark responded that the current system allows districts that flexibility now. They can place teachers from private sector or out-of-state higher on the ladder. Evaluation will follow teachers as they go from district to district.

Rep. Ward-Engelking commented that not all administrators are excellent.

Dr. Clark agreed that it would require training and requirements to be in place for evaluators.

Jason Hancock explained that the proposal also includes a point system beyond licensure. Teachers could get points for years, content area master's degrees, evaluation, etc. They move based on years, but also on the criteria for movement. Evaluation status is the determinant as are points. Evaluation and licensure are tied.

A beginning teacher would spend 3 years with the standard licensure, but there could be an option for earlier movement based on points – multiple certification, etc.

Mr. Quarles commented that there would be more buy-in from teachers with broad strokes for criteria.

Sen. Goedde asked how much pushback would there be from teachers to give up continuing contracts?

Mr. Marley responded that he thought most beginning teachers would want to participate, but experienced teachers might not move as quickly. No continuing contracts will be an issue for experienced teachers.

Mary Ann Ranells commented that this is a great compromise, but it needs teacher input.

Dr. Clark commented that the premise was to provide a competitive wage and to show accountability. It's voluntary. If teachers want to stay on legacy system, they can. To have a sea change with respect to teacher compensation, there has to be accountability. The idea is to reward teachers. There is still the protection of due process.

Rep. Ward-Engelking commented that she thinks this has merit. One problematic area is that basic teachers may be paid less than a brand new teacher.

Dr. Clark commented that there needs to be buy-in from teachers at all levels. Another way to do it would be to start with the new teachers. But that is unfair to those in the system.

Dr. Quarles asked is a 2.9% increase in funding is realistic.

Paul Headlee responded that for the last couple years revenue growth has been around 6%. Each 1% to the public schools budget is \$13 million. This would not be unrealistic, but where the legislature ends up is unpredictable. These numbers would fit in with a reasonable request.

Dr. Quarles suggested giving an option for districts to participate.

There was discussion that the plan would need to be phased in. If it wasn't phased in, this could be a \$200 million impact.

Rep. Ward-Engelking noted that either way, districts would get substantially more salary money. She asked if districts could also use levy or discretionary money to bump up salaries more.

Dr. Clark responded that districts might still pay the differential, but there are two other recommendations the Fiscal Stability group has talked about:

- 1) Moving to enrollment funding. Attendance based funding is hampering ability to move forward with mastery funding. Even at the current level of funding, it will structurally be better.

2) Restoration of operational funding. All of these may be tied together.

The members of the former Effective Teachers and Leaders group shared what they have worked on. The group identified the importance of the core standards in creating structure and processes to allow teachers to be part of professional learning communities – collaborative model. Group zeroed in on effective teachers and leaders. Had presentations on the new teacher evaluation model, discussed mentoring as an important component to help teachers and administrators continually improve. The group reviewed various models, but hadn't decided on any particular model. The professional development committee suggested an ongoing \$10 million for training on the Idaho core standards.

Dr. Clark asked that if the career ladder model moves forward, it would pay for the mentors. Would still need to make provision for substitute time and release time. Want to make sure that is accounted for.

Professional development once a week or once a month is not enough. Need to provide flexibility to the local level and do what works best for the district or school.

Katie Pemberton – talked about job-embedded collaboration as a cost-effective strategy to build the professional learning communities – working as a team to increase student achievement... Several districts have been able to implement these structures.

Mary Huff commented that the group discussed the need for a required mentoring program but that local districts have flexibility with respect to the components of their program. This allows small and large districts to tailor programs to their needs.

The group did address pay for performance with presentations on plans from Arkansas and Denver. The current research doesn't show a direct link between pay for performance and student achievement. It requires funding up front. The group decided to look at the other areas more specifically to impact student achievement.

Mary Ann commented that if the goal is the 60% post-secondary completion, the way to get there is collaboration and not competition.

Mary Huff commented that the Arkansas pay for performance model was based on collective goals.

Rep. Ward-Engelking noted that funding is an issue.

Karen Echeverria noted that the career ladder proposal includes some funding for mentoring and for professional development.

Dr. Clark commented that additional funding for mentoring would be needed.

Rep Ward-Engelking noted that the funding for professional development for Idaho Core standards would not be ongoing.

Dr. Clark commented that her original opposition to common core was not based on the standards, which are good. It was based on the lack of funding for professional development and training. The last time the science standards changed, it cost her district \$1 million.

Roger Quarles asked if there had been any polling on whether the public would prefer to pay more taxes to maintain the current days and weeks versus paying less in taxes and having late starts and/or a 4-day school week

Dr. Clark suggested that to address the concern about having new teachers making more on the new ladder than existing teachers who don't have the opportunity to move, the group might want to look at what New Mexico did. They phased in their tiers in 2-year increments by each tier. This may be something for the group to consider. Also need to consider how to get buy in for such a plan.

Dr. Clark summarized the five areas the group is looking at:

- 1) 1 Move to enrollment based funding
- 2) 2 Restoration of unit/operational funding (i.e. discretionary)
- 3) 3 \$10 mill for training in the common core (1 year)
- 4) 4 Build time into week for collaboration
- 5) 5 Career Ladder/Tiered Licensure plan

The group continued its discussion of the career ladder/tiered licensure plan.

Rep. Ward-Engelking said that new teachers could come in at \$33,000 or \$34,000 and then be bumped up and existing teachers at less than that would be bumped up to the \$33,000 or \$34,000.

Jason Hancock walked through some assumptions and scenarios of how it could be implemented in tiers. The kind of mix you get based on who moves over first changes the fiscal impact. In the fiscal modeling, he adhered to the 40-50-60 plan. The Task Force can't realistically ask for the funding to move everyone over at once. You could let everyone move across, but not at 40-50-60 plan at the beginning. You could get there starting at a lower level and then get there over the course of 5 years.

Dr. Clark commented that it might be more palatable to the legislature if it wasn't 40-50-60 to begin with.

Mr. Marley commented that the legislature could walk away from the plan at any point.

The group discussed including a "poison pill." If teachers move away from an ongoing contract, and the legislature de-funds or changes the program, the teachers get their former status back.

Mr. Marley noted that leaving experienced teachers with no room for movement is a problem. You can't just give the newer teachers all the opportunities to earn more.

Suggestion – have Jason run 2 or 3 different models and bring a subcommittee back together to look at options. When the ladder is fully operational, what are the triggers for letting teachers move? Is there a trigger earlier if a teacher has a proficiency designation and meets the other requirements.

Mr. Freedman noted a teacher should be able to meet the requirements in a shorter period of time. Five years is a long time. Perhaps have 3 years and then an extension year if necessary.

Mr. Marley noted that the plan needs to mirror the certification process, but the model needs to be kept straightforward and not too complicated. It needs to be understandable. Moving beyond the time requirements on the current steps and lanes model is a good idea.

Dr. Clark noted that the best models give as little discretion with the evaluator as possible. The group discussed some additional ideas for how to modify the proposal with respect to earning points and incremental increases within each rung. These could be tied to leadership and additional responsibilities and should be tied to certification. There does need to be incentive for master teachers to continue to improve.

Mary Huff noted that one of the areas the Teachers/Leaders group addressed was recruiting and retaining high quality teachers. The career ladder seems to address this goal. But how does this lead to fiscal stability.

The single largest contributor to the current instability is the differential they have to pay in teacher salaries. This would be the schedule for all the districts. However, it wouldn't apply to the charter districts. This would make Idaho competitive with neighboring states.

The group added a 6<sup>th</sup> item to the list of potential recommendations: Statewide mentoring program.

Wayne Freedman raised the issue of a statewide approach to benefits. The group had previously talked about a line item increase tied to some index. The group decided that it may be necessary to see how the health insurance exchange plays out. They could include it in the recommendations as an area that needs to be addressed in the future.

A small group including Christina Linder, Wayne Freedman, Bert Marley, Jason Hancock, Janie Ward-Engelking will work on the career ladder/tiered licensure will meet on August 2<sup>nd</sup> from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. to discuss more details and changes to the proposal based on the day's discussion.

The full group will meet again on Monday, August 12<sup>th</sup>, from 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the Joint Dist. No. 2 offices.

Between those meetings, the working group will send out the tiered licensure/career ladder.