**HJR 7 – Committee To Advance Educators Compensation and Careers –**

**Technical Working Group – Meeting #1**

**Thursday, November 12, 3:00 pm**

**MINUTES**

**Member Attendees: Members Not In Attendance:**

Meaghan Brennan Jeff Taschner

David Blowman

Hugh Broomall

Sara Croce

Kristin Dwyer

Betsy Fleetwood

Gerald Gallagher

Mike Jackson

Angeline Rivello

Monet Smith

Karen Thorpe

Josette Tucker

**Support Staff In Attendance:**

Tina Shockley

The first meeting of the HJR 7 Committee To Advance Educators Compensation and Careers – Technical Working Group was held on November 12, 2015 in the Townsend Building’s Cabinet Room, Dover. Lindsay O’Mara, Governor’s Education Policy Advisor, called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m. Everyone introduced themselves and the agency they were representing.

Two handouts were provided to members: (1) PowerPoint DECC-Open Forum deck dated June 2015 and (2) CAECC Provisional Recommendations Report dated June 2015.

Lindsay provided a brief overview of the larger CAECC’s work thus far, noting that the group has worked on a new career pathway and compensation package for the past two years. She noted this was the first meeting of the Technical Working Group (TWG), which came out of the original CAECC group. She also noted that there is an Educator Working Group (EWG) that is meeting. The CAECC group had high aspirations to have a new system up and running by 2016-2017 school year, but that is not going to be feasible. She noted that everyone wants this to be successful, so a full scale implementation will not occur until the 2017-2018 school year. This means a plan, budget projections, system requirements, etc. need to be identified by Spring 2017 at the latest.

It was noted that there are three key recommendations:

1. Establishing a meaningful career pathway for educators
2. Raising starting salary for educators
3. Providing teacher-leadership opportunities in our schools at various levels

The group focused on Page 15 of the deck which shows different educator pathways. The traditional pathway of an educator is obtaining a Master’s Degree and thereby earning a salary increase. A new pathway is providing an educator with a teacher-leadership track, which may allow them to stay in the classroom while earning more salary.

Lindsay advised the members that we are *not* charged with defining teacher leader roles. She further noted the three main focus area for our group are:

1. Teacher Leader Allocation Roles
2. Implementation
3. Critical Definition of High Needs Schools

**Teacher Leader Allocation Roles**

It was noted that it would be determined later exactly how teacher leader roles would be allocated (by district or by school). Examples of teacher-leadership roles include: teachers mentoring their peers, teacher-leaders for content areas, department chairs, instructional leadership supports (technology) or those who may lead in classroom management. While there were questions with how this would work, it is a larger discussion for the group to tackle going forward. It was further noted that the new recommended compensation / career pathways do align to the DPAS system. It was further noted that an educator can serve in a teacher-leadership role for a three year term. Also, the new system would not make any changes to EPER (Extra Pay for Extra Responsibility), it would work alongside it. The districts establish the number of teacher-leader roles and allocate them to the schools in the district. There were concerns voiced regarding ensuring that enough teachers opt in, the right teachers opt in and ensuring growth and effectiveness are monitored.

**Implementation**

There was a great deal of conversation around the need for a PHRST representative to join the committee, as they would be vital in answering questions about how the PHRST system could or could not be changed to accommodate changes to teacher compensation or pathways. The group discussed the need for districts to have some type of technical assistance with the changes, and that any change would need to be aligned with state policy (licensure and certification requirements), as well as aligned with the teacher evaluation system.

There was concern about having dual systems operating at the same time. Lindsay noted that no teacher would have to move to the new system, but that all new educators would be in the new system. This group’s input is needed to determine if we want to “grandfather” in educators.

Lindsay further explained that there would potentially be three opt-in opportunities over the first five years for existing educators. Initially they can opt in when the system is new, two years later and then two years after that, so that we can capture all educators. Once an educator moves into the new system, they stay there and cannot move back.

It was noted that there is still incentive for teachers to get their Master’s Degree, as the new system is intended to supplement a teacher’s salary. Lindsay noted that Page 32 of the Provisional Recommendations Report shows what that would look like.

Concerns were voiced regarding the budget for implementation (specifically for higher starting educator salaries). We will need to see what dollars are actually available to go towards this. There would be a cost to establish the framework for this, including funding for development, implementation and for salaries.

Likely, we would pilot this with those currently in teacher-leadership roles, perhaps one district in each county.

**Definition of High Needs Schools**

While we can identify high needs schools (previously Priority Schools), there is also a need to recognize there are high needs populations in non-designated high needs schools (i.e., Brandywine School District). It was also noted that we really do not have a good definition of a high needs population. This is something the group needs to work on.

**Systems & Operations**

The group brainstormed about the challenges of the system and how it would operate. Issues that arose were:

* OMB/System Development cost and timeframe for that in the appropriate budget year (need to know in November)
* Codes for system
* Data Service Center would need to be involved
* DE PHRST may need to open fields for additional data (with clusters its built into it)
* A salary plan development (this may require extra manual data entry work, as occurred when para-professionals were added to the system)
* System must be well-defined
* Need to track number of stipends, budget accordingly; does stipend stay with school or district (stays with unit and is built into their salary); issues with putting that on/off in the system
* Need to develop a specific list of questions for PHRST representative
* Smaller districts – it’s very challenging for local tracking, they sometimes track outside of PHRST
* Is it easier to migrate existing system or have dual systems?
* Would the timing of this conflict with a planned upgrade to PHRST (which is to be done by Aug 2017)?
* Need to know how many teachers are going into the new system
* Cross District/Intra District issues and collaboration; would there be an option to opt into the new system if a teacher went to a new district or school
* Because the PHRST system is customized to Delaware, it is a big deal to change something
* There may possibly be an upgrade in coming budget for DEEDS, and this will need to be built around this system, while keeping the old system.
* Concerns with what burdens and challenges the new system would put on local school districts, as local pay schedules will be based on the old salary schedules. It was noted that local districts do not have to change their systems up front and there is no pressure for them to change systems. Districts retain flexibility as a long as they follow minimum parameters.
* Need to add a grade option in PHRST?
* How does the new system impact charter schools?

Lindsay concluded the meeting by noting that at some point in the future we will have the Educator Working Group meet with us for a discussion, as they may be encountering similar issues. Likewise, their consultant, Department of Finance, Office of Management and Budget, and the Controller General’s Office will work to determine the final cost of implementation and report back to the CAECC. She reminded everyone that recommendations need to go to the Governor and General Assembly in June 2016. The next meeting will be scheduled after the holidays by Tina Shockley, who is supporting the committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Approved 1/26/16