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

**Technical Working Group – Meeting #2**

**January 26, 2016, 4:00 pm**

**MINUTES**

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

Meaghan Brennan Mike Jackson

David Blowman Hugh Broomall

Betsy Fleetwood Sara Croce

Gerald Gallagher Monet Smith

Angeline Rivello

Jeff Taschner

Karen Thorpe

Josette Tucker

**Members of the Public In Attendance:**

Karin Faulhaber, PHRST

Anne Spano, PHRST

**Support Staff In Attendance:**

Susan Haberstroh

Lindsay O’Mara

Tina Shockley

The second meeting of the HJR 7 Committee to Advance Educators Compensation and Careers – Technical Working Group was held on January 26, 2016 in the Townsend Building, Cabinet Room, Dover. Lindsay O’Mara, Governor’s Education Policy Advisor, called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. Everyone introduced themselves and the agency they were representing, including two guests from PHRST.

A motion to approve the minutes from Meeting #1 was made. Members noted that two changes needed to be made to the minutes: (1) the misspelling of Monet Smith’s name (“t” instead of “y”, and (2) the misspelling of Sara Croce’s name (no “h” in Sarah). The minutes were approved pending those two changes.

**Update on Overall Process – Educator Working Group**

Lindsay briefly noted that the Educator Working Group (EWG) has been meeting, and it will be helpful to the Technical Working Group (TWG) to know what they are working on. Therefore, next time we will be having that conversation. Also, she reviewed that the key objectives in improving the compensation system are: (1) raising starting salaries to be competitive and (2) creating opportunities for educators to stay in the classroom. She further noted that there could also be incentives for national board certification.

She noted that the EWG and TWG groups would be proving information to the larger CAECC group in order to direct the purpose and current objectives of the larger CAECC group with regards to key adjustments to be made to the compensation system.

She noted that this group would be supporting the following areas: developing rules, developing appropriate definition of high needs schools, recommendations for appropriate compensation levels for educators, and further defining current employee growth.

The requested feedback from the EWG was around: (1) developing a series of model teacher leadership roles, (2) proposed job descriptions, (3) developing the teacher-leader evaluation process, (4) how to make progress on critical needs in schools, as well as (5) guidelines for what “foot in the classroom” means and (6) guidelines around direct responsibility for student academic growth.

There was good discussion on teacher leaders being in on educator evaluations, the need for defined roles, potential release time from classrooms for this work, and the possibility of a state funded stipend for the teacher leadership role, selection, evaluation and recommendations.

The group further discussed the Working Role Summaries for Model Leadership Roles, which include: “critical needs” and roles to address those needs, and the desire to have 5-8 model roles (i.e., Instructional Practice Lead, Digital Content Lead, Instructional Strategy Lead, Community Partnership Lead, Instructional Culture Lead).

There was discussion of examples of educators with and without a foot in the classroom and gave suggested changes in terms of terminology.

Lindsay noted that the topics for future Educator Working Group meetings should be: Selection processes and educator selection. She noted that two districts were doing this now - one of which is Brandywine School District, as they wanted to see how this works in real life. Also, Smyrna is using Title II funds for a position.

Everyone wants to know what does this look like in practice. Committee members discussed teachers in the classroom vs. some others who interact with classroom, but who are not directly in the classroom. Lindsay agreed these were some very helpful examples and encouraged them to send in examples.

She indicated that next time, we may have Jesse Parsley and Robyn Howton come to the TWG meeting to provide some examples of Teacher Leadership roles, what works and what doesn’t work, as well as to discuss piloting teacher leadership as noted in the Governor’s Budget Recommendation. David Blowman encouraged it to be structured the correct way to work properly.

**Preview of Governor’s Recommended Budget Proposal**

Lindsay moved on to note that the Governor is enthusiastic regarding this important issue affecting several people, and wants to make some progress in this area, and through his budget proposal has committed to putting money into starting salaries for educators.

She clearly noted that this proposal has raised concerns about how that system would be created/work. Would there be two systems running simultaneously? There are lots of unanswered questions given the current and proposed systems. This proposal is not about that. The purpose of the proposal / concept here is to make investments by increasing salaries in the current lane structure of teacher compensation at the front end of the scale. The purpose is to bump up state share of salaries in a teacher’s early years.

Lindsay reviewed with the group a current starting salaries chart showing state share of educator salaries (the status quo) and what was recommended by the Governor – which was bumping up starting teacher salaries to a minimum of $33,000. While we are still working on details, essentially the highlighted boxes exemplify that any teacher with a BS degree would make no less than $33,000 in state share.

Gerald gave an example from Smyrna, where it was a disincentive for a teacher with BS degree to get Masters degree. The proposal to remove the degrees was not well received in Smyrna. Educators who stay in the system know there is an incentive to getting their Masters degree. Gerald noted that Smyrna encourages teachers to get degrees. By year 10 – 60% of educators have their Masters degree. Educators didn’t like that salary distinction in early years. Gerald and Jeff suggested there are several different approaches to figuring this.

Lindsay explained that the funding of a pilot teacher/leadership concept, would consist of a small scale pilot of less than 100 teachers, would involve 1-2 schools in each county, running at state level, not a system-wide financial change at this time. Additionally, there could be a stipend for National Board Certificated teachers who are certified but not receiving compensation.

**Discussion Topics**

There were many items discussed during the meeting, which resulted in the following comments or questions:

Which group of employees would be paid off this scale? It is intended to affect classroom teachers and specialist, but may have unintended consequences for those who work at Del Tech.

Would district administrators be paid differently?

What about DOE employees – how would this affect them?

How would Prison education teachers & Agency teachers (DHSS, Kids Dept) be paid? They are currently paid the same as teachers, will that change under a new system?

We don’t really want to differentiate, or devalue administrative positions.

What about higher education, like DelTech being compensated through a different system? We anticipate there being very little impact to these employees.

As for Classroom Teachers and Specialists – librarians, counselors – there should be no unintended consequences at district level, as they are on different lanes on the schedule. There should be no automatic district impacts.

Would district incentives affect this? No….that would just be on top of the base state salary.

What about various district contract issues – collective bargaining agreements, contract issues?

PHRST issues – what are the issues there?

We need to determine how many people we are talking about? The group asked our PHRST guests and Meaghan, what does the scale potentially look like, and who falls under that category?

It was noted that this is adding money at the state level, not local.

We have lowest starting salaries of 21 surrounding states.

The teachers’ salaries computation has changed over the years, but we are still well below the average state teacher starting salary in our region.

This is just part of the conversation…we need to get started, knowing we will need to do more in future years. This is just a starting point.

How big an issue is this with new teacher recruitment? It is an issue, but we could recruit more students who are from Delaware to teach here. The focus being on recruiting and retaining. We don’t want to lose them in year 5 or 6. We need to build a strong base of teachers in first ten years. When we reach year ten, salary would be average to that of 21 school districts, so we are just behind at the starting salary level.

What about issues with PHRST?

How would this impact classroom teachers and specialists? This would impact anyone who is paid off the teacher payscale, including agency teachers.

According to PHRST, this would just be a change to a table, so this is a doable change. It is just the unintended consequences we need to address as they arise.

It was noted that this summer there will be a PHRST system upgrade, but that this would still be a single scale. We want this to be doable, supported and move us in a positive direction towards the recommendations of the CAECC committee. This is just a start, implementable, but will still have a big impact while we get started.

It was acknowledged and suggested that we need to have a working session with PHRST on the phases of implementation, how long it will take, etc.

Teacher leader pilot may be different to implement – though it would be like a mentor stipend, so we believe it will be simpler.

There was some discussion as to how this would be implemented / calculated / coded in teacher’s base salary at the district level.

We need to ask the Educator Working Group about the value of positions, as that will be important to know.

Does this count to toward pension? Yes, but further discussion is needed with the Pension Office.

There was some discussion about Assistant Principals vs. teacher leader positions.

The pilot is envisioned to be teacher leader role……before senior teacher leader (6 years more). Pilot in more immediate term, we’d just start with the teacher leadership role. Any examples from districts would be appreciated (5-6 districts).

National Board Certification is already in place, but with the Governor’s proposal for a flat stipend there are very few qualified people who are not getting it.

What will the districts need from us?

**Next Steps/Next Meeting**

The group tentatively decided that the next meeting date would be March 22, from 3-5pm.

The meeting adjourned at 5:36 p.m.

Drafted 02.22.16 - tms