Governor's ESSA Advisory Committee
November 20, 2017 Meeting Minutes

OPENING

- The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM.
- The meeting facilitator thanked everyone in attendance, covered the evening's agenda, and requested feedback for some of the components that would be discussed during the meeting.
- Secretary Bunting welcomed committee members and expressed her appreciation for their continued participation, and was pleased to share that Delaware's ESSA plan was the first to be fully approved by USED. Additionally, the plan was able to adhere to what the Committee preferred. The Department felt strongly to support the decisions of this collective group. Now comes the hard part, putting Delaware's plan into practice.
- Secretary Bunting shared that she is currently meeting with each superintendent to work on goal setting that does aim to cut back the non-proficiency percentage in half, according to the goals of the ESSA Plan. Good discussions are taking place and plans are to meet with each superintendent mid-year and at the end of the year to check on progression. Each Superintendent is to select a sub-group to focus on as well as an overall group.
- Committee Chair Matthew Burrows also welcomed the members and expressed his appreciation for everyone's continued participation in the process.

UPDATE on the ESSA PLAN

TSI1 & TSI2 Targeted Support and Improvement Schools:

- Reference was given to an email previously sent to Committee members after Delaware's plan was initially approved whereas, for one of the requirements, USED contacted the Department for clarification regarding Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI).
- To USED, it appeared we were "capping" Targeted Support and Improvement schools. We emphasized this was Delaware's plan from the beginning, however, USED acknowledged our method for identifying TSI schools was not allowable by law.
- USED suggested that the identification of TSI schools be looked at in a different way, but in a way that still arrives at the same result where there would not be an overabundance of targeted support schools identified. How the number of schools is derived would have to be allowable under the law.
- Ted Jarrell, DDOE, further explained that USED provided some examples of what other states have done, and although allowable under the law, seemed very restrictive. It was decided, for Delaware, to organize the TSI schools by two different categories resulting in TSI1 and TSI2.
- It was understood that initially that TSI schools are where the schools sub group had their performance at the cut point for CSI (the low performing overall schools), this was true to some extent.

- There was some latitude in how we could define TSI2 schools where the subgroup is below the cut for CSI. However, we estimated that would result in a fairly high percentage, approximately 70/80 schools. Most other states did as well.
- Knowing there would be 70/80 schools at the very start, the desire was to try to cap it. The best method was to take the lowest 5% of those schools which would amount to approximately 10 schools. This number of schools would be fairer and more reasonable to handle for DDOE and LEAs. That approach was not allowable.
- USED indicated that we could define TSI2 any way we choose, as long as it is defensible. As a review for what other states were doing was completed, for Delaware, it was decided to cap at the TSI2 level not, at the TSI1 level.
- Ultimately, we defined TSI2 as those schools where their subgroups are in the lowest 5% among all schools.
- TSI1 would be defined as a subset of TSI2 schools (approximately 11 schools) to be identified (annually).
- TSI1 would be distinguished as those schools identified to in the bottom 5% (11 schools) for 2 consecutive years for the same sub group.
- If the same 11 repeat the next year than they are all TSI. If they do not repeat, you will have fewer than 11. This is a variation compared to what other states have done. This was similar to our initial approach, but via a different route using the categories of TSI2 & TSI1. USED did approve this change.

Social Studies and Science Assessments:

- This year there was a pause on the Social Studies assessment. A new Social Studies assessment is being created. Field testing will commence in the spring.
- A new Science assessment is being created with field testing to be conducted.
- Upcoming conversation to be held with USED to request a waiver for Science for this year. If the waiver is approved, we will not have a science assessment. DOE is requesting a one year waiver.
- This was noted to make the Committee aware in case members were to receive feedback of the waiver being approved.

METRIC WEIGHTINGS:

Elementary/Middle School:

- Deputy Secretary of Education, Karen Field Rogers, provided Committee members a brief recall of the ESSA plan on the different metric areas such as, Academic Achievement, Academic Progress, School Quality/Student Success, Graduation Rates, and ELP. This all creates our DSSF with the ELP being a new indicator. We also have added chronic absenteeism, as a new measure, and there is a new Growth Methodology.
- In reviewing feedback on the different Growth Methodology (initially looking for Growth to Proficiency), it was realized that Growth to Proficiency does not add any additional information. It is significantly correlated with the Academic Achievement.
- Would like to eliminate Growth to Proficiency. The new Growth Methodology accounts for students moving to proficiency if they meet their growth targets.
- According to the Framework of the Plan, it provided how many points are going to each of the five major areas (to be taken out of a total of 500 points). For example: Academic Achievement – 30%; Academic Progress – 40%; School Quality/Student Success – 20%; Progress toward English Language Proficiency – 10% (Elementary/Middle School).
- Further information needs to be provided on how the measures will be weighted. Committee members were referred to the handout *DSSF under ESSA 2017-2018 DRAFT* for further explanation of breakdown for measures. For example, under Academic Achievement- Proficiency ELA (grades 3-6) at 15% (75 points), Proficiency Math (grades 3-6) at 15% (75 points) and so forth.

- Donna Johnson, State Board of Education (SBE), commented that SBE was in support of doing a growth to proficiency measure. SBE worked with an independent contractor to conduct an analysis of different growth methodologies that were presented during a SBE meeting last year.
- A follow-up study with data that was run, and working with DOE, showed the correlation with proficiency as well as demonstrated that the new growth methodology addressed concerns.
- DOE provided additional data that shows the new growth methodology does show growth towards standard.
- By keeping a growth to proficiency model as was originally proposed, it would essentially be double weighting proficiency, and results were also more strongly correlated with proficiency of low income students, which was not a desired outcome.
- Donna Johnson concurred with that research and provided a statement to DOE.
- Karen Field Rogers thanked the SBE for their assistance with this analysis.

High School/High School Plus:

- Again, referring to the handout, members reviewed breakdowns on draft weighting for high schools and high school plus schools (serve grades beyond 9-12, including k-12).
- Noted, this was shared with DSSF discussion group as well as the data forum, which includes representation from districts and charters to obtain feedback.
- This information was provided earlier to Committee member for the opportunity to review and address questions or concerns at this meeting.
- If all in agreement, then moving forward, we will run the DSSF using last year's data to see how it works for different schools.

Discussion points included:
- Comment on the process, it is preferred to see the numbers run with concrete data to ensure high poverty schools are not typically being tagged again because of bias.
- Question was asked for clarification - when growth to proficiency component was removed, did the overall percentage weight for academic progress stay the same. The response was yes.
- Concern raised about the impact the ELP indicator would have on schools with a low number of EL students.
- Operational question was raised for Science and Social Studies assessments that are on hold for elementary & middle schools - would this mean that the total goes from 500 to 450? It was acknowledged it will be addressed.

DSSF Rating Determinations
Cut Points: Standard of Scoring:

- The Committee was referred to the *DRAFT Cut points for DSSF 17-18* handout for review. Referring to the Standard Scoring Table, for each area, there would be a certain number of points. For example, looking at elementary/middle schools for Academic Achievement, the total would be out of 150 points, looking at high school, the total would be out of 200 points, and out of 150 for high school plus. These points correspond to the indicator weights outlined in the approved ESSA plan.
- Proposed to have 5 different categories of how a school is doing in each area, Well Below Expectation, Below Expectation, Approaching Expectation, Meets Expectation, and Exceeds Expectation.

Discussion Points Included:
- Question was raised about the cut scores and how determined, how is the data run? This is based on quintiles determined by a mathematical calculation. Also based on the way we approached the former DSSF.

- o Cut points could change after the data is run in order to meet long term goals. The data will need to run through the entire system and align with our long term goals.
- o Looking ahead, these are expectation levels and we should ensure before they become permanent, that they are expectation levels, not just mathematical formulas that have been applied.
- o Running the data will be a huge task, but is needed most to answer a lot of questions that in turn, will help to steer in the right direction.
- o An example was given how points are redistributed across the DSSF if either a measure or an indicator is missing.
- o The optimal goal is for each school to have 500 points.
- o It is anticipated that 50% of schools may not have 15 students to result in ELP data. More children are entering the system. We may have to anticipate on shifting points.
- o Concern raised regarding ensuring that EL students are still learning and still moving toward proficiency even if the school does not receive a rating. It was explained they would be still counted as the all students category, even if the school has a small EL population. It was further noted, that services are still provided for these students, they are not forgotten, and students still have growth targets.
- o Additionally, Secretary Bunting acknowledged that when goal setting with superintendents, they were asked to select and concentrate on a sub group that will be a lead target for their work for the year. The attention to those sub groups will bring up the entire school.
- o Not all schools have the same access to resources for children in difficult circumstances, but they are not overlooked. Many things happen to assist as much as possible, such as raising funds. What is in the best interest of the child is always considered.
- o Some of the reason why some schools will not meet 15 students, may have to do with the distribution of ELs by grade level. It is not uniform across grade levels and is very heavily concentrated in the K-3. Most likely 70% to 75% of ELs are in K-3. Trying to make every school have 15 may not necessarily work.

TEXT-BASED DESCRIPTORS

- Looking for feedback on the cut points, proposed text-based descriptors are, Well Below Expectation, Below Expectation, Approaching Expectation, Meets Expectation, and Exceeds Expectation.
- To share what other states are using, examples were given for Illinois, Maine, New Jersey and Vermont.
  - o For example, Illinois uses 'Exemplary school', 'Commendable school', Underperforming school', Lowest-performing school.
- Many states are using the A to F letter grade, or numerical score, or stars, or a combination.
- Based on feedback received, will determine what is used for Delaware. Currently using a combination.
- Request was made if using expectation descriptors, to ensure cut scores were actually aligned to our expectations. If using as the descriptors it is important cut scores mean that. Show connection at least in the Academic Achievement component to our long term goals.
- Consideration to be given on using different 'labels' on schools and the message it delivers. For example using standards verses expectations may seem demeaning and make it harder for a school in a non-favorable situation.
- Rationale for using 5 different categories – gives sufficient differentiation and better clarification.
- Whether 'target', 'expectations', 'standards', or something else is used, it needs to be defined.
- Suggestion was made to see if focus group data is available on what these words mean to parents.

ESSA ADVISORY COMMITTEE - CEASES DECEMBER 31, 2017:

- Per executive order 62, Governor Markell, the ESSA Advisory Committee ceases December 31, 2017.

- Deputy Secretary of Education, Karen Field Rogers, thanked Committee members for their participation and work and expressed how this Committee was very helpful in obtaining feedback for discussion and decision making for Delaware's ESSA Plan.
- In moving forward, looking for feedback in continuing with a new ESSA Advisory Committee:
  - Is it preferable to continue?
  - Current makeup of the Committee, Is it the right mix of representation? Current members continue?
  - How often to convene? Should there be a minimum number of times to meet in a year?
  - What topics should be considered or revisited?
  - How often is feedback desired and preference on how communicated?
  - Possibly use a tiered approach and change size of group as needed depending on current topic.
  - Other comments made by Committee members:
    - Value in a committee, but consideration should be given as to who should be on the committee.
    - Important to review changing CSI and TSI as we move forward. What should schools expect if identified as a CSI or TSI? What are the expectations for the individual school/district?
    - Include Equitable Education, Educator Equity and Excellence - very important.
    - Helpful to look at what is the role and responsibility of the Committee.
    - As we move forward, continuing with a committee would provide valuable guidance and feedback in areas where there may be changes to the plan, updates on goals, items in the plan that were not fully developed for implementation when approved, looking at what the data is telling us, what are we learning from implementation?
    - Should this possibly be Governor Carney's decision and appoint membership for continued participation, add an additional executive order for implementation?
    - Ensure that we develop overall continuous improvement of education in our schools.
- Karen Field Rogers mentioned a survey link was provided in an email prior to this meeting.   The link will be sent to Committee members for feedback.

NEXT STEPS

- Working with LEAs focusing on implementation.
  - DOE to focus on school improvement and providing supports for schools and districts.
  - Focus on equal access to education opportunities for all students.
  - Improving outcomes for all students. Goal setting and what support should be provided.

CONCLUSION

- No members of the public attended for comment.
- Meeting presentation will be sent to Committee members.
- Members were asked to complete a handout for any additional feedback on the components discussed during the meeting.
- The meeting adjourned at 7:11 PM.