

NEVADA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
NEVADA STATE BOARD FOR CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT TASK FORCE

February 23, 2006

Department of Education
State Board Room, 700 East Fifth Street, Carson City, Nevada

MINUTES

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT, CARSON CITY:

Barbara Myers, Chairperson and State Board of Education Member
Assemblywoman Bonnie Parnell, Chairperson on the Legislative Subcommittee on Education
Sue Denning, 7-12 Administrator and co-director of the Northwestern Regional Professional
Development Program
Leslie James, Consultant, Assessments, Program Accountability and Curriculum

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT, LAS VEGAS:

Dr. Christy Falba, Director of Math, Science and Instructional Technology
Kevin Davis, Parent
Evelyn Allred, Member of the Council to Establish Academic Standards
Sharon Beatty, Member of the Council to Establish Academic Standards
Gloria Dopf, Department Liaison to the Task Force

TASK FORCE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Gary Waters, Member of the State Board of Education
Dr. Merv Iverson, Member of the State Board of Education
Hugh Rossolo, Director of the Northeastern Nevada Regional Professional Development
Program
Dr. Paul LaMarca, Director of Assessments, Program Accountability and Curriculum
Cindy Sharp, Consultant, Assessments, Program Accountability and Curriculum

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE, CARSON CITY:

Ricci Rodriquez-Elkins, Executive Director, Center for Charter School Development

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairperson Myers opened the meeting at 3:01 p.m. Each Task Force member introduced themselves and provided highlights of their educational background.

2. REVIEW TASK FORCE GOALS

Chairperson Myers stated the goal of the Task Force is to review practices with Districts to ensure alignment between state standards, curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development. Chairperson Myers requested that Members review the handouts entitled “Student Achievement and Graduation Rates in Nevada”, an excerpt from a publication from WestEd regarding graduation rates in Nevada. Chair Myers stated that the article is a little deceiving as the article was not just about graduation rates. The article indicated that Nevada has the pieces in place for curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional development, but they are not necessarily all aligned with the Standards and there is no uniform or standard process in the State to make this happen.

The article expressed a concern with regard to textbooks and that there is no way to ensure that there is a standardized method for textbooks to be adopted includes the Nevada Standards.

Chair Myers stated that part of the goal was to discuss this issue with District but also to hold discussions with the Academic Standards Commission.

Dr. Falba stated that in terms of the textbook adoption in Clark County, the Standards form the basis of the rubric that is used for the textbook adoption process.

Ms. Allred stated that the Academic Standards Council has now adopted a Standards revision process so that the revisions are finished a year prior to that subject textbook adoption. This allows Districts to take the revised Standards and implement them before adopting textbooks during the next textbook adoption cycle. The Academic Standards Council did that consciously to ensure that districts have the new standards in place prior to adopting the textbooks.

Ms. Denning stated that Washoe County uses the Standards as the basis for the textbook adoption process.

Ms. Dopf responded that the general discussion was to ensure what is happening at the instructional level is linked to the Standards.

Chair Myers that the Task Force should be focusing on whether the curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development are aligned and if they are, how do we know they are?; and if not, what changes could be make either through the State Board, local Boards or legislative changes that would ensure that that is happening.

Ms. Dopf stated that the Composite of Statue speak to the textbook selection process and the expectation of a process that is uniform and then ratified by the State Board of Education.

Chair Myers stated that when it comes to the State Board level, they do not actually review the textbooks but entrust that the process has worked up to that point and then the State Board approves the recommendations from the local boards.

3. REVIEW DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLANS (SUMMARY)

Ms. Dopf explained the hand-out of NRS references regarding who has authority at various levels for alignment.

Chair Myers stated that the State Board SHALL adopt the standards. The Standards are reviewed and approved by the Academic Standards Council and then forwarded to the State Board of Education to hold a public hearing and final adoption. The State Board does not have the option to accept or reject those Standards and the State Board is not the enforcer of the Standards but required by statute to adopt and approve them.

4. REVIEW SCOPE OF WORK AND TIMELINE

Ms. Beatty stated that professional development is needed on how to remediate PLP and Syops students based on how many school districts indicate priorities in their Improvement Plans.

Chair Myers questioned if Ms. Beatty was suggesting placing the remediation efforts with the professional developments needs. Ms. Beatty responded yes, because most teachers do not receive training on remediation of struggling students.

Ms. James stated that she has reviewed this issue in terms of the Districts that are going to be in their third year improvement and what the state is going to do to put together requirements for them to meet a new curriculum, which includes professional development. Ms. James stated that the Department had a staff committee meeting to review district curriculum and content that is actually delivered. Ms. James stated that the Department has an agreement with WestEd to review this framework and where we want to go.

Chair Myers stated that teachers don't know the best methods for assessing what the students do in their class on a daily or weekly basis and they are not good at writing assessments. It's not part of their teacher preparation.

Ms. James stated that the Department is promoting the quality of assessment and the student piece in matching the need to the method.

Ms. Beatty felt that it should be within the purvey of this Task Force to determine if the curriculum in those counties is reflected in the Standards. Ms. Beatty questioned if the Professional Development supports the Standards. A lot of very heavy duty work is going on in curriculum right now that we wouldn't necessarily want to repeat and perhaps we should take a more simple view of how to tackle this. I can't see us doing a little mental analysis of every single county in terms of how we teach a particular standards, frankly we probably need to just be looking at whether or not the counties are addressing whether it's reflected in their curriculum, is the testing reflecting that emphasis with the standards and is professional development actually supporting the teachers to the extent that they can truly do that. Are we giving them enough support to make that happen? That's probably enough for us to cope with.

Chair Myers requested that Ms. Beatty's comments be transcribed exactly for the record.

Ms. James stated that it comes down to who has the expertise to analyze curriculums, maps, units, assessments, professional development, the alignment, what is the tool, and what does that self analysis look like.

Ms. Beatty stated that Clark County has Curriculum Guides that reflect the Standards, by taking a look at the curriculum guide of the county to determine the correlation.

Chair Myers questioned if all counties have curriculum guides? Chair Myers stated that new science and math standards have been adopted and just re-doing that process should cause the districts to start to look at that anyway. Chair Myers requested that the Districts provide their curriculum guides and indicate what format they exist in their district. That would help the Task Force answer some of these questions about curriculum.

Chair Myers asked if there was any other "Scope" comments and stated that the hope was to try to have this completed prior to next January.

In response the Chair Myers, Assemblywoman Parnell stated that for bill draft requests from an individual, the bill draft request needs to be submitted by the first of September.

Ms. Dopf proposed that the Task Force discuss with the assessment centers the services and resources that they would have to support the direction of the Task Force.

Chair Myers stated that she would like to gather further information and stated that the McCREL handout is an important handout. Chair Myers requested that the Task Force Member provide a current and correct e-mail address to the Department.

5. PROPOSE FUTURE MEETING TIMES AND LOCATIONS

The next meeting was set for video conferencing between Las Vegas and Carson City on March 30, 2006 at 3:00 p.m. with a phone conference between Hugh Rossolo. An alternate date was set for April 6, 2006 at 3:00 p.m.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There was discussion regarding the questionnaire being sent to the counties. The Department will want some input to determine if the Task Force is on track for what we want to accomplish. The Task Force might as well get information about assessments and what their professional development issues are.

Chair Myers stated that she feels that the answers are in the District Improvement Plans and doesn't want the Districts to re-invent the wheel. The question is, "Are the Standards in place?"

Ms. Dopf stated that if you are looking at a survey specific to the focal point that we are identifying, you are not going to find systemic answers in the District Plan.

Ms. Denning stated that she thought that all the classrooms have to have a copy of the curriculum for that particular grade level or subject area.

Chair Myers stated that the survey particulars can be worked out internally and we will determine a date and time and confer by e-mail if you have questions or think of something else that needs to be included. Chair Myers stated that she doesn't want the survey to get too complicated.

Chair Myers stated that she appreciates the time and the input and can move from this point.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Myers adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Dr. Keith Rheault, Superintendent of Public Instruction

Approved by

Dr. Cliff Ferry, President, Nevada State Board of Education
Nevada State Board for Career and Technical Education

Recorded/Transcribed by:

Nita Barnes, Assistant to the Board
Nevada State Board of Education/Nevada State Board for Career and Technical Education