

School Curriculum, Assessment & Accountability Council (SCAAC) July 10, 2017



Volume 6, No. 2—Minutes from the July 10, 2017 Meeting

Advisory Committee Members Present

Kelly Bradley	Scott Bruins	Tracey Cusick
Steven Evans	Casey Gesenhues	Hal Heiner
Valerie O'Rear	Stephen Pruitt	Shad Sletto
Terry Sullivan		

Advisory Committee Members Absent

Dale McDowell	Justin Mitchell	William Owens
Jennifer Putnam	Thomas Salyer	

Guests

Tanya Brumley, Kentucky Coalition for Arts Education; Clyde Caudill, Data Recognition Corporation; Brian Gong, Center for Assessment; Brad Montell, Education Workforce Cabinet; John Stroube, Kentucky Coalition for Arts Education

Kentucky Department of Education

Todd Allen, Joy Barr, Roger Ervin, Michael Hackworth, Kevin Hill, Karen Kidwell, Teresa King, Jenni Larkins, Kathy Moore, Rhonda Sims, Leslie Slaughter, Jennifer Stafford, Cindy Warren, and John Wickizer

Call to Order

Chairman Scott Bruins called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Welcome and introductions from new members were provided. A quorum was available. Scott Bruins made a motion to accept the agenda as provided. Shad Sletto seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Minutes

The minutes from the March meeting were provided for review. Since the minutes included recommendations from the previous SCAAC Advisory members, Scott Bruins made a motion to approve the minutes as unofficial minutes and share on the KDE website. Hal Heiner seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Greetings

Commissioner Pruitt provided greetings to the new advisory members and noted his appreciation for their guidance, feedback and time. He stressed the importance of the work at all levels, i.e.,

federally with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), state with Senate Bill 1, and at KDE with the development of a new accountability system.

Secretary Heiner also greeted the council members and encouraged each to believe that educators have a noble purpose in life to prepare children to be successful.

SCAAC Members' Charge

Todd Allen, Deputy General Counsel in the Office of Legal, Legislative and Communications, informed the SCAAC members of their charge based upon Executive Order 2017-334 (KRS 158.6452), dated June 2, 2017:

- Study, assess and audit Kentucky's system of:
 - Setting academic standards,
 - Establishing curriculum,
 - Assessing learning,
 - Identifying academic competencies and deficiencies of individual students,
 - Holding schools accountable for student achievement, and
 - Assisting schools to improve their performance.
- Report and recommend to the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE), the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, the Legislative Research Commission, and the Education Professional Standards Board, critical data related to academic expectations, curriculum, core content for assessment, and the development and deployment of statewide assessment and accountability programs.

Discussion:

- What does the term “audit” mean in the SCAAC Member Charge? A deeper dive.
- Requested that information be provided to members to keep abreast of current topics.

Standards Revision

Karen Kidwell, Director, Division of Program Standards in the Office of Teaching and Learning, presented an update on the development/revision of the Kentucky Academic Standards. Kentucky teachers are doing much of this work. It is a 12-month process for any standards revision.

Senate Bill 1 (2017) called for the Kentucky Department of Education to implement a process for reviewing all academic standards and aligned assessments beginning in the 2017-18 school year. The current schedule calls for one or two content areas to be reviewed each year and every six years thereafter on a rotating basis. The rotation schedule will begin immediately (Summer 2017) by soliciting feedback on English language arts, mathematics and health/physical education standards.

Standards Review Cycle:

2017: English language arts; mathematics; health education; physical education; computer science

2018: Social studies; world languages; library/media

2020: Science

2021: Art

Discussion:

- All reviews/revisions are done by current Kentucky teachers.
- Kentucky Academic Standards.
- Need more advanced coursework.
- How do performance metrics relate to standards?—lag about one year behind.
- The business of education matters, consistency, focus groups of shareholders.

Proposed Accountability System

Rhonda Sims, Associate Commissioner in the Office of Assessment and Accountability, Jennifer Stafford, Director, Assessment Support in the Office of Assessment and Accountability, and Brian Gong, Senior Associate, at the Center for Assessment, led the discussion on Developing Kentucky's Accountability System

Three items were previously sent to members for their preparation: 703 KAR 5:270, Kentucky's Accountability System (clean copy and edited copy) and the Kentucky Accountability System Overview.

The accountability system is designed to promote and hold schools, districts and the state accountable for student achievement and significantly reduce the achievement gap. Indicators of the accountability system work together to report a complete picture for Kentucky schools and of the education students receive. The system emphasizes several important concepts that promote a strong educational experience for all of Kentucky's students.

All Kentucky public school students, including those participating in the alternate assessment program for students with the most severe disabilities and in charter schools, are included in the accountability system. Data calculations that lead to a school rating are based on full academic year students that have been enrolled for 100 instructional days, with the exception of opportunity and access measures and graduation rate. Opportunity and access highlights the experiences all students in a school receive and is based on enrolled students. Graduation rate is based on a student's final enrollment.

School Report Card

Public School Report Card dashboard available beginning fall 2018 that will give shareholders a look at Kentucky's accountability system. The goal was to make it simple to understand. The dashboard is an attempt to see at a glance a graphic representation that shows an overall rating. A brief video of the commissioner speaking about the dashboard and new proposed accountability system will be presented on the school report card landing page.

Discussion:

- Unintended consequences of communication should be reviewed.
- Parents need to receive frequent, good communication.
- Children need performance levels and the overall star rating is for the schools/district.
- System public reporting (i.e., the dashboard) needs to be designed for parents, not educators.
- Supporting resources developed for each school (i.e., public Q/A).

Recommendations:

- Enhance the five star rating by including the actual score or numbers, where appropriate, under the star.
- Provide more visual details.
- Include live links under each of the indicators to dive deeper.

Proficiency

Proficiency is the term used to describe the desired level of knowledge and skills for all students to achieve on academic assessments. Proficiency sets a high-level academic benchmark or performance bar for each student. Meeting rigorous expectations for what students should know and be able to do better prepares students for a variety of life choices. The score is a weighted average, with Novice=0 points, Apprentice=.5 point, Proficiency=1.0 point, and Distinguished=1.25 points.

For students who are receiving instruction that is more advanced than in their enrolled grade, the system gives credit for taking and doing well on a more advanced test. For example, a student enrolled in grade 5 who take a grade 6 test would earn 1.25 points for scoring Proficient, and 1.5 for scoring Distinguished. This additional value for an advanced test is designed to incentivize this personalization for students and support advanced instruction.

The weighted average is used to create a proficiency score for each content area. Then the content areas are combined with the following weighting: English/language arts (25%), Mathematics (25%), Science (25%) and Social Studies (25%) to generate a proficiency indicator score.

Discussion:

- Weighting of distinguished at 1.25 or 1.5.
- Unintended consequences of discouraging students performing at higher levels of achievement to decrease the achievement gap
- Emphasis is on achievement gap.
- Weighting on all content areas (English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies). No consensus was formed. Some members like the idea of weighting reading/writing and mathematics more; others preferred an equal weight on all content areas.

Recommendation:

- Include science and social studies as academic indicators.

Achievement Gap Closure

Achievement Gap Closure focuses on reducing the performance difference between student demographic groups as measured by the state-required assessments.

Achievement gap refers to the disparity between the performance of a student group and a comparison criterion. Kentucky's accountability system will include two measures to provide a clear picture of how schools are closing the achievement gap for their students: 1) Gap to Group and 2) Gap to Proficiency.

Gap to group—is a comparison of performances between a comparison student group and a reference student group. Gap to group comparisons facilitate direct evaluation of the relative performance between groups, but do not enable direct evaluation of how high either performance is.

Gap to proficiency—refers to comparison of performance between a student group and a performance criterion other than another student group’s performance. Gap to proficiency comparisons facilitate direct evaluation of the performance of a student group in relation to a goal, especially a standard or criterion such as proficiency. The goal is 100% of the students reaching proficiency.

Discussion:

- Policies on gap are determined by core values.
- Achievement gap may be punitive and a disincentive for schools.
- Schools don’t select students, but each should be treated equally.
- Gap to group might be more accurate in the Opportunity and Access piece.
- Educators need support from the Department on how to teach students with varying backgrounds.

Recommendation:

- Focus only on socioeconomic status.

Growth

Growth is a student’s continuous improvement toward the goal of proficiency and above. Growth considers both where a student’s performance starts and how the student is moving toward the goal of proficiency.

The growth each individual student makes over time is measured by performance on tests administered annually (reading and mathematics) in the elementary and middle schools (grades 3-8). Each student’s growth is projected for two years into the future and evaluated as to whether the student is “catching up” to become proficient.

Each student’s growth is assigned points on the basis of a value table. The value table includes recognition of growth with low and high bands of lowest performance levels of novice and apprentice. Each individual will have a trajectory to move up (get points based on the student’s performance).

Discussion:

- Members were supportive of the division of high and low within Novice and Apprentice.
- Negative growth factor within category (i.e., high apprentice to low apprentice) is too punitive.
- Distinguished column (orange) indicates “moving up” on value table and should be labeled appropriately.
- Are the negative points meaningful?
- Members encouraged a sound basis for the growth measure.

- If measured, then it should be reported.
- Suggest numbers in the growth value table be revisited?

Recommendation:

- The entire Distinguished Column should be orange to indicate “moving up.”
- Recognize growth from year to year for performance at proficiency (i.e., include credit at proficient projected to proficient).

Transition Readiness

Transition Readiness is the attainment of the necessary knowledge, skills and dispositions to successfully move to the next level of education, work or life. Elementary schools by grade 5 and middle schools by grade 8 are expected to help students show they are ready to transition to the next stage of their education. Transition readiness is defined by students having an acceptable composite score that combines performance in English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. At high school, transition readiness is more than earning a high school diploma. It requires that students demonstrate academic, technical or military readiness.

Discussion:

- Members support the student options given for readiness within each of the categories of academic and technical.
- When do students make this pathway decision?
- The term technical ready is unclear. Possible replacements may be career or workplace. Many may feel that it may mean technology ready.
- Blended composite at elementary and middle school may be too broad.
- An individual student report reported to parents with transition readiness would be beneficial.
- Concern and consequences of having to enlist in military for “military readiness” was expressed.

Recommendations:

- Replace technical readiness with “workplace ready or career ready.”
- Remove “enlist in military,” and connect to something else.

Graduation Rate

Graduation rate is the percentage of students completing the requirements for a Kentucky high school diploma compared to a cohort of students beginning in grade nine. Kentucky uses a five-year adjusted cohort rate in accountability. The five-year rate recognizes the persistence of students and educators in completing the requirements for a Kentucky high school diploma. A four-year adjusted cohort rate is produced and used, as federally required, to report the long-term goal for graduation rate.

Discussion:

- There is an incentive to encourage students to graduate in five years.

Opportunity and Access

Opportunity and access highlights the educational experiences schools are providing students beyond the content areas and grades measured by the state-required assessments. The measures are organized in terms of providing a rich curriculum, equitable access and support for the whole child. Also, the indicator includes a measure for school quality and a locally-determined district measure.

Opportunity and access measures focus on building a solid, well-rounded foundation at elementary and enhancing that foundation, and introducing career and essential skills at middle school. At high school, the measures recognize demonstration of essential skills, career and technical education including high-demand industry certifications and specialization in non-tested areas.

Discussion:

- This is a very broad category.
- Define chronic absenteeism—a student who misses 10% or more of his/her enrolled academic year. There is a strong correlation of attendance to student achievement.
- Visual/performing arts need more of a presence.
- Members liked the emphasis on a richer curriculum.
- Within whole child measures, include three measures instead of two, or allow the district to propose a whole child measure as an option.

Recommendations:

- 1:1 technology would be a good whole child support to list.
- Increase importance in accountability.
- Select three measures instead of the recommended two.

Overall Accountability Rating

Each school will be assigned an Overall Rating of one to five stars, based on strength of performance on school-level measures and indicators of Proficiency, Growth (elementary/middle schools, including English learners), Transition (including English learners in high school), and Opportunity and Access. A supplemental designation may be noted for very low performance and positive gap closure or failure to close gaps.

Discussion:

- Star Rating is an overall accountability rating, a gauge.
- Make the School Report Card dashboard easier for all shareholders to understand.

Recommendations:

- Use empty stars for 1-4 on the dashboard.
- Place a star rating underneath such as 4.2 to show where school/district is at.
- Remove gap to group in Overall Rating.

Adjourn

Casey Gesenhues made a motion to adjourn. Terry Sullivan seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m. ET.

Next Meeting

September 19, 2017