

THE MINNESOTA P-16 PARTNERSHIP ROUNDTABLE

OCTOBER 3, 2007

ROOM 220, SAINT PAUL CAMPUS STUDENT CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

1:00-3:00 PM

MEETING NOTES

Present: Robert Jones, Bob Bruininks, Maureen Prens, Mary Bents, Kent Pekel, Sara Gjerdrum, Jennifer Godinez, JoAnn Knuth, Grace Schwab, Fred Storti, Bill Blazar, John Ferlaak, Alice Seagren, Sean Kershaw, Michael Newman, Charlie Kyte, Scott McMahon, Amy Nelson, Jeanne Herrmann, Jim McCormick, Susan Heegaard, Suzanne Tacheny, Karen Klinzing, Lois Bollman, Cyndy Crist, Geoff Maruyama, Char Greenwald, Katie Stuckert, Beth Aune, Donna Swanson, Bill DeJohn

1. Welcome and Introductions: Robert Bruininks, Chair
2. Consultant Suzanne Tacheny gave a summary of her report on P-16 goals, challenges and opportunities

Questions and discussion:

- Bob Bruininks stated that we haven't spent much time on how P-16 can be leveraged to get consensus around big policy issues.
- Jim McCormick stated that Minnesota does well when you look at individual numbers but things are shocking when you drill down. This is a problem—one that worries me the most. How can we do better? I believe rigor has to be relevant—it likely means different ways of teaching.
- Jennifer Godinez said that MMEP is no longer using the term “achievement gap.” It implies that African Americans and Hispanics, etc. don't want to succeed and achieve.

Jennifer shared information on MMEP's 11/15 conference which will focus on equity.

- Alice Seagren requested that Suzanne's PowerPoint summary be emailed to all P-16 participants.
- Bill Blazar asked whether anyone talked about the training of higher education teachers. Teacher training inference is on PreK-12 system.
- President Bruininks stated that we need to attack how we teach in both PreK-12 and higher education. An analysis of courses has been done—what does the research say; what works? Often in the first two years, a student is in very large classes. Some call these “cattle car classes” and believe they are boot camps to screen out people. These kind of classes result in bad outcomes.

- Suzanne Tacheny added that a related issue is higher education's role in training teachers.
- JoAnn Knuth stated that her puzzlement is why a good outcome happens at school A but too often can't be replicated at school B. The challenge we have is to put a systemic process in place where we replicate the use of best practices and continuously learn from that.
- Mary Bents stated that we need to link teacher preparation and development with leadership preparation and development. We've "siloed" these two areas too often in the past. We need to help all educators work together within schools and work with the community at large.
- Jim McCormick added that we need to look at the length of the school year and parent commitment. JoAnn Knuth commented that if a longer school year means more of the same, then we will not achieve results. Jim McCormick agreed.
- Fred Storti stated that a year-round calendar might allow us to be creative. We need to look at it systemically. He is a big proponent of the "P" in P-16. We need connection between pre-schools and elementary schools.
- Alice Seagren stated that there is legislation this year on preschool standards. DHS focuses on childcare. Headstart has regulations and expectations for school readiness. MDE is trying to set up expectations for childcare providers that meet education standards.
- Lois Bollman stated that a year-round school can enable educators to avoid spending so much time bringing kids up to speed. Could it also add more time for teacher professional development and interaction between teachers?
- Tom Dooher commented that rather than just look at the length of the school year, we need to ask ourselves "what do we want our student outcomes to be?" before taking that step.
- Bill Blazar stated that defining readiness is a good place to focus.
- Sean Kershaw stated that framing educational disparities through the term "achievement gap" is not proving successful in Minnesota. And he is not certain the public does "get it." There is a disconnect between institutions and community.
- Bob Bruininks recommended that we bring together various studies and see what we can learn. We should have a conversation about the term "achievement gap." What language makes sense? How do we move the conversation forward and keep the issue alive?
- Sean Kershaw said he would distribute a recent Citizens League poll on education to the group
- Maureen Prenn stated that we need to look at the transition of teachers out of college.
- Sara Gjerdrum will send the Roundtable information on Education Minnesota's e-mentoring pilot project and last spring's teacher support and induction findings.

3. Proposal for P-16 Working Groups and Meeting Strategy

- All agreed to add an additional question to the Working Group feedback form: *Are there other P-16 partner or PreK-12-higher education alignment efforts that you believe we should look at and learn from?*
- Karen Klinzing stated that if P-16 doesn't proactively begin to define postsecondary readiness, the legislature may require us to do it or may do it themselves.
- Alice Seagren reported that the math and science academies are now being planned. In addition, MDE is determining what professional development is needed to help teachers master the new standards and to integrate them into curriculum.
- Bob Bruininks suggested that we launch a forum/coalition of groups to get our best thinkers together to address this issue in a serious way.
- Jennifer Godinez suggested that we take a creative look at using ethnic media throughout the P-16 Partnership's work.
- Bob Bruininks suggested that we expand the research we have done to identify future opportunities for P-16 alignment to include legislative committee chairs, the Itasca project, school boards and others. Would this be helpful? He suggested that we could also utilize other polls that have been done and put together a synthesis.
- JoAnn Knuth pointed out that the Principals Academy teaches the point of urgency—creating a sense of urgency that drives toward action. We should remember that creating a sense of urgency for change is critical in this work.
- Bill Blazar stated that there are three big mistakes that the education community makes when dealing with the business community: (a) engaging and listening to the business community but not doing anything with the input (b) listening to the community and then doing the opposite and (c) listening to the community but then failing to come back and say "Sorry, we can't do it," and explaining why.
- Charlie Kyte added that the education and the business community need to engage with each other in a much deeper way.

4. New Members

- Bob Bruininks offered a proposal to add two voting members to the P-16 Partnership:
 - Minnesota Association of Charter Schools
 - Minnesota Mentoring Partnership
- Roundtable members unanimously approved the proposal

5. Legislative Involvement

- In response to questions about involving legislators in the work of the P-16 Partnership, P-16 Chair Robert Bruininks and Vice Chair Alice Seagren will meet with senate and house committee chairs in the next several months and will report back on their discussions.

Note: Future meetings of the P-16 Partnership Executive Team and Roundtable will be determined and disseminated in the coming weeks.