

Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership

April 14, 2010 (2:00 – 4:00 p.m.)
Conference Center A, Room 14
Minnesota Department of Education

Meeting Notes

Members/Designees Present: Alice Seagren, Bill Blazar, Paul Cerkvenik, Karl Aaro, Keith Downey, Mary Dresbach, Jennifer Godinez, Robert Jones, Sean Kershaw, Karen Klinzing, Joann Knuth, Charlie Kyte, James McCormick, Scott McMahan, Robert Meeks, Bruce Munson; Gen Olson, Marsha Swails, Chuck Wiger

Others present: Beth Aune, Lois Bollman, Kent Pekel, Cyndy Crist, William DeJohn, Cathy Wagner

Chair: Alice Seagren, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Education

1. Welcome and approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the January 12, 2010 meeting were approved.

2. Minnesota Learning Commons

Linda Baer and Billie Wahlstrom presented information about Minnesota Learning Commons (MnLC). The mission of the MnLC is to provide access to effective and efficient online learning provided by Minnesota public education partners (Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota Department of Education, and K-12 public schools). Through the MnLC, Minnesota students, educators, advisors and students can access educational opportunities and learning resources, including high quality educational materials, online courses/programs, services and technology tools.

Discussion

A question was asked as to whether MnLC courses address standards. The answer is that courses taken through MnLC for high school credit must address the state academic standards.

A suggestion was given that perhaps opportunities should be explored for conducting a MnLC demonstration project in rural Minnesota.

3. Review of P-20 Partnership Bylaws

The members reviewed the Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership Bylaws as amended on January 12, 2010 to create the Longitudinal Data System (LDS) Governance Committee.

4. Resolution to Partnership Bylaws

A resolution to the bylaws was introduced that describes the organizational structure of the new LDS Governance Committee by outlining its membership, duties, responsibilities and ongoing strategic direction. (See handout "Resolution of the Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership" distributed at this meeting.) Two amendments were offered.

Amendment 1: Adds language stating that requests for accessing data shall be directed to the Longitudinal Data System (LDS) Governance Committee. *Amendment passed.*

Amendment 2: Clarifies language describing the LDS organizational structure by adding “P-20” in front of the word “Partnership” in instance(s) where that occurs. *Amendment passed.*

The resolution, as amended, passed.

Members of the Partnership should let Commissioner Seagren know if they or their designees will be serving on the LDS Governance Committee. An updated version of the LDS charter is posted on the Minnesota Office of Higher Education Web site at <http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=1532>.

5. MN P-20 Education Partnership Workgroups

The members reviewed the draft charges of the following three workgroups: 1) College and Career Readiness Communications Campaign, 2) STEM Achievement Gap Strategic Plan, and 3) Rigorous Course Taking Strategic Plan. (See handout, “Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership: 2010 Workgroups” distributed at this meeting.) Commissioner Seagren asked the members to consider the individuals whom they would want included in the workgroups. The charges for the new workgroups build on previous work of the Partnership that was completed when President Bruininks was chair. Chancellor McCormick reminded the members that the work of the new groups represents the Partnership’s agenda for the next two years.

Discussion

Members offered the following suggestions for the three workgroups:

- Reports of the previous P-20 workgroups should inform the work of the new groups.
- The first bullet in the charge statement for the “Rigorous Course Taking Strategic Plan” workgroup should reference that policymakers, business leaders, families, etc. understand the role of high expectations and support the achievement of all students.

Chancellor McCormick posed the possibility of adding a fourth workgroup to address postsecondary completion rates. Representative Downey suggested that the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU), the University of Minnesota, career colleges and the Minnesota Private College Council could develop a joint strategic plan to raise college graduation rates. Members indicated their assent and Commissioner Seagren announced that the “Postsecondary Completion Strategic Plan” workgroup would be added to the list of workgroups.

6. RTTT feedback

Commissioner Seagren reported on the feedback that Minnesota received on its Race to the Top (RTTT) application. Overall, the state needed to score about 60 additional points to be considered competitive. Members should let the commissioner’s office know if they are interested in participating in an upcoming meeting in Minneapolis to review the feedback in greater detail.

Members discussed ways that Minnesota could improve its application for a future round of competition. The following suggestions were offered:

- (Bill Blazer) We should focus on the recruitment/retention/training of teachers. Everything should come back to this same theme. Reviewers need to see a central concept and not so much process.
- (Cyndy Crist) We could get leverage from PSEO, especially concurrent enrollment via the relationship between the college and high school. We have data that support its efficacy.
- (Senator Gen Olson) We've underplayed the importance of literacy. The new Board of Teaching rules regarding literacy will greatly help newly licensed teachers, particularly in their efforts to assist struggling students. These rules have not yet been extended to teacher re-licensure.
- (Commissioner Seagren) Tennessee, in its RTTT application, embraced the achievement gap. Another idea is to focus on math. Should teacher preparation and/or Board of Teaching licensure be improved for mathematics?
- (Cyndy Crist) The second annual Teacher Quality Symposium keynote speaker is Bill Schmidt who will unveil his new study on teacher preparation. The symposium is June 30 at Metro State University. Perhaps new ideas could emerge from Schmidt's presentation.
- (Kent Pikel) The state could propose a quasi-experimental trial of options related to traditional teacher preparation models and alternative pathways, and commit to moving in the most promising direction. Minnesota could try both options and measure their outcomes. This is the way that China reformed its economy.
- (Jennifer Godinez) Options could be described in terms of how they work with "community." Perhaps there could be an annual gathering that shows how resources are/are not working in a "Midwestern changing demographics" state.

Commissioner Seagren thanked the group for their suggestions and asked those who have further ideas or suggestions for improving Minnesota's subsequent RTTT application(s) to contact her.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the Partnership is **Tuesday, August 10, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m., Conference Center A, Room 14** at the Minnesota Department of Education, Roseville.