



Chapter 55 School Quality Task Force Meeting Minutes Tuesday, April 5, 2022 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Meeting Start Time: 11:00 AM

Roll Call

Task Force Members

Janelle Beers
Emily Dean
Heather Hoyer
Heather Jarrett
Jon Konen
Daniel Lee
David Pafford
Tony Warren

Facilitators

Julie Murgel
Erich Stiefvater
Tristen Loveridge

OPI Representation

Nathan Miller

Region 17 Comp Center Support

Jacob Williams

BPE Representation

McCall Flynn

Welcome and Review

1. Julie Murgel: reviews"
 - a. Meeting Agenda
 - b. Group Norms and Working Agreements
 - c. Consensus Definition
 - d. Task Force Purpose
 - e. Task Force Timeline

Conceptual Memorandum Discussion

1. Student Growth
 - a. Heather Jarrett: Reviews the work and proposals of the group
 - b. TF has no additional discussion
2. Staffing ratios for Library Media Specialists
 - a. Nathan Miller: Reviews the work and proposals of the group and shares data
 - b. David Pafford: Asks if the group looked at the option or opportunity to partner with a local public library and their staff?

- i. Nathan: Did talk a bit about alternative endorsement elements. With the fiscal impacts on schools, they wanted to keep the impact low. If they had a need to use an alternative method like utilizing a public librarian in their community, they can put the variance to standard in.
 - ii. David: Where is the research and information on Coops among districts geographically?
 - iii. Nathan: That is why the number was extended below 250 so they can employ or contract with a librarian. It would cover 67% of school systems.
 - c. McCall Flynn: What happens for the schools in the range between 250 and 500 students?
 - i. Nathan: This is where the 1/500 ratio takes place. Those school systems would need to employ enough library FTE to meet that requirement. Based on the number of library media specialists employed this year, only 11 school systems would be impacted.
 - ii. McCall: Wonders what it looks like if a district has the opportunity to reduce their FTE. Wondering if they had asked any Library Media Specialist groups if they have any thoughts.
 - iii. Nathan: We have not, there was a letter that was submitted for public comment that expressed their concerns. This letter will be read to the group at the end of the meeting.
 - iv. Heather Jarrett: She had her school librarian reach out to other librarians to share their voice and concerns. She knows there are states with no requirements around librarians, but she does not feel the group would be doing MT students justice with a system like that. The proposal her and Nathan have put together is a good flexible system and allows school systems to reallocate staff.
 - d. Janelle Beers: Would like to clarify what a school system is. Shares example of Dillon, MT. They have a High School and Elementary district. Is that two separate systems?
 - i. Nathan: That would be two districts within the same system. They would be able to allocate librarians between those schools in the system.
 - ii. Janelle: This is different than her understanding. She would hope that districts would be able to work together, but she knows there are towns with separate districts.
 - e. Daniel Lee: In the data Nathan shared, he showed it would decrease by 21 FTE for librarians across the state?
 - i. Nathan: Yes, the data shows the difference between the current required FTE vs the proposed FTE requirement.
 - ii. Daniel: Wants to point out that there is evidence that school librarians matter and there is evidence that they influence student achievement (*Lance, K.C. & Kachel, D.E. (2018). Why school librarians matter: What years of research tell us. Phi Delta Kappan, 99 (7), 15-20*). He doesn't know how reducing the FTE across the state, he is not sure how it helps students. If the purpose is to reduce the number of variances to standards that is one reason to do this, but if the goal is to help students, then more librarians would be needed not less. He does think the group has done a good job on the work, but he is not sure if he feels comfortable reducing the number of librarians across the state.
 - f. Julie Murgel: Is there a proposal for the 250 – 500 range?
 - i. Heather Jarrett: You'd use the 1/500 ratio. Whether the school had 2 students or 3000 students, the system would use the 1/500 ratio. Perhaps it needs to be clearer in the redline.
 - ii. Nathan: Describes why there is less FTE
 - iii. Heather Jarret: They looked at the data, what is happening in schools, and had a "do no harm" mentality.
- 3. Graduation Requirements and High School Credits
 - a. Heather Hoyer: Reviews the groups work and proposals

- i. Daniel Lee: Adds that it is true that students could finish HS faster. It is also true that students could finish the requirements then take more electives afterwards. He clarifies what the group means by “equivalent”.
 - b. David Pafford: Do we have a definition of "unit of study"?
 - i. Nathan: Yes, it lives in rule. One unit is considered 8,100 and a half unit is 4,050
 - c. McCall Flynn: Why was the statute 20-7-602 used and how does it relate to a unit of study?
 - i. Heather Hoyer: With Billi Taylor’s background in curriculum, she wanted to make sure school boards are a part of the process. They need to be a part of the curriculum adoption process.
 - ii. Daniel: When we talk about proficiency standards or equivalence, we need to make sure boards are paying attention to that.
 - iii. McCall: Suggests it lives 10.55.701
 - d. McCall: On the changing requirements for social studies and adding government. By requiring this it would require the BPE to create government content standards.
 - e. Heather Jarrett: Has concern around the use of the word “mastery”. Suggests using “proficiency” instead. She also thinks it could be worth having fiscal notes and the review of the standards specific to government being done around government and civics as the two could be hand in hand.
 - f. Nathan Miller: It may be helpful to add equivalent standards of achievement as a definition. Who would decide that and what it means?
- 4. Education Program Requirements
 - a. Heather Jarrett: Reviews the groups work and proposed red line language
 - b. Nathan Miller: Voices concerns on striking out requirements for middle schools to provide visual arts, music, CTE, and world languages. He has found these areas are easy to get rid of if they are not required to be offered.
 - c. McCall: Noticed Julie mentioned the language was copied from somewhere else in 10.55.902 (2). Where was that pulled from?
 - i. Julie: It is the same wording as (2)(c) in the original language. That same section is copied into all three, Elementary, Middle and High School.
 - d. McCall: Voices that she agrees with Nathan on the electives for middle schools.
 - e. McCall: Would reiterate her comments on a half unit of government.
 - f. Heather Jarrett: Asks Nathan, would it be better to have the addition of something similar or to have examples of elective offerings?
 - i. Nathan: (4)(b) states that the electives have to be offered. He would say that there are a lot of schools that have all of the courses. There are smaller schools would not offer this if it was not in rule. It is important for students to be able to take these courses before HS, so they have the opportunity to try out new things.
- 5. Staffing Ratio for School Councilors
 - a. Janelle Beers: Reviews the work and proposals. She voices her concern in the definition of a school system.
 - b. Nathan Miller: Gives further clarification on School System. There are established school systems with SS codes.
- 6. SEL and Mental Health
 - a. Jon Konen: Reviews his work and proposals
 - b. David Pafford: He is hearing community members alleging that SEL is code for hidden CRT.
 - i. Jon: Yes, it is something he is dealing with in his own community and hearing about it across the nation. Almost every topic that we have discussed can be connected to something controversial. The amount of research that has been done around SEL and supporting the wellbeing of

students is something we can all agree with. School districts have the ability to use local control to control these situations. He does not want to connect SEL and CRT.

- ii. Daniel Lee: West Ed wrote a paper last year laying this out. CRT is a legal theory that is not about student mental health.
7. School Climate and Family and Community Engagement
 - a. Jon Konen: Reviews his work and proposals
 - b. Emily Dean: MTSBA has been discussing family engagement. There is a significant piece discussing 10.55.701. She asks Jon if he thinks it needed to be enhanced or if it is sufficient?
 - i. Jon: The implementation piece is the major factor.
 - ii. Emily: MTSBA has a couple of model policies on family engagement that is built off of 10.55.701. She will share these with the group. Not all districts adopt those policies, but a majority do.
 8. Accreditation Process
 - a. Heather Hoyer: Shares concern about the legalities of their proposal. While she thinks this is important, she thinks they may need more people to collaborate on this.
 - i. Daniel Lee: Shares concern that we don't have the time to redo this. Therefore, they have nothing to propose.
 9. Mentorship and Induction
 - a. McCall Flynn: Reviews her work and proposals
 - b. Jon: Loves the idea of a mentoring program and he knows it can be hard to find mentors. One of the models he completely supports is the SAM Leaders Learning Professional Network.
 10. Local Control
 - a. Emily Dean: Reviews her work and proposals
 11. Variance to Standards
 - a. Jacob Williams: Reviews the work and proposals
 - b. McCall Flynn: Wonders if there was discussion to move language around charter schools into its own rule rather than in the definitions?
 - i. Jacob: Yes, that is a possibility. He clarifies what McCall is meaning by moving the language.
 - ii. McCall: Thinks that having a charter school rule would be beneficial as it tends to get lost in the variance to standards.
 - iii. Julie Murgel: She thinks they could certainly look at moving charter schools to its own rule.
 - c. David Pafford: Asks if we anticipate an increase in Charter School activity in Montana? If there is, then a stand-alone rule would be good to have as those applications come in.

Discussion of Changed Schedule

1. Julie Murgel: Since the 15th is Good Friday, she asks the group if they would like to move the meeting.
 - a. TF discusses when the best time to meet would be for the majority.

Public Comment

2. Dennis Parman, Executive Director, Montana Rural Education Association:
 - a. Thanks the group for the effort put in and the conversation.
3. Diane Fladmo, Director of Policy, Montana Federation for Public Employees:
 - a. Pleased to hear about the increased number of survey responses and encourages that the survey is reviewed before decisions are made. It would be helpful if the public is provided the responses as well, so they have time to review and gather their thoughts. She appreciated the comments that the group does not have enough time to fully review the accreditation process. She would suggest that the same approach is taken with the ratio for Librarians. She would like to see the data spreadsheet Nathan provided to the group. She is happy to hear the work that has been done around mentoring. She thinks

working with the LPL that has been working well would benefit the retention of teachers. Thanks the group for their work.

4. Bruce Peterson, Eastern Service Area Authority Treasurer and Valley County CARE Coalition:
 - a. He appreciates the conversations from today. As he skimmed over the standards, there is a lot included. Schools are important in improving mental health. 1 in 5 families are affected by behavioral health. He will come back with some discussion if his group has any. He says to keep up the good work.
5. Angela F Archuleta, KW Vina Elementary Library:
 - a. [Written Public Comment submitted](#)
6. Kit Stephenson, President, Montana Library Association:
 - a. [Written Public Comment submitted](#)
7. Gary Carmichael, 2007 Montana Teacher of the Year:
 - a. [Written Public Comment submitted](#)
8. Dana Carmichael, Retired Teacher-Librarian:
 - a. [Written Public Comment submitted](#)

Meeting Adjourned: 1:18 PM