



Chapter 55 School Quality Task Force Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 19, 2022
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Roll Call

Task Force Members

David Pafford
Jules Walker
Heather Hoyer
Gayle Venturelli
Heather Jarrett
Janelle Beers
Jon Konen
Tony Warren
Gary Lusin

Absent

Emily Dean
Billi Taylor
Daniel Lee

BPE Representation

McCall Flynn

Facilitator

Julie Murgel

Executive Support

Tristen Loveridge
Maie Lee Jones

Region 17 Comp Center Support

Jacob Williams
Erich Stiefvater

1. Welcome

The meeting was held on May 19th, 2022, in Capitol Room 137. It began at 9:00 A.M., and was presided over by Julie Murgel, with Tristen Loveridge as executive support.

2. Recap of work-to-date

The School Quality Task Force reviewed recommendations for library media services, school counseling personnel, graduation requirements, and elementary, middle, and high school programs, as well as other factors to consider.

3. Subcommittee presentations

a. Accreditation Process

- Aspects of the accreditation process were revised, as well as assurance requirements, student performance, gaps, rationale, assessment of continuous school improvement, local control, and the outcome that defines quality schools.

- The committee discussed that quality assurance requirements require state-wide guidelines, and that accreditation was the next stage in strengthening quality standards.
- As another tool for assuring a unified improvement process, accreditation, and continuous improvement, committee members indicated that assessment could contribute to better student outcomes and efficient professional development to satisfy the demands of the staff.
- To increase transparency, committee members suggested adding a column next to the superintendent recommendations to caption the Task Force suggestions. Although the Task Force was included in the superintendent's recommendations, the details of what the Task Force decided on were not shared with educators across the state or with the public. It is critical to distinguish or clarify this.

4. Public Comments

- Dennis Parman, Executive Director of the Montana Rural Education Association.
- Kirk Miller, Executive Director at School Administrators of Montana.
- Diana Fladmo, Public Policy Director of Montana Federation of Public Employees.

(10:53:00) Motion moved by Jon Konen and seconded by Tony Warren to review recommendations from the superintendent that went to the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee.

(10:56:00) Jon Konen moved to amend the motion to review each rule and provide comments on the superintendent's recommendations, for the record, to share with the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee. Heather Hoyer seconds it. The motion carried 7 in favor, 1 opposed, and 0 abstentions. Motion passes.

5. Debrief and consensus-building of subcommittee work

The School Quality Task Force held a working session to come to an agreement on the terminology to be used and to provide recommendations for ARM 10.55.709, 10.55.710, 10.55.901, 10.55.902, 10.55.904, and 10.55.905.

To improve clarity, the School Quality Task Force suggested putting the earlier suggestions they made on May 5th, 2022, in Capitol Room 172 in a different color from the superintendent.

Tony Warren noted on ARM 10.55.709 that these recommendations were harmful to students, and David Pafford requested that his name and participation be removed at this time.

6. Discussion of final broad considerations

Mentorship and Induction – ARM 10.55.701

The School Quality Task Force members discussed:

- The importance of mentorship best practices and establishing evaluation measurement requirements.
- The benefit of leaving staffing needs flexible if the school board or its designee can appoint or recruit mentors to meet whatever needs exist if they chose to do so depending on the resources, they have available to them.
- The work of international teachers in rural areas.
- The advantages and disadvantages of local control.

- They stressed the importance of explaining and sharing the Montana Mentoring Program’s statewide resources, as well as the importance of financial literacy.
- They emphasized the information and resources available on the Office of Public Instruction’s website.
- The Mentor Montana Grant program has added some courses for mentors to the teacher learning portal. These resources are available to districts at no cost.
- Professional development, curriculum, behavioral issues, classroom management, and aspects that promote, evaluate, and engage the mentoring program's recognition must all fulfill basic criteria.
- The accreditation process must be held accountable and involved by all parties; it must be conducted with rigor, and all institutions must be on the same page with available resources actively shared.
- The Montana Teacher Learning Hub is a fantastic resource that may provide a statewide opportunity to any school district of any size, as well as possibilities for teachers who require assistance.

(13:34:19) Motion: Moved by Heather Hoyer and seconded by Jon Konen, to move to accept changes in addition to ARM 10.55.701 as presented to the committee. The motion passes unanimously.

Recap Discussion on School Quality Task Force final board considerations.

- The board looked over the recently passed administrative regulations.
- Members of the Task Force are seeking support and requesting that a solution be presented to the superintendent as soon as possible to debate and brainstorm some ideas related to the accreditation process.
- The current system isn't set up to help all schools improve successfully.
- The School Quality Task Force is requesting assistance from the superintendent, as well as the formation of a year-long committee by the Board of Public Education to strengthen accrediting procedures.
- The School Quality Task Force discussed their experiences, expressed gratitude, and lessons learned.
- All points of view must be heard.
- The Task Force would like to see something that respects local autonomy and state value while also allowing for accreditation.

Is there a piece that potentially the accreditation part that could be enhanced by the negotiated rulemaking committee that could be moved forward?

The Negotiated Rulemaking Committee might improve the accreditation aspect by:

- Looking at what other states are doing to investigate, gather more information, and move forward.
- Measuring outputs and outcomes of the strategic plan.
- Adopting Cognia performance standards as criteria for improvement efforts.
- Being able to employ strategic planning as a method could be an additional path that is more beneficial.

- Alternatively, use another state-approved gadget.
- Looking for educational innovation and ideas that impact education to meet the individualized needs of students across the state.
- Setting a timeframe, 2025, to envisage what we want to achieve and to begin working on it.
- Increasing and improving mental health accreditation of schools across the state.

The School Quality Task Force emphasizes the following as being very important:

- Mental health work might have an impact on accreditation.
- Looking for ways to improve education across the state.
- ARM 10.55.603(5)(c): Curriculum and Assessment.
- ARM 10.55.907 - Distance, Online, and Technology-Delivered Learning.
- ARM 10.55.908 - School Facilities.
- ARM 10.55.2101 - World Languages Program Delivery Standards.
- ARM 10.55.712 - Class size: Elementary.
- ARM 10.55.1701 – Career and vocational / Technical Education Program Delivery Standards
- ARM 10.55.801 – School Climate.
- ARM 10.55.602 - Definitions

7. Wrap-Up

Reflection Activity

Questions and answers were used to reflect on the Task Force's work and procedure.

1) What is one piece element component of the Task Force you'd like and will incorporate into any stakeholder or public engagement process you, yourself will coordinate in the future?

- Set the accreditation process of other states as a model for moving forward.
- Networking and seeing things from different perspectives was extremely beneficial.
- Google site was helpful and resourceful.
- Learning more about districts was valuable.
- Having a diverse range of voices with varying levels of knowledge and experience.
- Gain a better understanding of the Office of Public Instruction's work and the school process.

2) What is the most essential piece of feedback or advice you want to give the OPI regarding how it conducts the stakeholder public engagement process moving forward?

- Obtain effective stakeholder and public engagement feedback by urging the Office of Public Instruction to slow down the process.
- Increasing the number of stakeholders at the table is a good idea.
- Encourage everyone who needs to be represented, involved, and heard at the table.
- Use a document to track changes from all parties involved so that we can see the impact of the changes graphically throughout the process, much like the legislative process does.
- Consistently keeping up with developments and standards.
- Obtain a more frequent and consistent assessment of what is happening.
- More frequent meetings with the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee can aid in being more efficient in obtaining current input, having a more consistent evaluation procedure, and gathering more up-to-date information.
- To use the accrediting process to improve schools.

- Everyone should have access to accurate information.
- 3) For each Task Force member or support staff you work with between January and May what is one thing you've learned about them and the perspective they bring that you appreciate and think the added value to the process?

As a method of showing their gratitude, the School Quality Task Force shared their experiences, and what they learned from one another, and thanked each other.

Words of the Superintendent of Public Instruction – Elsie Arntzen

The superintendent expressed her gratitude for the efforts of the School Quality Task Force and expressed her opinions.

Adjournment:

The Chapter 55 School Quality Task Force meeting adjourned at 3:46 P.M.