



Chapter 55 School Quality Task Force Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 14, 2022

10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Meeting Start Time: 10:00 AM

Roll Call

Task Force Members

Janelle Beers
Emily Dean
Heather Hoyer
Heather Jarrett
Jon Konen
Daniel Lee
Gary Lusin
Tony Warren

BPE Representation

McCall Flynn

Facilitators

Julie Murgel
Jacob Williams
Tristen Loveridge

Region 17 Comp Center Support

Erich Stiefvater

Welcome and review

1. Julie Murgel: Reviews:
 - a. Meeting outcomes
 - b. Meeting agenda
 - c. Public comment norms
 - d. Group norms and working agreements
 - e. Consensus definition
 - f. Task Force purpose
 - g. Key deliverables
 - h. Timeline
 - i. Negotiated Rule Making (NRM) 4/13/22 meeting overview

Timeline Discussion

1. Tony Warren: Even before Nathan Miller put his resignation in with the OPI he was feeling like the process was moving too quickly for his comfort. Wonders if there is a way to slow down the process. The group doesn't want to create harm with the absence of Nathan.
2. Heather Jarrett: Looking at the feedback the TF has received it is important a complete review is done. If we rush through the process, we won't know what some of the full implications would be to the students in our state. Especially considering this is done every ten years, there could be a lot of implications to many districts. Historically this work has been done over the course of a year and half. We're looking at a six-to-ten-month process and the TF overlapping with the NRM makes her nervous. She supports Tony's comments.

3. Janelle Beers: Concerned that there is a survey we don't have the results for yet. Seems disingenuous to ask people questions that we don't care what their answer is. Looking at the comments regarding the library ratio and other discussion she is not sure we have all the information to make informed decisions yet. Makes her nervous to vote on things we don't have all the info for.
4. Heather Hoyer: Concurs with the TF comments. Worries without having Nathan Miller here it'll be difficult looking at data for accreditation and the impact on schools. Our responsibility is not only to make our job easier but more realistic. Without his voice at the table, she doesn't feel comfortable moving at the pace we are moving.
5. Julie Murgel: If the TF doesn't want to make any votes at this time that is something the TF can do. If they want to see additional data, we can do that. She respects the groups positions.
6. Dan Lee: Is there a statute or rule that requires this is done this year? This is reviewed every 10 years, but he is curious what the mandate is to get this done.
 - a. Julie Murgel: She is not aware of any statute that says Ch55 has to be reviewed only every 10 years. There are things that have been changed outside of the 10-year cycle.
7. Janelle Beers: Can we make this process longer?
 - a. Julie Murgel: The BPE set and adopted the timeline. We need to consider what is doable and what would make the group comfortable. We can get a sense of where the group is today and what they need.
 - b. McCall Flynn: If the Superintendent would like to put forward an alternative timeline, she thinks the BPE would like to hear that. The timeline is not set in stone.
8. Emily Dean: Asks if there would be interest to continue the conversation without votes and to have a motion to recommend to the Superintendent that she go to the BPE to ask for an extended timeline?
 - a. Julie Murgel: That could be something the TF considers after we have gone through the meeting to get a sense of where they are at.
9. Jon Konen: Going through the proposals overall, he would feel better if we understood better the legal implications of changes in policy. There are pieces, especially within the charter school discussion, that changes in language can have a lot of implications. We need to continue having the legal conversations.
 - a. Julie Murgel: The OPI does have legal personnel that is reviewing the work. She thinks it could be possible to have a session that included the OPI lawyer to ask him the questions the TF has.
10. Jacob Williams: Do all recommendations need to go forward in one batch or if there is something the TF feels comfortable with moving forward on its own can that be sent forward?
 - a. Julie Murgel: Yes
 - b. Jon Konen: He is concerned about not giving the "whole enchilada".
 - c. Julie Murgel: There are pieces that need to be mapped across the entire chapter.
11. Julie Murgel: Appreciates the TF for the transparency and the group putting out their thoughts and thinking of all schools and students.

Conceptual memorandum

1. Jacob Williams: Reviews the conceptual memorandum and key points to think about in our conversations today.

Student Growth

2. Emily Dean: Comments on the definitions of growth and proficiency. The definition of proficiency may cause more confusion and thinks it would be more beneficial to follow the MCA definition of proficiency since that is what drives most district definitions of proficiency. The definition of growth may be more detailed than necessary. Many states are using something a simple definition of growth. She does not think we need to include more language to make the point. Emily provides the language she is proposing

- a. 10.55.602(xx) "Growth" means a measure of a student's progress between two or more points of time to demonstrate their progression toward goals or benchmarks, even if the student has not yet achieved proficiency.
 - b. 10.55.602(xx) "Proficiency" means a student is proficient at a grade level standard if there is evidence of understanding for all parts of the standard. Is determined by the school board using district assessments, consistent with 20-9-311(4)(d).
3. Daniel Lee: When we identify a specific statute, he would like to see it.
 - a. Emily Dean: Shares MCA this is what drives all district policy in defining proficiency. Proficiency is determined by a school board and district assessments. The majority of districts have a proficiency policy where it is established what benchmarks are used to define it.
 - b. Daniel Lee: in terms of equity, how do we ensure the definition of proficiency in district A is the similar to district B?
 - c. Emily: A lot of school use their SBAC scores while other schools local assessments or classroom grades.
 - d. Jon Konen: Their proficiency models looked at MAP, NWEA, ACT scores and different assessments.
 - e. Heather Hoyer: Looking at transformational learning and those assessments, they can be different based on the students' goals and life goals in conjunction with community members and family that are guiding them.
 4. Jacob Williams: In the definition that Emily provided, are there any district that would have a definition different than that?
 - a. Emily Dean: we would need to look at the policies of all districts.
 - b. Jacob Williams: Could there be a district with a definition different than the original definition?
 - c. Emily: It is possible. It is important to ensure there is not confusion between MCA and administrative rule. ARM is the foundation not what a district is necessarily pursuing.
 5. Julie Murgel: When we look at what we are considering now. We are currently using the third through eight grade SBAC results for math and ELA and the eleventh grade ACT results for math and ELA. We're talking about proficiency and growth beyond summative assessments not district assessments. In our current system, it is done at one point in time to establish the accreditation rating.
 6. Heather J: Looking at the definitions, proficiency is not currently defined specifically. She does think proficiency needs to be defined. There are references to proficiency but without a definition it is dangerous. A person would need to look in Chapter 20 to find the definition within the calculation of A and B. She advocates for consistency throughout the work.
 7. Jon Konen: The implication of the definition of Proficiency is asking schools to be able to do is to report on their progress and standards-based reporting. Montana has some districts that are reporting K-8 regularly and only a handful of High Schools (HS) that can say their reporting is standards based due to the complications that come into play with GPA, scholarships, and class rank. This has a larger implication to what we are proposing going forward.
 8. Gary Lusin: Agrees with Emily Deans comment about identifying in statute what proficiency is. Voices concern about the proposal to remove the word learning in the definition of proficiency. He points out the definition 10.55.602 (22) learning progression. There are specific performance in each content area in each grade level K-12. Removing the word learning it seems that it is removing a major element of what we're trying to achieve. Supports having the definitions of growth and proficiency but wants to voice his concern of removing learning
 - a. Dan Lee: asks if Gary is intending the language to be like "growth, learning, and proficiency...?"
 - b. Gary Lusin: Thinks that could work but trying to link terms we are using in this document with the definitions of the chapter. If the definition of learning is learning progression, he thinks we should use that term.
 - c. Janelle Beers: clarifies the suggestion. "... growth, learning progress, and proficiency..."
 - d. Gary Lusin: Yes, to use the term used in the definition section of the chapter to keep consistency.

9. Jacob Williams: Is it that the assessment is learning progression by assessing growth and proficiency?
Summarizes the groups conversation.
 - a. Dan Lee: The resource from renaissance it describes the difference between proficiency and growth. Proficiency is measured at one point in time and growth is measured between two points in time. It is important to keep growth since proficiency and growth are not the same thing.
 - b. Julie Murgel: Would we want to consider having growth be measured in two points in time?
 - c. Janelle Beers: Should our proficiency definition should include the information about one point in time or something like that?
10. Daniel: Including growth would have some implications. Growth suggests we would want to measure student growth on an annual basis. The implication is looking at growth vs. proficiency.
11. Jacob Williams: Currently 4A growth is measured but it is not a measurement of growth on the same standards because it is a measurement of growth to proficiency year to year.
 - a. Julie Murgel: Yes. She shares an example
 - b. Dan Lee: There are students that grow a great deal but still not achieve proficiency in a subject.
 - c. Julie Murgel: Yes, a student could be novice. They could be growing to nearing proficiency at a high scale. When we think of the amount of learning to progress from novice to close to proficiency, the student has a high rate of growth. There are different types of calculations like median growth percentiles.
12. Jon Konen: The practical use aligns with most of the districts that use MAP or NWEA. When we dive into the data, we have typical growth from the beginning to the end of the year. We're right in line with how we can communicate student growth.
 - a. Julie Murgel: MAPS uses a RIT score and shares example.
13. Dan Lee: There is another dimension between proficiency and growth. We think of proficiency as the use of a test to determine proficiency. There is a tendency to think that ability is a fixed quantity. With a growth mindset, we understand it is not fixed and students that put forth effort can improve overtime.
14. Jacob Williams: What are the next steps for the group around Student Growth? Do we define proficiency outside of the definition in MCA?
 - a. Emily Dean: thinks we would be limiting flexibility if that is done. This is the baseline, and it is up to districts to meet the needs of students. That looks different in every community.
 - b. Heather Jarrett: For consistency, we can pull the language from MCA 20-9-311 into a definition, so it is in multiple places. It honors the local control and realizes that districts define this differently. If we're going to call it a definition it needs to be in the definitions.
 - c. Heather Jarrett: Supports the proposal to include learning progression in the definition of assessments.
 - d. Heather Hoyer: We need to have consistency for legal purposes as well. If we have a definition that is different in ARM vs MCA, we can have difficulty to legal issues as we look to give more flexibility to districts. When we look at transformational learning, the purpose is flexibility and achievement based on a student's goals and needs in life. If a district is defining proficiency different than the definition in MCA, we can have friction between the two. That consistency is important from a legal aspect.

Library Media Specialist

1. Janelle Beers: Do we have the information on how many districts this would impact?
 - a. Heather Jarrett: If everyone could see that data that would be great.
2. Heather Jarrett: Would like clarity on the questions brought forward in public comment during the last meeting. She would like to have answers to those questions before we make a decision about this.
 - a. What specifically are these variances issues for (e.g. teachers completing an SLT certification program vs. a school utilizing paraprofessionals for partial-percentage positions)?
 - b. What do these schools have in common demographically (e.g. small size, partial-percentage positions, rural, ect)?

- c. How long have these schools been utilizing variances for these positions, and is there a limit to how long they can use a variance for a specific reason?
 - d. Why are these positions not being filled (e.g. "lack of qualified applicants," partial-percentage positions, administrative misunderstand of the library's vital role in learning, etc.)?
3. Heather Hoyer: We know the answer to the first two questions. We just need to review those and then answer the last two.
4. McCall Flynn: What happens to school systems that have between 250 and 500 students.
 - a. Jacob Williams: the 500 is the ratio. For every 500 students in a school system, you need 1FTE librarian. 250 is an effort to expand the previous language of 126. For school systems that have 250 students or less have the opportunity to employ or contract a librarian. It expands the number of school systems that can utilize the opportunity to contract a librarian.
 - b. McCall: So if you have 251 students, you would need 0.5 FTE
 - c. Heather Jarrett: it is actually 0.502 FTE. You will get dinged for not having the .002.
 - d. Heather Hoyer: She thinks it would help to have the actual number in language. We need to be very clear in that expectation.
 - e. Heather Jarrett: Her and Nathan had discussed giving a range for a pass. Such as below .005 FTE. Finding someone to employ .001 or .002 FTE is next to impossible.
 - f. Jacob Williams: Could there be language clarifying rounding to the nearest tenth?
 - g. Heather Hoyer: Yes, she thinks that clarification could be good.
 - h. Heather Jarrett: this is unfortunately where having Nathans voice at the table would be helpful.
5. Janelle Beers: Needs more clarification behind why it is helpful to change to school system instead of using districts.
 - a. Heather Jarrett: Say you have a district with multiple schools in it, it becomes one system and they would be able to share strategically their library media specialists. Gives example of her districts. There are feeder schools that could potentially fall under the system and share a librarian.
 - b. Janelle Beers: because the feeder schools are within their district.
 - c. Heather Jarrett: Gives Sweet Grass County example.
 - d. Janelle Beers: Is system the definition OPI uses? Is that the only difference?
 - e. Julie Murgel: There are two different definitions for system and district. There are SS codes for the systems, districts, and schools. Shares example of Wolf Creek.
6. Heather Jarrett: The suggested ratio creates more flexibility for the entire system entity to share personnel throughout the entity.
7. Jacob Williams: There are school systems in the state that have a HS and Elementary on the same campus that are considered different districts but are considered the same system?
 - a. Heather Jarrett: Yes, Shares example of Reed Point.
8. Heather Hoyer: Shares large school point of view. After Nathan explained the proposed ratio, she understood it would give her a lot more flexibility in Great Falls.
9. Janelle Beers: It is great to hear about the flexibility, but she would like to see the two lists of who qualifies and who does not. It could change since we are looking at changing to the system.
10. Jacob Williams: Summarizes. The group would like to have a clear demonstration of the impact this would have and a consideration of clearly defining the ratios or language helps prevent the issue of the thousandths FTE.
11. Emily Dean: Doesn't remember if the spreadsheet included the rounded number for districts?
 - a. Julie Murgel: it included the raw number but did not round to anything.
12. Julie Murgel: Summarizes the needs of the group.
 - a. Four questions to answer
 - b. What small schools it would impact at a system level
 - c. What it would mean to round

13. Gary Lusin: If we move to a system concept which does provide flexibilities to districts in a system. If we reduce this, does it affect the A and B we get for students? If someone in the legislature looks at this as a reduction of librarians, could they reduce the funding?
 - a. Heather Hoyer: Are you asking about the highly qualified teacher funding?
 - b. Gary: If we reduce the number of librarians in a system could it be interpreted that the district doesn't need as much funding because they are not funding as many staff. He is curious if there could be ramifications with funding due to this change.
14. Heather J: A and B are separated out. The implication would come in the Quality Educator Payment (QEP). Which means we have highly qualified library media specialists who are properly licensed and endorsed. If a school does not have this in place or they employ fewer, this is where the financial implication would play in.
 - a. Julie Murgel: Balanced with if you have fewer librarians they are not paying out salary for those employees.
 - b. Jacob Williams: is that funding based on the number you employ or the ratio?
 - c. Heather Jarrett: Based on the number you employ.
 - d. Emily Dean: The QEP drives the funding not Appropriation driving the QEP
 - e. Jacob Williams: If you are required to employ .5 FTE for library media specialist but you choose to employ 1.0 FTE you get that funding for 1.0. So, changing this does not change the finding.
 - f. Heather J: Yes, she thinks so.

Board of Trustees

1. Emily Dean: Reviews the suggested language
2. Gary Lusin: As a trustee he supports this. It is a good addition.
3. Julie Murgel: Asks Emily if she can clarify why, it is felt this is needed to be added?
 - a. Emily Dean: It is not currently in ARM. To ensure consistency between ARM and the MT Constitution.
 - b. Julie Murgel: this is about affirming what is in the constitution and what is constitutionally mandated for local control. She is assuming this is already in place. Do you foresee any implications?
 - c. Emily: She foresees positive implications. We have seen which states have locally driven constitutions. Montana is a national leader in constitutional authority for schools to being locally controlled by the district. Our constitution clearly states that and thinks it is important to highlight that in administrative rule.
4. Heather H: Moves that the proposed language in 10.55.701 "The supervision and control of schools in each school district shall be vested in the elected board of trustees" move forward to the Superintendent.
 - a. Tony Warren: Seconds the motion
5. Vote on the motion: The proposed language in 10.55.701 "The supervision and control of schools in each school district shall be vested in the elected board of trustees" move forward to the Superintendent.

a. Janelle Beers: Yes	e. Daniel Lee: Yes
b. Emily Dean: Yes	f. Gary Lusin: Yes
c. Heather Hoyer: Yes	g. Tony Warn: Yes
d. Heather Jarrett: Yes	h. Jon Konen: Yes

 - i. Vote passes unanimously. Recommendation to move to the Superintendent

Graduation requirements and High School credits

1. Heather Jarrett: Within the Social Studies standards, there are government and civic standards that already exist.
 - a. Jacob Williams: The standards to exist already, but if the TF decides to create a credit for these courses it would require a separate set of standards.

- b. Heather Jarrett: Disagrees. Shares Reed Point example. The standards are used for those courses and don't need to be separated just utilized by a school that is going to offer a government or civics class.
 - c. Heather Hoyer: Shares that Great Falls does it the same way as Reed Point.
 - d. McCall Flynn: By requiring government, we are adding a requirement for schools when it is already encompassed in the social studies standards.
 - i. Heather Hoyer: Would just need to remove from social studies to make them a stand alone?
 - ii. McCall Flynn: She is not sure how that would need to be met.
 - e. Julie Murgel: When we think about social studies standards cover well beyond just civics and government like economics and history. Those are all encompassed the set of standards that were recently revised and adopted. Those are already in place, so you would continue to use them as you do now.
 - f. McCall Flynn: Are we talking about the basic instructional program or graduation requirements?
 - i. Julie Murgel: We had this conversation in program requirements.
 - ii. Heather Jarrett: She and Heather H had talked about it in their groups. It speaks volumes about the desire of a few of the group.
 - g. Janelle Beers: Do we have any idea how many schools don't offer a civics or government course?
 - i. Heather Jarrett: Requests data on how many High Schools are/are not currently offering half a year of government
2. Jon Konen: Looking at our draconian set up, this also leads way to the transactional learning piece. The timeline can be sped up for a student that can be proficient in areas quicker than others. This is a good thing. More individualized learning will be more prominent in 10 years. By using the and/or honors schools as they make the transition to individualized learning.
 - a. Heather H: As one of the subcommittees that worked on this that was the intent. It is a soft transition rather than a hard requirement.
 3. Heather Jarrett: Would like to see the data on what schools are currently offering government or civics so the group can see the potential impact going forward.
 4. Julie Murgel: There was also a mention of PE not being a half of a semester two years but having the option of a full year.
 - a. Heather Jarrett: Likes the flexibility. A student could take it over the course of their high school years and still get the credit.
 - b. Heather H: concurs with Heather H. It would remove it in the definition to have it for two years.
 5. McCall Flynn: She is unsure of the equivalency language. This has allowed for local districts to demine. What does equivalency mean? What are the equivalent standards and how are those measured? She understands adding flexibility but thinks they can already do that. Who gets to decide what the equivalencies are and if it is a local district, what already exists?
 - a. Emily Dean: MTSBA had a robust discussion about this. The outcome of the conversation was that including "or the equivalent in MT standards achievement" language could result in unintentional limitations in flexibility in 10.55.906. MTSBA feels districts can already do this and adding this language could result in debates that are not necessary because it is already allowed.
 - b. Heather Jarrett: would it be a good place for the word proficiency or proficient in the standard?
 - c. Jacob Williams: is a Unit defined as a specific amount of time?
 - d. Heather Hoyer: The intent of this is to show it does not need to be defined by time. Not time bound but proficiency bound. She asks Emily to expand on why this would be more limiting.
 - i. Emily Dean: looking at 10.55.906 (3) and (4). If we just say "or the equivalent in MT standards achievement" can be interpreted much narrower than what is already included in subsection 3 and 4.
 - e. Jon Konen: Understands, especially since districts can interpret this differently.

- f. Dan Lee: Every time a student wants to do something that will move them through school faster, do they have to petition the board for the trustees to make the decision or would it be done through the school?
 - i. Emily Dean: It could be done through policy. A board could adopt a policy outlining the criteria that would fall into this category.
 - ii. Dan Lee: Does MTSBA have a model policy?
 - iii. Emily Dean: Yes. The district can also tweak the model to fit their district. There is a series called the Flexibilities and Efficiencies policy Series.
6. Julie Murgel: Looking at 10.55.906 (4), it begins with the permission of the local board of trustees. Does that put the onus on students? She would like to talk through this.
 - a. Heather Hoyer: Shares Great Falls example. Thinks what is hanging up the TF is the word “and”. Perhaps we just need to leave “or”
 - b. Emily Dean: The other place it could be limiting is content standards achievement. There could be other circumstances that merit core satisfactory completion.
7. Emily Dean: If the TF wanted to include in 10.55.905, the TF could consider “or circumstances described in...” to refer back to what is there.
 - a. Heather Hoyer: she is seeing section 3 and 4 as different things. 3 in Great Falls is when she needs to deviate from the board adopted 23 credits. 4 is flexibility within courses to not restrict by time in seats. She is trying to think how to word this differently. She proposes taking “and” out and leaving “or” and maybe standards achievement. She needs some time to word smith this.
8. Heather Jarrett: What would an equivalent mean for some people? Could it mean a lot of different things? What is the impact of using that vague term?
 - a. Emily Dean: that is the concern. We know that 10.55.906 (3) and (4) have worked well for a lot of districts. There is concern with introducing ambiguity that could be interpreted to limit flexibility even though its not the intent.
 - b. Heather Jarrett: Could it open more issues where someone uses an equivalent that is x, y, or z.
 - c. Jacob Williams: The freedom exists now for that can of worms to exist as is. The baseline is 4 units and the unit can be determined within the district according to 10.55.905. First it is a number of minutes but then it can be determined by a board of trustees.
 - d. Emily dean: It’s not that a board of trustees can define a unit but that the seat time is not the requisite. Seat time is not defining the unit.
 - e. Jacob: Does the current 10.55.905 give school districts the freedom to do that?
 - f. Emily: Yes, current 10.55.906 does that.
9. Janelle Beers: Asks Heather H if her transformational learning that the current 10.55.904 speaks to it?
 - a. Heather Hoyer: Would like to see the flexibility reflected in both cases. The input received at the beginning of this process was consistently to be given flexibility. When someone is in a jam, they do not have time to go through all of ARM. she is trying to find a way to be reflective of the flexibility in ARM.
10. McCall Flynn: Would it makes sense to rather include language for each of them, include a new (3) that says for each of these requirements school districts have the ability to use 10.55.906 (3) and (4) to determine the requirements. She shares what she thinks of when she thinks of equivalencies.
 - a. Heather Hoyer: She thinks we need to push school districts to think on terms of flexibility. We don’t want to limit them. A constant reminder that you can and should be flexible.
 - b. Janelle Beers: Maybe include the word flexibility in language.
 - c. Julie Murgel: She likes the idea of bringing that language up. Currently it reads that here are the 20 unit requirements then reads exceptions. But that proposal would push the “or” up and does not change the language and resolves the equivalency issue.

- d. McCall Flynn: Proposes language: 10.55.906 (3) the above units required may be satisfied consistent with ARM 10.55.906 (3) and 10.55.906 (4).
 - i. Julie Murgel: Asks if we should specify units a-g?
 - ii. McCall Flynn: Doesn't think we should do that for in case those units change.
 - iii. Jacob Williams: Suggests required
 - iv. Dan Lee: Suggests changing "cant" to "may"
 - v. Language falls on: 10.55.906 (3) "The required units may be satisfied consistent with the flexibility provided in ARM 10.55.906(3) and 10.55.906(4)."
- 11. Gary Lusin: take out the word equivalent and include "or an educational delivery model..."to establish and apply all of the methods we have. The word equivalent is creating concern and replacing it with education delivery model seems like a solution.
- 12. Emily Dean: This is a good point to be able to share this with constituents and come back to the next meeting with thoughts.

High School Requirements

- 1. Heather Jarrett: Is there a definition of Arts vs Fine Arts? She doesn't want to narrow anything.
 - a. Julie Murgel: Shares 10.55.1201 is the program delivery
 - b. Heather Jarrett: Wants to ensure she is not missing something that may not live under fine arts.
 - c. McCall Flynn: Shares 10.53.601 Content Standards
 - d. Heather Hoyer: Perhaps we should just leave it at arts
 - e. Jacob Williams: To clarify, arts is defined, fine arts is not defined, so maybe its better to leave as arts.
- 2. Janelle Beers: Is the Social Studies discussion on this the same as earlier with civics and government?
 - a. Jacob Williams: Yes, we need to know the impact on districts before the discussion of inclusion.
- 3. Julie Murgel: Wonders if the TF wants to call it government or civics or both?
 - a. Heather Jarrett: Looking at the content standards, it is listed as Civics and Government.
- 4. McCall Flynn: It would be helpful to have the data that lists how many schools use Government and how many use Civics.
- 5. Jacob Williams: As it is, it is not an, and/or, it is one class.
- 6. Heather Hoyer: The intention was to have "or" because and would be more of a full credit because you wouldn't teach a quarter of civics and a quarter of government.

Elementary

- 1. Jon Konen: Would like to know more about what electives look like at the elementary level? He knows some schools have STEAM electives but he is not sure how much reading and writing is done in those.
- 2. Julie Murgel: Shares 10.53.101
 - a. Jacob Williams: Asks where exactly 10.53.101 requires reading and writing literacy in all elective program areas?
 - b. Julie Murgel: Asks how this is different across Elementary, Middle, and High School? Should it be included for elementary? Is it the same or different for Middle and High?
- 3. McCall Flynn: Was the reasoning for including this in the first place just because it wasn't there?
 - a. Julie Murgel: Yes, just for consistency between.
- 4. Heather Jarrett: Thinks a deeper dive needs to be done to find where it is stated and what does it look like before the TF consider this fully.
 - a. Jacob Williams: its not in 10.53.101
 - b. Heather Hoyer: Asks Julie if it could be in the Comprehensive Literacy Program for the state?
 - i. Julie Murgel: It could be.

5. Gary Lusin: Thinks we do need to coordinate Elementary, Middle, and High School education programs so kids can transition smoothly between the grade bands. One area that is in High School programming but not in the Elementary, is world languages. Are world languages be something we should identify as relevant today and in the future to be included in educational programming.
6. Tristen Loveridge: Has had a member of the public from Billings, MT to request that world languages are a part of a required course not just an elective.
7. Heather Jarrett: If we cannot find this anywhere, should it be stricken in the other two sections? That would be consistent with what is actually happening.
8. McCall Flynn: It would be helpful if there was institutional knowledge of why that is there before we move forward in striking the language.
9. Julie Murgel: It is not a foreign idea of teaching reading a writing in the content. It does happen a lot in the other standards. We may need to do some digging to find some history on the rules.
10. Jacob Williams: Notes that if it is going to say "as required" we need to find where it is required at or not say that either.

Middle Grades

1. McCall Flynn: Like we are doing review of Civics and Government, she would like to see the same for Earth and Space Sciences as part of the physical and life sciences. She looked in the sciences content standards and it does look like those live there. It is important we include what the elective offerings are.
 - a. Heather Hoyer: She understands wanting to simplify the language. If middle school aligned closer to High school. Middle school is overly defined.
2. Emily Dean: After elective offerings, include "elective offerings in the discretion of the board of trustees". It is already but she thinks it is important to include.
 - a. Jacob Williams: Would you want that in High School as well?
 - b. Emily Dean: Yes
 - c. Heather Hoyer: Clarifies with Emily. She would still call out each of the electives but leave the two units and put at the discretion of the board of trustees.
3. Jacob Williams: One proposal was to use the same language that is in High School for Middle School. It does have some specifics but just has two units of electives. High School has more that middle does not have.
4. Heather Jarrett: shares the difficulty in a Class C school with no available housing and a small budget, language like "all students must be able to elect from the following program areas...", they use the digital academy to make that work. The TF needs to be mindful of the current environment in MT. She wants to see more flexibility when talking about elective offerings. Supports the addition of Emily's verbiage to include the discretion of the local board of trustees.
5. Gary Lusin: There is potential to allow for other offerings to districts between all schools. Allowing that to be determined by the trustees is a good way to go. With education moving in the personalized learning path, the focus is on every student. It is concerning the word "all" is removed from the language. He would propose to consider keeping the word "all" in the language.
 - a. Heather Jarrett: If we are honoring the whole child, we cannot always say every student. It is an absolute word like never, always, and every. Those words are a little scary in terms of educating children. It could be a legal issue because there could be students that cant meet.
 - b. Gary Lusin: without the word "all" it translates to "some". We need to focus on every student. It could minimize the opportunities that students should be able to receive.
 - c. Tony Warren: proposes we include "all students working toward the content standards"
 - d. Heather Hoyer: Proposes "provides all students the opportunity to meet content standards" She thinks this covers IDEA

- e. Heather Jarrett: feels much more comfortable with Heather H suggestion.
 - f. Gary Lusin: He thinks that looks good. It sends a message that we want to address all students and give them all the same opportunity.
6. Heather Hoyer: Why were the specific sciences listed out rather than just listing sciences?
- a. Heather Jarrett: national standards call out each of the sciences. Moving forward, this should be a current representation of our standards.
 - b. Julie Murgel: how would the TF feel about leaving it as just science rather than listing out each area?
 - c. Heather Hoyer: She agrees with the standards we have now, but she is thinking about how this document will live through the next standards. She is concerned with being prescriptive in listing out the sciences.
 - d. Janelle Beers: We were also wanting to know how many schools are currently teaching each of these. By not listing them all, it takes care of that.
 - e. Jacob Williams: For come reason High School mathematics breaks out each type of math. It is complicated.
 - f. Julie Murgel: thinks the TF should consider striking “life” and “physical”
 - g. Jacob Williams: strikes the language and makes change on working document.

Charter School

1. Jon Konen: Asks if a summary and explanation can be given on the ability to pull out of the Charter School piece and the difference between what we currently have and where it is now.
 - a. Jacob Williams: Reviews previous conversation around 10.55.604 (11)
2. Heather Hoyer: What was the concern of Bozeman?
 - a. Julie Murgel: 10.55.604 (11)(a) The question was about when a charter application comes in a variance to standard. Do they need to go through and identify every variance to standard they were seeking? Does (11) mean a charter school is seeking a variant to all of the assurance standards or individual ones? It is different in terms for online and some options of in person classes for electives. As a charter school when they say they are trying to meet or exceed the school accreditation standards, it meant all of them together. Do we need to pull it out so it is understandable that when you are seeking a variance to standard for a charter school, you are putting how you will meet all of the requirements or exceed the student performance requirements?
3. Heather Hoyer: who on this committee worked on this?
 - a. Julie Murgel: Julie, Jacob, and Nathan worked on this language. This was a conversation that steamed from the variance to standard board and carried forward into our process.
 - b. McCall Flynn: She did agree that this would be the best route based on the discussion the variance to standard board had.
 - c. Heather Hoyer: This was a point of conversation for the virtual schools. She had not heard it was an issue for Bozeman.
4. Jacob Williams: Districts can open Virtual schools that might not be Charter Schools. Bozeman went through the charter school application which led to the difficulty. It also led to the decision to create a charter school definition because a charter school in some ways is asking for a variance in some ways.
5. Emily Dean: This comes up frequently and is sometimes forgotten in MT because of how much flexibly we have. In comparing what is done here compared to other parts of the country. When we look at alternative schools across the state, they look very similar to charter schools across the country. They could apply to be a Charter but have not gone through the process.
6. Julie: As we know, we’re talking about the variance to standards. The majority are around the library media specialists but there are two with charter schools. People could be seeking variances beyond the library media specialists which has a lot of flexibility build in. She agrees with Emily with the idea wondering if we are really

leveraging the flexibility we have that gives schools the ability to look at how they structure, staff, and build their schools.

7. Gary Lusin: As a Bozeman trustee for 17 years. The Bozeman Charter academy was 3 or 4 years ago when the charter school option became available. In those situations, the Bozeman charter academy serves many students, of all kinds, through their flexibilities. The Bozeman charter school is an experiment. The OPI and BPE have worked through the standards to allow for the flexibility to be in place. While there are variances all the students have to meet the academic requirements of the district. He does not have any problems with the suggested language. It provides all districts the opportunity to be creative and innovative. Variances may evolve over time but so far it is working well for Bozeman.
8. Jacob: 10.55.602 definition of Charter School
 - a. McCall Flynn: is (a) is rule as well?
 - b. Jacob Williams: Does not think it is in the next part, but it could be added.
 - c. Julie Murgel: Asks McCall if (a) is not necessary?
 - d. McCall Flynn: (a) is not necessary if it is already lined out in the rule.
 - e. Jacob Williams:
9. Heather J: There is difference in language between (11) and (1). Can we clarify why there is that change?
 - a. Jacob Williams: It is a disconnect. Due to differences in the variance to standards rules and the new rule.
 - b. McCall Flynn: suggests it is left as the school district to be consistent and because it was not a language change.
 - c. Julie: Works to clarify TF thinking looking at 10.55.604 (1)
 - d. Heather H: Would we want to make it consistent throughout all of the language? (2) would also need to change to school district.
 - e. Julie Murgel: When it says school district do we mean the board of trustees?
 - f. Emily Dean: Thinking back to an advanced opportunities plan, she is curious what language that uses. The board of trustees are the ones that approve the plan.
10. McCall Flynn: currently as the language is, the Charter school piece is (11) and under. When it is pulled out in the suggested language, there is more language under it. Is there a reason we can't revert to the variance to standards process that exists? She is not sure if a charter board would be created.
 - a. Julie Murgel: they discussed that and weren't sure. It could be referenced back to a specific ARM.
11. Emily Dean: Shares 387 Advanced Opportunity Plan definition. She thinks board of trustees may be the most direct option.
 - a. Jacob Williams: Works to make necessary adjustments in working copy document
12. Jon Konen: What the impact would be for different districts across the state to start a charter school. He is concerned that changing just a few words in this language can open up a lot of different issues that can impact districts. He worries about private companies and voucher systems coming into the state.
 - a. Jacob: The language that is here currently exists in rule.
 - b. Heather Jarrett: Concurr with Jon's statement.
13. McCall Flynn: Concurr with Jon and Heather and is a proponent of public education. It is under the BPE, and school districts are already doing what is right in the very public process. She thinks this language would be a tool for the BPE to use to show that the flexibilities are already available to districts.
14. Jacob: Would like to clarify with Jon and Heather. Are there places they are concerned language has already been changed?
 - a. Heather Jarrett: She would like to strengthen the language to include the words already existing public schools. She would like it to be explicitly clear that it is existing school districts and nothing else.
 - b. Emily Dean: Public schools, including any charter schools, remain accountable to the community.

15. Jon Konen: Process has been stepping towards these private entities. He knows Charter schools are on their way to MT just wants to be cautious in that process. Agrees with Emily Dean in holding them accountable to local school districts.
16. McCall Flynn: This is a topic that it would be good for the TF to have discussions around it before the next meeting.
17. Janelle Beers: Would pulling this language out address the issues that Bozeman had?
 - a. Julie Murgel: Yes, she thinks so.

Accreditation Process Activity

1. Julie Murgel: reviews the activity and questions the TF should keep in mind.
 - a. How does the state determine the accreditation status of a school?
 - b. What evidenced based criteria is used?
 - c. What tools are used to evaluate the quality of a school?
 - d. How often do they evaluate the quality of a school?
 - e. What is the output from the evaluation process that provides a description of a school's quality?
 - f. How are the accreditation and accountability systems related?

2. Jon Konen: Alaska
 - a. Considers MT similar to AK (frontier and small districts and high native American population)
 - b. Use Cognia and can use state
 4. Absenteeism
 5. Graduation rate
 - c. Split into K-6 and 7-12 with different indicators
 - i. K-6 Indicators:
 1. Attendance
 2. Participation rate
 3. Percent proficient
 4. Academic growth
 5. English Language Learners
 6. 3rd grade PEAKS data
 - ii. 7-12 Indicators:
 1. Academic achievement
 2. English Language proficiency
 3. Growth
 - d. Use top level with 9 subgroups are above the target are considered universal
 - e. Targeted are one or more subgroups less than threshold of less than 5%
 - f. Universal every 5 years and targeted is every year
 - g. Lowest 5% of schools are on the comprehensive
 - i. Less than 66% grad rate
 - h. Have two different indicators
 - i. N number
 - ii. 80/20 rule
 - i. Takeaway: many aspects mirror MT. There is a lot we can takeaway. Having a pathway using Cognia with many of the MT districts already using

3. Heather Hoyer: South Dakota
 - a. Accredits every 5 years
 - b. Accredited non-public and public schools (non-public must be done yearly)
 - c. If a school is using Cognia they can do in conjunction with the state but not replacing state
 - d. Measure 5 standards, school boards who seek accreditation
 - i. Progress towards continuous improvement cycle
 - ii. Academic performance
 - iii. General education practices
 - iv. Basic competencies in compliance with state laws and admirative rules
 - e. Equitable distribution of review
 - f. Use WEIDA for Elementary
 - g. School quality surveys

- h. Student performance but have progress towards improvements equal to that in elementary
- i. HS student performance is an academic indicator
- j. Give equal weight to students that need more time as those that grad on time
- k. Takeaway: likes the High School completion equivalent

4. Gary Lusin: Arizona

- a. Daughter taught at Charter school in AZ for five years
- b. Skeptical of how AZ conducts their accreditation/accountability systems
- c. Does not require state accreditation
- d. School districts can be accredited through Cognia (Bozeman school district is through Cognia)
- e. Accountability process the districts have to provide to the state in addition to Cognia
- f. Parent, teacher, community surveys that are turned in
- g. Accountability process is A-F grade system
- h. Accreditation process is not part of the accountability system (not sure how to interpret this)
- i. Takeaway: questions what they are doing. Makes him think about separating the two components of assessing schools. Only accreditation or if accountability process acceptable and how they relate.

5. Emily Dean: Utah

- a. Uses Cognia
- b. Only accredit secondary schools. Elementary and Middle school accreditation is optional
- c. Every 5 years on a school system basis
- d. Large teams come in for each accreditation
 - i. Interview district and school leaders, parents, students, and community members
- e. In larger districts observations are done in ¼ of classrooms
- f. Three domains of accreditation
 - i. Leadership capacity
 - ii. Learning capacity
 - iii. Resource capacity
 - iv. Depending on system they have there are other standards under each
- g. Accountability is separate on an annual basis
 - i. Student academic outcomes in growth
- h. Assign letter grade A-F based on weight indicators
 - i. Elem and Middle schools
 1. Achievement
 2. Growth
 3. EL progress
 4. Growth of lowest performing 25% of students
 - ii. High Schools
 1. Achievement
 2. Growth
 3. EL Progress
 4. Growth of lowest performing 25% of students
 5. Post-secondary readiness
- i. Takeaway: interesting and likes the three domains. And customizing based on the school district. Have diverse school systems with large and small communities.

6. Janelle Beers: Idaho

- a. Totally amended their program in 2019
- b. A Cognia State
- c. Use a three-year period
- d. Four academic measures
- e. School quality and student success ratios

- f. Identified four areas for underperforming schools:
 - i. CSIF Underperforming schools (lowest 5% comprehensive support)
 - ii. CSIF Graduation Schools (Graduation rate lower than 67%)
 - iii. Targeted support and improvement
 - iv. Additional targeted support and improvement
- g. Categories for schools that are doing well
 - i. Top 90% or above
- ii. Gold makers (overall meeting improvement or growth standards)
- h. School quality measures
 - i. Student Surveys
 - ii. Teacher Surveys
 - iii. Parent Surveys
 - iv. Communication with parents on student achievement
 - v. Grade 8 enrollment in prealgebra or higher
- i. Accreditation is voluntary for elementary and Grades K-8 and alternative schools
- j. Takeaway: Does not think their standards are stringent and doesn't think there is anything to take away for MT

7. Heather Jarrett: Colorado

- a. Districts are responsible for accrediting schools by contracting through the Department of Education
- b. Accreditation is determined by:
 - i. Achievement
 - ii. Growth
 - iii. Post-secondary and workforce readiness
 - iv. Ontrack growth
 - v. Graduation rate
 - vi. Performance of historically underserved students
- c. Local boards are in charge of accrediting and ensuring programming
- d. Districts have to have accountability committee consisting of:
 - i. Three parents
 - ii. One teacher
 - iii. One admin
 - iv. One business representative
- e. Publish district performance reports which determine district rating
 - i. Performance Plan
 - ii. Improvement Plan
 - iii. Priority Improvement Plan
 - iv. Turnaround Plan
- f. District accreditation ratings
 - i. Accredited with distinction
 - ii. Accredited
 - iii. Accredited with an improvement plan
 - iv. Accredited with a priority improvement plan
 - v. Accredited with a turnaround plan
- g. Takeaway: having a district wide committee that determines the accreditation is interesting.

8. Tony Warren: North Dakota

- a. Uses Cognia
- b. Accredited once every five years
- c. Districts with enrollment over 1,000 have an evaluator from out of state
- d. Districts with under 1,000 have an evaluator from in state
- e. Most of their accreditation was repealed after transitioning to Cognia
- f. Takeaway: MT goes to a model with a lead evaluator with strengths challenges etc.

9. McCall Flynn: Washington

- a. All schools must be approved (done through Education services district)
- b. 9 different accreditation bodies for both public and private schools
- c. Schools annually conduct survey to affirm they are complying
- d. Approval survey includes questions on:
 - i. Instructional hours
 - ii. Days and school schedules
 - iii. Grad requirements (subject areas and graduation pathway options)
 - iv. High School and beyond plan
 - v. Educational offerings and activities
 - vi. Mastery based learning
 - vii. Emergency waivers from spring before
 - viii. Mobile grad requirements
- e. Measured by 9 indicators:
 - i. ELA proficiency
 - ii. Math proficiency
 - iii. ELA growth
 - iv. Math growth
 - v. Graduation
 - vi. EL progress indicator
 - vii. Attendance
 - viii. 9th graders on track measure
 - ix. Dual credit
- f. System and school improvements are done across three tiers:
 - i. Comprehensive supports (schools fall in lowest 5% or grad rate below 67%)
 - ii. Targeted supports (Three or more student groups under 5%, one or two under 5% receive a self-directed support)
 - iii. Their OPI and state board establish criteria for school recognition
- g. Takeaway: Surprised dual credit measure is part of their indicators. Very interesting. We talk a lot about dual credit, but it is not a part of MT measurements.

10. Jacob Williams: Wyoming

- a. Annual Review at the district level
- b. District is responsible for identifying criteria in each school then uploads report to the state department
- c. Review is a series of assurances of 24 criteria listed on their webpage.
- d. Statute lays out each criterion
- e. On site review every five years that can be done with an outside service provider (ie Cognia) or a team from the state department
- f. Accreditation requirements
 - i. 80% or higher artifact approval
 - ii. Approved school improvement plans
 - iii. Approved district assessment system
 - iv. No unresolved compliance issues
 - v. No unresolved staffing issues (certification not FTE)
 - vi. External review completed w/in 5 yr. cycle
- g. Takeaway: Interesting they have the district is responsible for ensuring everything is in place then reporting to the state. WY only has 40-50 districts vs. MT with 320 systems and 407 districts.

11. Julie Murgel: What would be the ideal accreditation process?

- a. Jon Konen: Likes having multiple factors/indicators. We know that show one piece of data/test does not define who we are. We heard Cognia quite a bit, and they have 30 performance standards included in their new system and it hits a lot that we have discussed. Would be interested in seeing a pathway for districts to use it in Accreditation. The rotation of accreditation is powerful and helps the state. Less reporting and in a targeted or comprehensive level may get more attention and support. From the State

level, we can look at targeted and comprehensive schools to find resources, and also look at schools that are successfully making the grade. We can learn a lot from the districts in our state.

12. Julie Murgel: What would be the minimum/must haves in accreditation?
 - a. Heather Hoyer: Compliance with laws and ARM. That is our baseline.
 - b. Emily Dean: Recognizing the unique features of communities and that success looks different in communities and for kids.
 - c. Gary Lusin: Discussion is leading him to think about what we are trying to accredit. He understands all of the pieces and rationale, but he wonders if there is more streamlined to assess MT schools. There are a wide variety of issues in MT schools. He is not sure how accreditation and accountability standards will work sufficiently in the future.
 - d. Janelle Beers: Whatever we do, we don't add it on top of what is already happening. Not more paperwork. We have a number of schools that are tiny frontier schools. It may not be one size fits all.
 - i. Jon Konen: Agrees with Janelle. He is hoping for a pathway for districts to do that.
13. Jacob Williams: When we're talking about process? Are we just talking about 606 or are we talking about the chapter in a larger scope? What is it specifically that does not capture each individual school that we would want to change? If we change the process, is it going to change the ARM and minimum? When we way process, what are we talking about?

Next Steps

1. TF discusses next steps.
2. Tony warren: Makes motion to request an extended timeline from the Superintendent
 - a. Janelle Beers: Seconds the motion
3. Vote on the motion: TF requests an extended timeline from the Superintendent
 - a. Janelle Beers: Yes
 - b. Emily Dean: Yes
 - c. Heather Hoyer: Yes
 - d. Heather Jarrett: Yes
 - e. Gary Lusin: Yes
 - f. Tony Warn: Yes
 - g. Jon Konen: Yes
4. Janelle: Will you know by our next meeting if we have more time?
 - a. Julie: Will be taking to the Superintendent right away. She will need to take that into consideration and maybe we will have an indication of where she is at with this.

Public Comment

1. Diane Fladmo, Director of Policy, Montana Federation for Public Employees:
 - a. MFPE is the largest union in the state and represents educators in K-12, higher ed, and classified employees. Thanks the group for the vote to request more time. This is a large responsibility to put on a few individuals. Last time there were over 50 people and took a year and a half to complete the process. The discussion from today was very important and happened at the second to last scheduled meeting. Asks to consider the staffing levels available to support the Task force. There are important vacancies at the OPI Accreditation division including: administrator, director, and administrative specialist. There are very few people there to assist. Now more than ever, we need wider and deeper expertise to help. Since the last revision, we're coming out of a pandemic. We're learning what we can do with education, and it has an effect on students and staff. She is pleased to hear there are continued efforts to include mentoring. Give yourself time. Not just to review the information you get, but to also ask for additional information. Ask other experts to give input including the MT library association. You have not had time to hear the details of their positions. Give time for other entities to give information. Be sure you receive the survey responses with time to deliberate

and see what is in them. Your recommendations will have your name on them as they move forward. Would appreciate if time is built into the timeline for the public to receive and give input on materials.

2. Dennis Parman, Executive Director, Montana Rural Education Association:
 - a. Written Public Comment submitted

Meeting Adjourned: 5: