

**MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
COUNCIL OF BASIC EDUCATION**

**Barber National Institute
100 Barber Place, Erie, PA 16507**

September 21, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 am by Dr. James Barker.

Attending:

Erin Agnew	Francis Michelini	Ed Sheehan
Jim Agras	Ivory Nelson (via phone)	Shannon Sullivan
James Barker	Jon Peri	Karen Farmer White
Paul Ferrera	Sen. Jeff Piccola (via phone)	A. Lee Williams
Dan Fogarty	Mollie Phillips	Larry Wittig

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the July 20, 2011 meeting of the Council of Basic Education were approved on a Sheehan/Fogarty motion.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Jonathan Peri reported on the September 20, 2011 meeting of the School and University Safety Committee, at which the Committee reviewed a draft of new Chapter 10 regulations pertaining to Safe Schools. The Board was tasked with promulgating regulations by Act 104 that include a model memorandum of understanding (MOU) between school entities and local police; establish protocols for notifying local police when certain incidents occur on school property; establish protocols for the response and handling of students with special needs; and establish protocols for emergency and non-emergency response. The MOU was developed with significant input from a stakeholders' Advisory Committee and the regulations were built from the model MOU developed by the Advisory Committee.

Mr. Peri highlighted the following key components of the draft regulation and discussed suggested changes that were made during the Committee meeting:

- The regulations cite current statutory requirements for every school in the Commonwealth to execute an MOU with their local police every two years, and require schools to consult and consider the Board's model MOU in developing their local agreements. Mr. Peri reported that the Committee discussed also requiring that schools that execute an MOU that is significantly different from the

model submit a list of reasons for the differences when they file the MOU with PDE. This will allow the Board to gather important information about how MOUs are being executed in the field to inform potential revisions as part of the Board's required biennial review of the model MOU.

- The regulations require an administrator to immediately notify local police when certain incidents occur on school property and outline a number of factors for an administrator to consider in determining whether to notify the police in situations where an administrator has discretion in reporting. Mr. Peri reminded the Council that statute dictates which offenses require immediate notification and which offenses an administrator has discretion in reporting and that the Board does not have discretion in this area.
- To strengthen law enforcement's understanding of handling students with disabilities, the regulations require schools to invite local police to participate in staff trainings on de-escalation techniques and also require schools to share copies of their behavior support procedures with local police.
- The regulations direct schools to consider the National Incident Management System in developing their emergency response plans, and require schools to share such plans with local police along with certain information important for police to have on file for emergency preparedness. Mr. Peri reported that the Committee discussed also extending these information sharing requirements to include local fire departments.
- Mr. Peri said that the Committee discussed adding a new provision to the regulation to require schools to immediately notify the parents of victims or suspects that their child has been involved in an incident on school property.

Mr. Peri noted that, following the Board meeting, the draft regulations and draft model MOU will be posted on the State Board's website for a week-long public comment period. These comments will be taken into consideration by the School and University Safety Committee in preparing potential revisions to Chapter 10 which the Board will be asked to approve as a final-omit regulation at its November meeting.

Ms. Phillips suggested that PDE consider providing joint training for school entities and police departments on the new requirements of Chapter 10 to promote greater understanding of the role that each plays in school safety and how they can work collaboratively to maintain a safe school environment.

Senator Piccola commented that he was pleased with how the regulations had been developed and encouraged the Board to adopt the model MOU and draft Chapter 10 regulations. He also thanked those who participated in the Advisory Committee's work and provided input into the draft regulations.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Mollie Phillips, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee, reported that the committee recently completed three public roundtable meetings on a draft of the Board's School Library Study (September 13 at Parkland High School in Allentown, September 15 at Susquehanna Township High School in Harrisburg, and September 20 at Northwest Pennsylvania Collegiate Academy in

Erie) and reviewed the discussion that occurred at each roundtable. She then introduced Dr. Mary Kay Biagini, the University of Pittsburgh researcher who completed the draft study, for a presentation on the report's draft recommendations. Ms. Phillips noted that a copy of the draft study had been shared with Board members in advance of the meeting and stressed that the Board would be asked to provide input to finalize the report's recommendations during today's Council meeting, after which agreed to edits will be made and the study will be transmitted to the House and Senate Education Committees.

Dr. Biagini said she was pleased to have had an opportunity to participate in all three public roundtable meetings to hear reactions from the field, and said she would focus her remarks to the Council on the report's draft recommendations since the majority of Board members already heard her discuss the report's key findings during the Erie roundtable. Dr. Biagini noted the context for the draft recommendations: Does every student in Pennsylvania have access to a quality library program that is staffed by a certified school librarian that collaborates with teachers? Do they have access to a library program throughout the school day that is supported by an adequate collection of current and useful print and electronic resources and the technology infrastructure to make resources available to all students?

Based on discussion at the roundtables, Dr. Biagini said support from the field was consistently voiced for the report's draft recommendations asking the Department of Education to:

- Restore the Division of School Library Media Services within the Office of Commonwealth Libraries
- Develop a model information literacy curriculum that would be made available to all school districts on the Department's SAS portal.
- Conduct an annual assessment of school library programs.
- Provide guidance on resources for students who are English language learners or who are visually impaired.

Mr. Fogarty expressed concern that only two Career and Technical Centers responded to the School Library Survey and asked whether it was possible to follow-up with the 14 CTCs who did not respond to collect additional information. Mr. Wittig noted that given the amount of data collected to inform the study, statistically, adding data for 14 more schools would not significantly alter the findings. Dr. Biagini said it may be possible to look at the CTCs web sites to glean whether they have a school library program.

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY **ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Deputy Secretary Carolyn Dumaresq provided an update to the Council on implementation of Common Core Standards, 2011 Adequate Yearly Progress results, schools identified as persistently dangerous in the 2011-2012 school year, and other initiatives underway in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.

PA Transition to Common Core

Dr. Dumaresq reported that the Department of Education is working to revise current Pennsylvania academic standards to embrace the content and rigor of the Common Core. Revising Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content linked to the PA Common Core Standards will permit a redesign of the PSSA while providing reporting categories that clearly summarize the results. Dr. Dumaresq provided a timeline for transition to PA Common Core Standards that anticipates introduction of the standards in February 2012 and revised PSSA exams for grades 3-8 in reading, writing and mathematics becoming operational in spring 2014. The transition timeline essentially focuses on four objectives:

- Revise the Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics to reflect the content and rigor of the Common Core Standards
- Revise the PA Academic Standards in ELA and mathematics to embrace the content and rigor of the Common Core Standards
- Revise the PSSA tests for ELA and mathematics based upon the revised Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content
- Develop and deliver PA Common Core professional development for educators

Mr. Sheehan asked if the Department had the appropriate resources available to accomplish the transition plan. Dr. Dumaresq said resources are available to meet the needs of the current year, but the plan is based on increasing the assessment line item in future budgets.

AYP

Dr. Dumaresq reported to the Board on schools making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the 2010-2011 school year and noted that the performance goals for making AYP increased in 2011 from 63% to 72% proficient in reading and from 56% to 67% proficient in math. She also reviewed the academic growth measures that can be used to meet math and reading performance goals, as well as the additional test participation, attendance and graduation measures that are incorporated into the AYP calculation.

Dr. Dumaresq reported that in 2010-2011:

- 463 (92.8%) of school districts made AYP, down from 473 last year
- Another 4 school districts are Making Progress, meaning that last year they were in an improvement status but this year they met the AYP measures
- 18 school districts are in Warning, up from 8 last year
- 3 school districts are in District Improvement I
- 11 school districts are in Correction Action 2
- 2,227 schools (71.9%) made AYP
- 99 schools are Making Progress
- 396 schools are in Warning
- 144 schools are in School Improvement
- 230 schools are in Correction Action

Dr. Dumaresq further reported that 77.1% of all students in grades 3-8 and 11 were Advanced/Proficient in math and that 73.5% were Advanced/Proficient in reading. Mr. Fogarty asked if it was possible to break out PSSA results just for the 11th grade. Dr. Dumaresq said that 11th grade proficiency on the PSSAs was higher than on the Keystone Exams and reminded Board members that the Keystone Exams are indexed to a higher level of rigor.

SY 2011-2012 Persistently Dangerous Schools

Dr. Dumaresq presented a list of the schools identified by the state as persistently dangerous for the 2011-2012 school year. All schools on the list are located in the Philadelphia School District, and the list had decreased from 19 schools identified in 2010-2011 to 12 schools. Parents of students who attend a persistently dangerous school must be offered the opportunity to transfer to another school and the district must submit a corrective action plan for each school for approval by PDE.

Mr. Peri thanked Dr. Dumaresq for sharing information regarding the persistently dangerous schools designations and said the documents highlight the importance of including parental notification in the Board's Chapter 10 regulation. Dr. Dumaresq agreed and noted that it is important to remember that safe schools data is self-reported and that steps must be taken to ensure that it is accurate. Mr. Peri noted that the state may see an uptick in the number of incidents occurring in schools due to increased clarity and consistency in the reporting requirements outlined in Chapter 10, but hoped that presenting an accurate picture of the incidents occurring in schools would help spur action to address and reduce those numbers in the future.

Keystone Exams

Dr. Dumaresq reported that results from the spring 2011 Keystone Exam field tests had been released to schools and parents and that schools can now use that information to analyze what eligible content was missed and where course corrections may be necessary in their local curriculum. Though funding for the Keystone Exams was reduced, Dr. Dumaresq said the Department is making a request to support the administration of exams in Algebra I, Biology and Literature next year, along with funds to support the first operational administration of the Keystone Exam in Composition and to develop an exam in Civics and Government.

Teacher Evaluation

Dr. Dumaresq reported that, as of September 19, 2011, 104 school entities had volunteered to participate in a pilot of a new teacher evaluation tool focused on evaluating elements of professional practice, including 76 traditional public schools, nine Career and Technical Centers, nine Intermediate Units (IU) & nine charter schools. She anticipated that a new teacher evaluation form would be ready for use next fall, and noted that additional components incorporating student achievement measures as up to 50% of the evaluation are still under development and will require legislation to implement.

Dr. Dumaresq also reported that the Department is looking closely at professional development supports for principals and other evaluators to ensure that the evaluations are

applied consistently, is continuing parallel work on a new evaluation for principals, and will begin discussion on how to apply elements of the new teacher evaluation model to staff who are not classroom teachers.

PSSA Forensic Analysis

Dr. Dumaresq updated the Board on the status of the Department's forensic analysis of recently administered PSSA exams. She reported that PDE has received forensic reports for the 2009 and 2011 school years, as well as an erasure analysis report and reports from districts that were identified as having anomalies on a previous forensic analysis. Dr. Dumaresq said she anticipates the Department will have many positive stories to share about how schools have implemented effective interventions to increase student achievement.

Seclusion Rooms

Dr. Dumaresq also provided an update on pending federal guidance regarding the use of seclusion rooms. The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) has not yet released the anticipated guidance, but PDE will continue to monitor and keep the Board abreast of USDE activity on this issue.

Striving Readers

Dr. Dumaresq reported that Pennsylvania is eligible for a \$38 million grant over three years to support striving readers and that her staff will work with the Office of Child Development and Early Learning to develop an application.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nancy Hubley, with the Education Law Center, thanked the Board for undertaking the historic School Library Study and said she hoped to see additional data on school library programs from charter schools and Career and Technical Centers. She offered her opinion that charter schools and CTCs likely did not respond to the survey because they did not have a lot to brag about regarding their library programs. Regarding Chapter 10, Ms. Hubley said it is important to offer a public comment period on the draft regulations even if they will be final-omit and suggested the regulations be modified to address students with a 504 plan, to promote the use of diversion both at the school and law enforcement level, and to have schools retain greater responsibility and discretion when they refer students to law enforcement.

Pierre Stanton, parent of a student in the Erie City School District, voiced concerns with standardized testing in public schools. Mr. Stanton made a suggestion in respect to mathematics assessment regarding a free system available through the Khan Academy.

Janice Whiteman, with Gannon University, requested that higher education faculty be included in training provided on the revised assessments that students will take related to Common Core and in training provided on the new teacher evaluation models.

ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

PRESENTATIONS

Kelli Wells, Director of U.S. Education Programs for the GE Foundation, gave a presentation on GE's Developing Futures in Education initiative. Ms. Wells discussed the work supported by the Foundation locally in the Erie City School District focused on improving math and science education and building a collaborative culture among the district's administration, school board and teachers' union. She also discussed the initiative's new nationwide focus on implementation of the Common Core State Standards and the targeted investments the Foundation is making in 7 school districts, including Erie, to bring leadership, process and accountability to the table to ensure the standards are implemented in a way that leads to greater student success.

Maureen Barber-Carey, Executive Vice President of the Barber National Institute, gave a presentation on the Barber National Institute: History, Mission Programs and Services. Ms. Barber-Carey then welcomed Barber Institute staff who led Board members on a tour of the school.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.


Stephanie Jones
Administrative Assistant