

Youth Committee – February 21, 2014

Conference Call

Attendees: Heather Gleason, Larry, Paula Palmer, Dee Torgerson, Alyssa Klein, Juanita Lauritsen, Mark Jacobs, Arliss, Annie Welch, Tasha Truskolaski

Meeting notes:

Alyssa provided an introduction of Paula who will be presenting information on the World's Best Workforce legislation and the Transition Plan legislation.

The Department of Education just wrapped up 6 regional meetings about these initiatives. At these meetings, the state encouraged districts to involve workforce partners, among other stakeholders, and ensure input for the plan is a public process.

Paula noted that the World's Best Workforce legislation is still new and how it will actually be figured out is still to be determined. The legislation requires school districts to engage stakeholders and the larger communities and to be accountable to these groups.

There are five goals under this legislation: all students must meet school readiness goals, students must achieve grade level literacy in third grade, address the achievement gap across racial and ethnic groups, between students living in poverty and their more privileged peers and special education, all students graduate high school, and college/career preparedness plan.

Paula provided an overview of the process. First, local school boards develop a plan based on local input. This plan must align with the goals and evaluation process described in the legislation. There must also be a process for defining teacher effectiveness. Districts must publish this information annually. The school boards must also hold a public meeting about the plan. The district must provide a survey about the plan for the public periodically.

There are also reporting requirements in the legislation. The school districts must report to stakeholders and provide summaries to Department of Education (DOE). The plans will be locally owned and developed. The MN Department of Education will provide technical assistance from the state. There are no templates for the local plans, but there will be a toolkit for guidance on developing these plans.

If after three years there is no progress, the commissioner of education can require the schools to spend 2% of basic revenue to support professional development strategies.

The MN Department of Education provides updates on the legislation weekly on their website under the Q&A section. The department will assist districts in developing plans and strategies.

The departments are working on creating a “One Plan” system to streamline reporting requirements for local districts. This will also help capture a larger picture of what is happening to the district as a whole. MDE is heading this initiative, but it is a project being developed across districts.

Paula then discussed the Transition Plan legislation, Minn. Stat. 120B.125. This legislation is closely tied and supportive of the World’s Best Workforce legislation, but they are separate. Under this initiative, schools must begin a transition plan with students no later than grade 9, but ideally earlier. This initiative helps students plan for students successful transition to postsecondary and employment. Districts are still determining what this plan will look like with limited funds and counselors. This is not a tracking system, but rather gives options/opportunities for youth to make choices. There is nothing in the legislation requiring continuing on a pathway or track involuntarily. There will be toolkits for districts to help develop these plans.

Paula said the state-wide reactions to these initiatives have been mixed. Many districts view this as another requirement without funding, but that the initiatives support what districts want to do or add on to what they are already doing.

The department will be hosting seven more regional summits and will reach out to the workforce community at these meetings.

The committee began a discussion about how the workforce system can get involved initiatives and any other additional thoughts about these two pieces of legislation.

The committee discussed opportunities to enhance employer engagement. One suggestion was to develop a database to find employers who want to participate. Some ways to do this could be working with association in key industries, engage business service specialists, and using Salesforce/Sharepoint or other online databases.

Next steps:

- Presentation to the larger group on February 27
- Look for opportunities to be more involved in shaping plans.
- Look for strategies to assist youth not in high school without a base for similar information.
- Meetings with counselors/other school staff to discuss strategies to implement the legislation.

- Using social media to provide outreach to youth

The co-chairs asked the committee to not focus or limit the definition of “youth.”