

Advisory Councils to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education: Annual Reports for 2014-2015

December 2015

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
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Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
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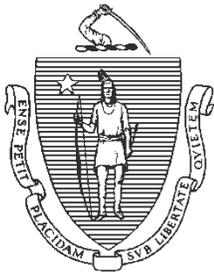
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Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

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Dear Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education,

Enclosed please find the 2014-2015 Advisory Councils' Annual Reports to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Advisory councils, established by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15, Section 1G, advise the Commissioner and the Board on matters pertinent to the implementation of education reform in the Commonwealth and to provide programmatic recommendations.

There are currently 14 advisory councils: Adult Basic Education, Arts Education, Digital Learning, Educational Personnel, English Language Learners/Bilingual Education, Gifted and Talented Education, Global Education, Interdisciplinary Health Education and Human Services/Life Management Skills and Home Economics, Parent and Community Education and Involvement, Racial Imbalance, School and District Accountability and Assistance, Science, Technology/Engineering and Mathematics, Special Education, Vocational Technical Education. This document compiles the reports from the eleven advisory councils that submitted a report this year. In addition, the State Student Advisory Council, whose members are elected by other students rather than appointed by the Board, is an active and important advisory council to the Board.

Each council's annual report, submitted by the council chair, includes a summary of the work of the council, recommendations to the Commissioner and Board, council leadership and membership, and meetings held. The reports and their recommendations are those of the councils and not of the Department.

Thank you to the council members and liaisons for their time, efforts, and constructive feedback. If the Board is interested in greater detail on the activities and recommendations of any council, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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ADULT BASIC EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
Annual Report

I. INTRODUCTION

The Adult Basic Education (ABE) Advisory Council was charged by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education to advise Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) on how to increase the number of adult students who enter into and succeed in postsecondary education by reviewing and providing guidance on the development and implementation of policy in support of enhancing the effectiveness of instruction, assist in creating a plan to determine which strategies are most effective, and assist ACLS with developing ways of evaluating impact and outcomes.

In FY14, the ABE Council voted to extend this charge into FY15 to allow for sufficient time to review all related materials and advise ACLS.

II. 2014-2015 WORK OF THE COUNCIL

The Council reviewed current ACLS initiatives and updates on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) that was signed into law on July 22, 2014 which goes into effect on July 1, 2016. The ACLS director joined the MA WIOA Steering Committee that focused on the development of the combined state plan that included the core programs of WIOA. Information on WIOA was shared with the ABE Advisory Council members.

The Council learned about the new SABES professional development system which focuses on three priority instructional areas, Mathematics and Adult Numeracy, English Language Arts, and ESOL and five other priority areas which are: Educational Leadership & Strengthening ABE Programs, Education & Career Planning, Using SMARTT & Cognos, ABE Distance Learning & Technology Support, MA ABE Assessments.

In order for the council to come to recommendations on how to increase postsecondary outcomes for Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs, the members:

1. reviewed data;
2. heard a presentation from SABES regarding professional development for advisors and advising in ABE programs;
3. heard a presentation on American Student Assistance related to overcoming financial barriers for the adult education student who want to enter into postsecondary education; and
4. heard from two program directors who presented on how they achieved strong postsecondary outcomes for ABE students in their programs.

III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The ABE Advisory Council members strongly advise Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) to continue to serve those who are most in need while implementing the common performance measures set forth by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Programs should create a culture of College and Career Readiness for all students with several pathways available to them. The ABE Advisory Council also emphasized the need to find a way to capture outcomes relevant for low level students that might not be reflected under the WIOA measures. Detailed recommendations include:

1. Share best practices and existing models that result in adult learners achieving postsecondary outcomes.
 - a. Convene a work group to identify components of a successful model and have a council member attend it.
 - b. Identifying where and how management enrollment contributes to programs' success and shares this information with the field.
2. Based on the knowledge gained through 1b above, promote semester-based managed enrollment as an alternative, where appropriate, to open enrollment.
3. Increase full time teaching staff in programs with the understanding that there needs to be a balance between part-time and full-time staff.
 - a. Explore ways to allow collaboration between and among ACLS organizations and programs to fund full-time staff (e.g., MOU for a shared fulltime staff person at a program level).
4. Maintain the current level of serving low levels of ABE across the system.
5. Develop policies that strengthen the relationship between the ABE Transition Programs and Community College.
6. Develop policies and/or programs that strengthen the relationship between the One-Stop Career Centers and the ABE programs. Identify training programs that are appropriate and advance ABE Students in their next steps.
7. Continue to support Career Ready 101 and promote contextualized instruction for ABE programs through SABES.
8. Continue to support role of advisors in the programs.

IV. COUNCIL DETAILS

Department Administrator: Jolanta Conway, State Director, Adult Basic Education

Department Liaison: Jolanta Conway

Chairperson: Mary Sarris

Members of the 2014-2015 Advisory Council:

Ernest Best, Massachusetts Alliance of Adult Learners

Maureen Carney, Massachusetts American Federation of Labor & Congress of Industrial

Christine Cordio, Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education

Ben Foreman, Massachusetts Institute for New Commonwealth

Barbara Krol-Sinclair, Intergenerational Literacy Program - Chelsea, ELC

Andre Mayer, Associated Industries of Massachusetts

Daniel O'Malley, Hampden Sheriff's Department, Ludlow, MA

Lisa Soricone, Commonwealth Corporation

Luanne Teller, World Education, Inc., Boston, MA

Council Meeting Dates: October 24, 2014, April 14, 2015, June 12, 2015, June 19, 2015

ARTS EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Annual Report

I. INTRODUCTION

The Arts Education Advisory Council formally met during the 2014-15 academic year in addition to working along with many other arts educators from across the Commonwealth throughout the year to work on various projects that related to arts education.

II. 2014-2015 WORK OF THE COUNCIL

The Council was charged with collecting information on district and school best practices and curriculum resources aligned with established initiatives for posting on the arts education advisory council page of the website. Council members and arts education teachers worked with the Department on various curriculum projects (work on these projects aligned, in part, with two of the Council's Recommendations from last year, listed in Section III, numbers 2 and 3 (marked with **), including:

Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework and National Core Arts Standards (MACF-NCAS) “Crosswalk Project”: Arts educators representing the five arts disciplines of Music, Visual Art, Theatre, Dance, and Media Arts) worked to compare (and where possible align) the standards of the 1999 Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework with those of the 2014 National Core Arts Standards.

Model Curriculum Units (MCU) Project: Arts Education Model Curriculum Units were developed in the following areas: Music (2 units), Dance (1 unit), Visual Arts (2 units), Media Arts (1 unit), Theatre/Drama (2 units), Arts Integrated -Multi-disciplinary (1unit).

The MCUs demonstrate ways that the learning standards from the Massachusetts Arts, English Language Arts, and Mathematics Curriculum Framework and standards from the National Core Arts Standards might be met through arts-centered learning experiences. These units include lesson plans, curriculum embedded performance assessments, and a listing of teaching resources. These units are in alignment with the Commissioner's council charge to identify best practices in arts education.

In addition, the AEAC members provided some examples of best practices in Arts and Arts Integration. These include:

- Exemplary work of Joanne (Jodie) Nelson, Brockton High School, in incorporating arts with English Language Arts at the High School level
- Jane Burke, of the Flying Cloud Institute in Western MA, for her work in incorporating Arts with STEM education in Berkshire County
- Priscilla Kane-Hellweg and the Enchanted Circle Theater (ECT) members, for their work incorporating theatre arts in the Holyoke Early Literacy Initiative and with STEM subjects with students and teachers.
- Professional Learning Communities- common planning time for Arts Integration and Model Curriculum Units development – Amherst model with Enchanted Circle Theater.
- Springfield District model: Visual Thinking Strategies
- Turn around strategies for failing schools and/or successful models using the arts: Edwards MS (Boston), Orchard Gardens School (Boston), Worcester Arts Magnet (Worcester), Peabody School (Cambridge). These schools have increased arts

instructional time through extending learning time while at the same time increasing academic achievement.

III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

As in past years, the AEAC continues to make over-arching recommendations relating to the inclusion of the arts in the general academic curriculum of all Massachusetts K-12 schools. Several of the below recommendations appeared in the last AEAC Annual Report:

1. AEAC Membership: We are appreciative of the tireless efforts of Dr. Munoz-Bennett and grateful that the ESE has identified the need for recruiting new members and addressing the issue that due to term expirations and a lack of a process to nominate replacements, the AEAC has been reduced from 24 members to 9. We recommend annual recruitment.
2. With the release of the new National Core Arts Standards (NCAS) in June, 2014, the AEAC recommends that the Commissioner and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education appoint a wide-ranging Arts Curriculum Framework Panel, with several representatives for each arts discipline - dance, media arts, music, theatre/drama, and visual arts to consider adopting, adapting, adding to, or rejecting the new NCAS.
3. The AEAC is appreciative that funding was available for the creation of Model Curriculum Units in the Arts this spring. We feel that this will be a valuable addition to placing the arts as a core curricular subject for schools and administrators to consider. We suggest that funding be provided for appropriate professional development institutes and workshops to share these model units with the field of arts educators and other professionals.
4. The Council requests that we be allowed to have input in the formulation of the annual charge based upon our rich experiences in the field of arts education and understanding of the needs in this discipline across the state. This would include examining statewide trends and needs; seeking public and professional input; and identifying model programs.
5. The AEAC would like to serve as the arts-education “eyes and ears” for the ESE and the Commissioner by:
 - a. Identifying new opportunities locally, statewide, and nationally
 - b. Observing and reporting on programs, trends, and initiatives from other states and regions that could benefit Massachusetts students
 - c. Providing lists of resources, research, curricula, and assessment tools available nationally and statewide that could strengthen Massachusetts arts education.
 - d. The Council recommends an examination of how engaging in arts courses and participating in related experiential activities in a seamless, cumulative, and sequential P-12 curriculum help students to develop artistic literacy, as well as many of the desirable competencies, qualities, and strategies necessary for success (as articulated in the “Massachusetts Definition of College and Career Readiness”) as they make the transition from the elementary and secondary school course of study to the college undergraduate curriculum (13-16) and to the workplace.
6. The AEAC requests an ESE response to our final reports from June, 2012, 2013, and 2014.
7. The AEAC recommends that ESE develops a specific budget to support arts education in the Commonwealth, including professional development institutes for curriculum development, arts assessment, and other key strategies for quality arts education.
8. The AEAC recommends that the ESE clarifies to districts that it is permissible for districts to use funding from Federal Title grants, Chapter 70, and other appropriate education funding sources to support arts education.
9. The AEAC suggests establishing a task force to look at combining media arts and some 40 courses listed under technology that are really media arts courses in alignment of NCAS

10. The Council recommends funding to develop a resource document, that lists resources for both domain-specific arts education as well as arts integration with and through other subjects and disciplines

Additional Recommendations: These were recommendations made in the 2012-13 AEAC Annual Report. They remain important and not yet fully achieved, therefore, we include them once again in our 2014-15 annual report.

1. Elevate MassCore from a “recommended” to the “default” high school course of study.
2. Support the inclusion of an admission requirement for Massachusetts public universities (four year institutions) of a minimum of one year in visual and/or performing arts at the high school level (dance, music, theatre/drama, visual art), thereby aligning state university entrance requirements with the MassCore course of study.
3. Require arts coursework or professional development in arts and learning for licensure for all administrators who hire or evaluate arts educators.
4. Evaluation of arts educators should primarily be based on assessment of arts-specific student learning outcomes in the area(s) of the teacher’s licensure, rather than primarily on their students’ performance on standardized state examinations in Common Core subjects of ELA, math, and other subjects.
5. Develop and provide enhanced professional development for arts educators and classroom teachers to promote collaboration through aligning their work across content areas.
6. Develop and provide enhanced professional development for arts educators regarding practices in curriculum development, student assessment, instructional practices, and new national standards.
7. Implement the recommendations of the Massachusetts Commission to Develop an Index of Creative and Innovative Education in the Public Schools (published by ESE in September, 2012).

IV. COUNCIL DETAILS

Department Administrator: Nina Schlikin, Director, Office of Literacy and the Humanities

Department Council Liaison: Lurline V. Muñoz-Bennett, Office of Literacy & Humanities, Curriculum & Instruction

Co-Chairpersons: Charles E. Combs and Jonathan C. Rappaport

Members of the 2014-2015 Council:

Charles Combs, Ph.D., Theatre and Drama Educator, Higher Education Consultant; Liberal Arts Chair Emeritus, Berklee College of Music

Diane Daily, Education Programs Manager, Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC)

Beth Delforge, Pre-K -12 Visual & Performing Arts Coordinator, Andover Public Schools

Lynn Feldman, VP Networking & Advocacy, Arts|Learning

Jennifer Fidler, Visual Arts Liaison, Wilmington Public Schools

Priscilla Kane Hellweg, Executive/Artistic Director of Enchanted Circle Theater, Holyoke

Julie Jaron, Director of Visual & Performing Arts, Springfield Public Schools

Sandra Nicolucci, Ed.D. Supervisor of Student Teaching, Music Education, Boston University

Myran Parker Brass, *Executive* Director for the Arts, Boston Public Schools

Jonathan Rappaport, Executive Director Arts|Learning, and Director & Faculty, Kodály Music Institute at Anna Maria College, Paxton

Council Meeting Dates: June 25, 2015

DIGITAL LEARNING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Annual Report

I. INTRODUCTION

The 2013 virtual schools legislation ([Chapter 379 of the Acts of 2012, An Act Establishing Commonwealth Virtual Schools](#)¹) created the Digital Learning Advisory Council (DLAC) to advise the Board and the Commissioner on:

- The development of policies guiding virtual schools, supplemental online courses, education technology, and other matters related to virtual education.
- The identification of best practices to encourage online education to complement classroom instruction in district schools.
- The assessment of the appropriateness of the fee that the Department may retain for the administration of the virtual school program.

The law specifies that the DLAC include representatives from various statewide education organizations, districts and schools including virtual schools (i.e., teacher, administrator, parent), higher education, and non-profit and technology companies. The current DLAC includes a broad range of experts who meet these criteria.

II. 2014-2015 WORK OF THE COUNCIL

Three subcommittees advised the Office of Digital Learning in the areas of virtual learning, blended learning, and chief technology officer credentialing.

Subcommittee on Virtual Learning: Jeffrey Elliott, Chair

The subcommittee provided feedback on the revision of the virtual school certificate renewal application, including: how the school supports students' learning coaches in grades where adult involvement is high; to providing specific examples of student performance tasks aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks; providing additional information on student attendance and participation; and clarify the percentage of curriculum materials in each subject and grade level that are in hardcopy and digital formats. The subcommittee also reviewed Massachusetts' [2014 Digital Learning Now Report Card](#), identified areas where the Commonwealth received low scores, and made recommendations to improve them.

Subcommittee on Blended Learning: Evelyn Thoren and Michael Horn, Co-Chairs

The subcommittee provided feedback on the design of the annual technology survey, including: collecting data by school type; soliciting feedback regarding online digital readiness tools; and collecting information about asset tracking tools, the district's total technology budget, blended learning, implementation of digital content, learning management systems, open educational resources, online Advanced Placement courses, and online/blended credit recovery courses and dual enrollment programs.

Subcommittee on Chief Technology Officer (CTO) Credentialing: Annamaria Schrimpf, Chair

The subcommittee discussed the recruitment, hiring, and development of technology leaders. Members of the subcommittee concurred that strong technology leaders will possess the technical expertise to efficiently and effectively manage enterprise technology systems as well as the educational expertise to enhance curriculum, instruction, and assessment with technology.

¹ <http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2012/Chapter379>

The subcommittee researched extant credentialing programs such as that provided by the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) a national professional association for district technology leaders. The subcommittee made recommendations for raising the skillsets and qualifications of technology leaders (provided below).

III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Virtual school renewal:** The DLAC recommended that the Department collect the following information through the virtual school certificate renewal application: support for learning coaches in grades where adult involvement is high; specific examples of student performance tasks aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks; student attendance and participation; and the percentage of curriculum materials in each subject and grade level that are in hardcopy or digital formats.
2. **Digital citizenship course:** The DLAC recommended that the completion of an online or blended course in digital citizenship be included in the MassCore recommendations, and that the course must be aligned to the state's Computer Science and Digital Literacy Standards (to be adopted).
3. **Course access:** The DLAC recommends that students be able to take credit-bearing courses offered by a provider other than the school district, with the approval, supervision, and evaluation of a Massachusetts-licensed educator from the school district, if the student is unable to access the same course in the district for whatever reason.
4. **Credit for virtual coursework:** The DLAC recommended allowing students to earn credit for online courses taken outside the school if the coursework is approved, supervised, and evaluated by a Massachusetts-licensed educator from the school district in which the student is enrolled.
5. **License for district technology leaders:** The DLAC recommended that the Department offer a voluntary educator license specific to district technology leaders and offer multiple pathways to earning this credential, one of which is based on CoSN's national certification program. The license would help increase the supply of Massachusetts educators who possess the technical expertise to efficiently and effectively manage enterprise technology systems as well as the educational expertise to enhance curriculum, instruction, and assessment with technology.

IV. COUNCIL DETAILS

Department Administrator: Kenneth Klau, Director, Office of Digital Learning

Department Liaison: Jennifer Gwatkin, Office of Digital Learning

Co-Chairpersons: Barbara Treacy and Peter Sanchioni

Members of the 2014-2015 Council:

Kevin Bauman, Senior Director of Product Management, Penn Foster

Wiley Cordone, Online Content Developer and Parent of Virtual School Student, Remilon LLC

Dr. Edward W. Costa II, Superintendent, Lenox Public Schools

Melissa Dodd, Chief of Staff, Boston Public Schools

Jeffrey A. Elliott, President/CEO, The VHS Collaborative

Amy A. Gracia, English and Special Education Teacher, Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School

Fred Haas, Teacher of English, Hopkinton High School

Michael Horn, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovation

Sam Catherine Johnston, Research Scientist, Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST)

Justin Reich, L. Menschel, HarvardX Research Fellow, Berkman Center for Internet & Society
Fellow Harvard University

Peter Sanchioni, Superintendent, Natick Public Schools

Annamaria Schrimpf, Director of Education Technology, Minuteman Regional High School

Kyle W. Shachmut, Technology Consultant, Lynch School of Education, Boston College

Evelyn S. Thoren, Vice-Chair, Chelmsford School Committee

Paul Toner, President, Massachusetts Teachers Association (former)

Barbara Treacy, Director, EdTech Leaders Online, Education Development Center

Council Meeting Dates:

Full Council: September 24, 2014, October 30, 2014, February 24, 2015, April 15, 2015, June 17, 2015

Subcommittee on Virtual Learning: October 30, 2014, December 16, 2014, January 23, 2015, March 31, 2015, May 18, 2015

Subcommittee on Blended Learning: October 30, 2014, January 6, 2015, April 15, 2015

Subcommittee on Chief Technology Officer Credentialing: October 30, 2014, December 19, 2014

**DISTRICT AND SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSISTANCE ADVISORY
COUNCIL
Annual Report**

I. INTRODUCTION

The 15-member Advisory Council on School and District Accountability and Assistance (AAAC) advises the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education on matters pertaining to the development and implementation of the Commonwealth's School and District Accountability and Assistance system. The Council reviews and advises the Department and the Board on the policies and practices of the Centers for Targeted Assistance and School and District Accountability. In the 2014-15 year, the Council continued to make recommendations related to Level 3, 4 and 5 schools and district and targeted assistance strategies. In addition, the Council provided feedback on various projects within the Accountability and Assistance Center, including the Planning, Research, and Delivery Systems, Charter School and School Redesign, and the District and School Turnaround.

II. 2014-2015 WORK OF THE COUNCIL

Overview

The work of the Council continued to reflect the current context in which the Department is focused: implementation of accountability and assistance efforts and adapting these efforts as needed to new school and district models. The Council continued to identify important questions and considerations relative to implementation of various initiatives.

Priority areas of focus centered on refining practices and policies that the Council has been helping to advise over the past several years. These areas include:

- District Accountability Reviews
- ESEA Flexibility Waiver renewal
- School Redesign Grant proposals
- Charter School and District Accountability Measures
- Level 5 District Receivership and turnaround plan implementation

Activities:

The Council met three times since SY 2013-14. Topics of discussion included:

- District Accountability Reviews
 - Implementation and delivery of the system
- ESEA Flexibility Waiver renewal
 - Adaptations for English language learners
- School Redesign Grant planning
 - State-determined model
- Level 5 District Planning
 - Stakeholder communication and engagement
- District and charter school accountability
 - Potential aggregate metrics

III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council offered specific input on the various topics outlined above. Recommendations included the following:

District Accountability Reviews: The Council offered guidance and recommendations on the district accountability review process – how to improve it, areas to consider, and overall implementation successes. The Council provided a variety of thoughtful responses including: at the close of the review process presenting a set of emerging findings for the district and ESE to allow both parties to engage in a series of conversations that encourage growth and learning; formatting the written report with color-coded dashboards in order for Superintendents to easily prioritize next steps; and providing stakeholders (teachers, parents/families, community members) with an update of the report’s findings.

ESEA Flexibility Waiver Renewal: The Council offered input on a specific set of adaptations that ESE was considering in the ESEA renewal application. The Council discussed the implications for districts that do not meet the new proposed proficiency standards; the negative connotations associated with a Level 3 school or district rating and the unnecessary level of panic it brings; and ESE’s continued involvement with each school/district. In response to proposed adaptations to English language learner criteria, Council members suggested adding growth indicators related to a student’s length of stay in the country and considering increasing the amount of time a student should be present in the country before administering ACCESS testing.

School Redesign Grant – State-Determined Model: The Council offered recommendations on ESE’s proposed State-Determined Model for the 2016 School Redesign Grant (SRG) competition. The Council encouraged the plan to enhance school based autonomy, focus on professional development, and specify exact criteria for principal job security. The Council also urged the model to encourage schools to explicitly outline a plan for teacher collaboration.

Level 5 District Planning: The Council advised members of the Office of District and School Turnaround on matters pertaining to engaging stakeholders with the Holyoke Public Schools’ receivership. Council members recommended stakeholders and community members be involved in the decision making process rather than relying on them to be messengers of already-made decisions; making materials accessible to all parties (including the languages in which they are translated and how they are distributed) in order to avoid unnecessary barriers; having members of the receivership team go out into the community to meet with parents where it is accessible for them; and partnering with key leaders in various communities/neighborhoods to help spread any information.

District and Charter School Accountability: The Council responded to a proposed idea to aggregate Horace Mann (HM) charter school results in the accountability metrics for districts. In general, Council members were not opposed to the idea; however, many wanted clarification around how the information would be presented and how accessible it would be to various stakeholders. Council members recommended that aggregate data should be compiled on a requested basis (i.e., the decision to aggregate should be made at the local level).

IV. COUNCIL DETAILS

Department Administrator: Dr. Russell Johnston, Senior Associate Commissioner

Department Liaison: Lauren Woo, Office of School and District Turnaround

Chairperson: Meg Mayo-Brown

Members of the 2014-2015 Advisory Council:

Valerie Annear, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, East Longmeadow Public Schools

Hardin Coleman, Dean and Professor of Counseling and Human Development, Boston University School of Education

John D'Auria, President, Teachers21

Kirk Downing, Principal, Brown Elementary School (Natick)

Elizabeth Freedman, Principal Greater Lawrence Technical High School

Kristen Lepore, Vice President of Government Affairs, Associated Industries of Massachusetts

Janine Matho, Deputy Director, Massachusetts Charter Public School Association

Meg Mayo-Brown, Superintendent, Fall River Public Schools

Kathryn McDermott, Associate Professor of Education and Public Policy, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Alexandra Oliver-Davila, Executive Director, Sociedad Latina

David Riley, Executive Director, Urban Special Educational Leadership Collaborative, EDC

Tari Thomas, Superintendent, Ralph C. Mahar Regional School District

Elizabeth Shevlin Tripathi, Education Policy Specialist, Massachusetts Teachers Association

Jason Williams, Vice President of Expansion and External Affairs; Massachusetts Executive Director, Stand for Children

Council Meeting Dates: October 29, 2014 January 21, 2015, June 17, 2015

EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Annual Report

I. INTRODUCTION

The Educational Personnel Advisory Council (EPAC or Council) advises Commissioner Chester and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education on issues pertaining to educational personnel. This year the Council met four times and focused on topics including licensure re-design, performance assessment for leaders (MA PAL), licensure customer service improvements, new Professional Standards for Teachers, and research synthesis on Department initiatives.

II. 2014-2015 WORK OF THE COUNCIL

Based on the EPAC member's feedback from the previous year, it was decided that the 2014-15 year should be spent identifying and focusing on a select number of personnel topics rather than try to deal with a myriad of issues simultaneously. At the September 18 meeting, four possible topics were presented and discussed: recruitment, particularly for diversity and high need areas; licensure redesign; educator evaluation, particularly as it relates to principal capacity and the Status of Educators Workforce Report. After the members discussed the topics, it was decided to concentrate on recruitment and licensure re-design.

The next meeting was held on January 7 at the Academy of the Pacific Rim Public Charter School in Hyde Park. ESE representatives shared the progress on Massachusetts State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators and Educator Quality Profile. It was acknowledged that the definition of an excellent educator is difficult and complex. The membership recommended that the Department look at support structures, leadership, school culture, working conditions, parent and community support, MCAS score growth, and their relation to the equity gap. The Department committed to share the Equity Plan with the members when completed.

There was a lively discussion about the current licensure system. Much of the discussion surrounded the tiers of licensure and whether they could be compressed or even move to one tier. As has occurred in past meetings, the members expressed concern about the preliminary license and whether these educators are properly prepared to be the teacher of record in the classroom. It was suggested that districts be encouraged to partner with higher education programs to help increase the supply of teachers in high need fields.

The meeting on March 18 at the Department began with a review and discussion on District Determined Measures (DDM's) used to measure educator effectiveness. The priorities of the evaluation framework are to place student learning at the center, promote growth and development, recognize excellence, set a high bar for tenure, and shorten timelines for improvement. The frameworks are solid but continue to be a work in progress.

As part of the discussion on potential changes to the licensure regulations, strengths and weaknesses of the four licensure tiers were identified along with recommendations for improvement. The suggestions for improvement were:

Preliminary- Require some pedagogical knowledge and shorten the time period allowed under the license.

Initial- Develop a means to allow education and experience to satisfy the requirements for licensure.

Temporary- Extend the validity period of the license.

Professional- Make the license one that signifies mastery and have more flexible requirements geared to enhance an individual's skills.

The final meeting was held on June 3 at the ESE office. The council reviewed metrics identifying the progress made in the Licensure Office regarding the turnaround time for processing initial licensure and licensure renewal applications and the customer call center.

The council discussed the field trial for MA-PAL requirement for principal licensure, involving over six hundred people during the 2014-15 school year. Based on a review of the materials submitted during the field trial, a cut score will be established for future candidates for the principal license. It was suggested that since there was no cut score used for the field trial completers that their licenses be issued quickly in order to allow them to apply for vacant positions as licensed principals. It was also suggested that it would be helpful to track pre and post MA-PAL principal licenses issued to see what the impact is on the supply of candidates.

Finally, research was reviewed with the Council regarding the following: curriculum framework implementation, educator evaluation, PARCC, and district assessment practices. The Department will be seeking more information from districts regarding integrating implementation across initiatives.

III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council anticipates that the input provided to the Department will be considered in the development of an enhanced licensure system and recruitment initiatives that will provide students in the Commonwealth with licensed educators that will prepare all students for success in the world that awaits them after high school. Possible areas of EPAC's work in the future may include the continuing discussion on licensure redesign, the Status of Educator Workforce review, and state equity planning.

IV. COUNCIL DETAILS

Department Administrator: Heather Peske, Associate Commissioner, Educator Quality

Department Liaison: George Sheehan, Educator Licensure Office

Chair: Donald McCallion

Members of the 2014-2015 Advisory Council:

Angela Allen, Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents

Katherine Hibbard, Associate Professor, Framingham State College

Desiree Ivey, Director of Teacher Training and Recruitment, Shady Hill School

Donald McCallion, Executive Director, Massachusetts Association of School Personnel

Administrators

Kathleen McNamara- Massachusetts Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

Daniel Murphy, Director of Education Policy and Programs, American Federation of Teachers-
Massachusetts

Talmadge Nardi, Teacher, Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter School

Richard Pearson, Associate Executive Director, Massachusetts Secondary School Administrators
Association

Elizabeth Shevlin, Massachusetts Teacher Association

Council Meeting Dates: October 1, 2014, January 7, 2015, March 18, 2015, June 3, 2015

GIFTED AND TALENTED ADVISORY COUNCIL

Annual Report

I. INTRODUCTION

The Gifted and Talented Advisory Council (GTAC) explores and recommends actionable strategies to address the special needs of Academically Advanced, (beyond grade level students) and "gifted underachievers" throughout the Commonwealth. This Council only considers strategies that are compelling, measurable, fiscally responsible, deployable, and sustainable in its support of providing a world class education for all students within the Commonwealth, in every school, across every city and town, and from *all* economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds.

The Council was charged with collecting information on district and school best practices and integration models. After collection and review of the information, the resources would be submitted to ESE for posting on the gifted and talented education advisory council page of the ESE website. The Council clearly heard from participants that there was a need for more information on options for parents and strategies for teachers. During the 2013 - 2014 term the Council prepared a sample instrument (District/School Survey on Beyond Grade Level Programs) as an example of a survey that could be used to collect practices used in schools and services offered to students. The Council still believes that this information will be very beneficial to parents and teachers looking for options to serve beyond grade level children.

The Council continues to review practices from other states. Council members are aware that Massachusetts educators are serving many of the academically advanced without the support and guidance offered by many other states as is indicated by the [2012-2013 State of the States in Gifted Education](#) report provided by National Association for Gifted Children.

II. 2014-2015 WORK OF THE COUNCIL

Recognizing the burdens placed on districts as they increased the rigor of their academic programs to align with the 2010 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and prepare for the PARCC assessment, the Council felt that it was best not to divert attention to the data collection efforts recommended. Given that, the Council's activity was minimal this term as we waited for a time when the data collection effort could begin in earnest, without so many conflicting commitments and priorities. The Council stands by its prior recommendation and seeks ESE support in collecting and disseminating best practices that are currently being used to serve the academically advanced student population throughout the Commonwealth.

III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The *District/School Survey on Beyond Grade Level Programs* which was prepared during the Council's last term should be deployed by DESE. Collecting this minimal information on practices already working in districts and schools across the Commonwealth would be a major step forward, enhancing the knowledgebase and fueling the very necessary conversation about providing replicable, innovative resources for our students that are academically advanced, gifted and talented, and gifted underachievers. The Council therefore urges DESE to deploy a *District/School Survey on Beyond Grade Level Programs*.

The Council strongly recommends that DESE inform all districts of the initiative to collect relevant and helpful information on programs that are working throughout the state to serve gifted and beyond grade level students. Therefore, we also highly recommend that DESE directly

task districts (including charter schools) to respond to the survey by the end of September 2015. This data, once collected, will serve as input so that the Council can effectively and efficiently pull together and disseminate information on the strategies and practices in use which are found to be compelling, measurable, fiscally responsible, deployable, and sustainable.

The Council believes it is in the interest of parents, teachers, and most importantly beyond grade level students, to have a centralized and accessible information resource that would allow those concerned with serving these learners, to find alternatives, options and strategies derived from actual practices within schools. This collection and dissemination effort will also hopefully fuel the conversation and launch the Commonwealth's efforts, to better and more systematically serve beyond grade level learners.

The Council respectfully requests to receive a response from DESE on this recommendation to deploy a survey as recommended.

IV. COUNCIL DETAILS

Department Administrator: Nina Schlikin, Director Literacy and Humanities

Department Liaison: Lurline Munoz-Bennett, Ph.D Arts Education and Equity Coordinator

Chairperson: Tyrone Mowatt

Members of the 2014-2015 Advisory Council

Donna Astion, Teacher, Berkshire Hills Regional Schools

Janis Baron, Director, Kaleidoscope Institute for Thinking Excellence (KITE); Teachers 21

Tyrone Mowatt, Managing Director, Ed Inquiry, LLC

Michele Proude, Parent, Hull Public Schools

Rachelle Toomey, Systems Engineer, BAE Systems

Aimee Yermish, PsyD, clinical psychologist, educational therapist, da Vinci Learning Center

Council Meeting Dates: Did not meet formally

**PARENT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND INVOLVEMENT ADVISORY
COUNCIL
Annual Report**

I. INTRODUCTION

The focus of the work the Parent and Community Education and Involvement (PCEI) Advisory Council completed this past school year was based on the recommendations of the PCEI from the previous school year:

- *Review the Massachusetts Family, School and Community Partnership Fundamentals (Fundamentals) for grammatical errors and update references in the introduction section².*
- *Collaborate with ESE staff working on the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation (Educator Evaluation) to complete and extend the Side-by-Side Comparisons to the Fundamentals, and specifically to develop a tool for educators to collect evidence of proficiency in Standard III: Family and Community Engagement³.*
- *Work with ESE staff to develop content for the Family and Community engagement section of the ESE website and complete recommendations on updates and changes to the web pages on family engagement resources.*

II. 2014-2015 WORK OF THE COUNCIL

The following are the highlights of the work that the PCEI Advisory Council engaged in during the 2014-2015 school year:

- A working group of the PCEI was created to review the Fundamentals and recommend changes to the introduction of the document. This work was completed and presented to the PCEI Advisory Council during its February 26, 2015 meeting. The Advisory Council unanimously approved the changes which included: updated references in the introduction, grammatical corrections in the Fundamentals themselves, and rewrites of two indicators to increase clarity.
- Ron Noble, ESE Manager Educator Evaluation, met with the PCEI twice and participated in several conference calls during the course of the school year to provide feedback and ongoing support to the PCEI's work on a template to serve as a guide to educators on collecting evidence of effective family engagement practice. Mr. Noble facilitated communication between the PCEI and the ESE vendor who was designing and creating materials for this purpose. Several drafts of a template were developed and refined. Two samples of effective family engagement practice using the templates were developed on parent-teacher conferences and early childhood home visits. This tool and the examples were presented at two conferences this year: Title I Dissemination Project Annual Conference, March 2015, and the ESE sponsored Educator Evaluation Convening, May, 2015. A final draft was completed July, 2015.
- Members of the PCEI provided input to ESE about resources and links to be included on the ESE website about the PCEI and about family engagement.

² <http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/sac/parent/FSCPfundamentals.pdf>

³ <http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/model/PartIII.pdf>

III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The PCEI recommends that it continue its collaboration with the Center for Educator Effectiveness in using the template to develop additional samples of effective family engagement practice to make available to educators. Also, the PCEI recommends that this template be used and samples be developed for specialized instructional support personnel, building administrators, and superintendents. This work could be done in conjunction with other stakeholder groups such as the Principal and Teacher Leader Cabinets.
2. The PCEI recommends that it continue to collaborate with ESE personnel to update and revise information and resources for the ESE website on family engagement and resources for families.
3. There are many emerging resources, tools and initiatives being developed by various working stakeholder groups both locally, statewide and nationally. The PCEI recommends that its members explore and review the literature and research on family engagement in order to stay current with best practices and to determine future directives for its work. Possible areas to consider are:
 - Dual Capacity Building Family School Partnership Framework (promoted by the US Department of Education)
 - Use of family feedback as evidence in the Educator Evaluation
 - Family engagement practice within community schools and other community engagement opportunities
 - Inclusion of family engagement in the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization efforts
4. The PCEI strongly encourages the recruitment of new members to this Advisory Council. Five long-standing members are leaving the PCEI after serving two three-year terms and a one-year extension. New PCEI members will bring new ideas, interests, and enthusiasm to continue the important work of promoting family engagement in all schools and districts across the Commonwealth.

IV. COUNCIL DETAILS

Department Administrator: Jolanta Conway, State Director, Adult Basic Education

Department Liaison: Kathleen Rodriguez

Chairperson: Margaret O'Hare

Members of the 2014-2015 Advisory Council:

Evelyn Bouley, Title I/MCAS Assistant: Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical School

Kristine Coffey-Donahue, Parent, Attorney: Law Office of Kristine D. Coffey-Donahue

Clayton L. Connor, Assistant Principal, Deerfield Public Schools

Patricia Gorham, Director of SOAR: Swampscott Public Schools

Kathleen Jones, President, CEO and Founder: TTT Mentor Program, Cambridge

JoAnne McCormick, Director of Guidance: Dedham Public Schools

Kathleen Meagher, Transition Specialist/Clinical Psychologist: Shore Educational Collaborative and Lynn Community Health Center

Margaret O'Hare, Family and Community Engagement Team at the Federation for Children with Special Needs

Stuart Peskin, Executive Director: Title I Dissemination Project

Michelle Sylvaria, Humanities Department Head, Morton Middle School, Fall River

Council Meeting Dates: December 19, 2014, January 13, 2015, February 26, 2015, March 20, 2015, June 4, 2015

RACIAL IMBALANCE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Annual Report

I. INTRODUCTION

The 1965 Massachusetts' Racial Imbalance Act provided integrated education in schools where de facto segregation had traditionally separated the school attendance of students based on neighborhood and race. This policy was the first northern response to the 1954 Brown court decision which abolished legally segregated education in public schools in the Southern portions of the United States. The Racial Imbalance Advisory Council was developed to ensure that the tenet of racial integration continues and is protected within the Commonwealth's public schools.

The intent of this legislation was to address the needs of school communities which were determined to be racially balanced and at the same time DESE provided the impetus to create magnet schools and programs with a diverse staff that were culturally competent and were trained to present effective curriculum and instruction to all students. These magnet school sites and programs ensured the integration of students and their families in the school decision-making process.

Although this work began more than 60 years ago and many educational successes were realized, there is still a need to focus on the successful integration of all public schools within Massachusetts and the effective education of all the Commonwealth's students, regardless of race, class, socioeconomic status and the home language. In 2014, DESE renewed its commitment to the cultural competency training of all school staff, increased diversity within public school staff and decreased out-of-school time for all students, and particularly students of color, through the Massachusetts Advocacy for Diversity in Education (MADE) Task Force on which three members of RIAC served.

II. 2014-2015 WORK OF THE COUNCIL

As is RIAC's custom, areas which are race-related which may affect students in the Commonwealth are addressed by the group as they are identified. This year, when RIAC members learned that students in middle schools across the Commonwealth exercised their civil liberties by leaving their classrooms during school time, without parental permission, to demonstrate with college students concerning the Ferguson, Missouri incident, the membership alerted the Commissioner and advised that he should address the movement in the Commissioner's weekly communication with districts, this task was accomplished in a timely manner.

In the spring, a RIAC member brought to the group the 2014 Charter School report and after careful review, it was noted that the report did not provide racial demographics of students or staff. The group agreed to schedule a meeting in the coming year with Charter Schools' administrator.

The primary focus this year was the Commissioner's charge to the Racial Imbalance Advisory Council to identify culturally competent best practices in public school districts in Massachusetts. The Best Practices Findings include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Districts that assign the best teachers to the children who need the most help to reach proficiency.

- Districts that provide wraparound social services and enhanced learning time through the provision of health care for all students and child care facilities in the high school for young families.
- Districts and schools that address food insecurity in meaningful ways, e.g. through universal breakfast and lunch programs. One school has found ways to provide food when students are not in school through the provision of food vouchers for two weekend meals each weekend and gift certificates at supermarkets for school vacations.
- Districts that provide annual student data reports that are community friendly and accurately capture the academic performance and social inclusion of all students. This data is disaggregated by race, gender, socioeconomic status, ELL and special education and honest discussions and authentic improvement plans are the result.
- Districts that collect and analyze student outcome data and can demonstrate that student improvement is consistent and steady in standardized testing, grade point average, and inclusion in higher level courses.
- School districts that ensure that all students graduate career and college ready. Some district have achieved a 100% proficiency rate and a 100% acceptance of special education portfolios for their student population through intensive, mandated skill classes which address literacy and math.
- Districts that provide interdisciplinary teacher and administrative teams across grade levels and schools to study and analyze student outcomes and make appropriate adjustments to curriculum and instruction in a timely manner.
- Districts that have made provisions to extend the school day and school year to address the enrichment, remedial and credit recovery needs of students through the provision of before and after school help and summer programs that are directly related to the academic needs of students.
- Districts that provide Art Programs and foreign language immersion programs and/or schools to provide a culturally competent school population.
- Districts that support STEM educational efforts to ensure that students are proficient in science, technology, engineering and math. These efforts will allow students to compete on a local, national and international platform.
- Districts that provide for the development of student civic pride and responsibility. For example, children who are twelve years old in Cambridge have been given the right to vote in some budgetary matters by the City Council.
- Districts that provide cultural proficiency professional development for all school committee members, school administration, teachers and paraprofessionals.
- Districts that fully incorporate the DESE evaluation tool for superintendents, principals and teachers will be able to accurately measure skills which relate to access and equity, culturally competent curriculum development and delivery, and family engagement. Culturally competent administrators will be able to provide reasonable and reachable goals for the staff they evaluate.
 - There have been concerns that although the cultural proficiency measurement has been included within the evaluation structure, that too many administrators do not have adequate skills to monitor and make appropriate suggestions for improvement for staff they evaluate.
- Districts which have incorporated the tenets within the Coordinated Program Review that recommends cultural proficiency training so that all teachers and administrators can determine whether materials, curricula and tests pass an anti-bias review.

- Districts that have supported high school principals and their staff in providing the professional development necessary to increase the racial and socioeconomic diversity of high school students in AP classes.
- Districts that welcome all children and families, regardless of race or class, with kindness and care and provide family liaisons to assist with the inclusion of families in the development of policy, school improvement plans and the sharing of accurate student outcome data so that they can make informed decisions. This might be accomplished through Parent Academies.
- Districts that provide universal preschool to ensure that literacy and math skills are on grade level when they enter first grade.
- Schools that help each student to develop an Individual Academic Improvement Plan to ensure that he/she is college and career ready.
- High Schools that provide appropriate dual enrollment programs and a dual system of academic and vocational educational programs will ensure that all students are academically challenged and prepared with a life skill.
- Districts which assign a staff person, in addition to the adjustment or guidance counselor, to follow each student to assess academic and social progress in middle school and high school until graduation to ensure that students know at least two interested adults in addition to their guidance counselors to realize academic and social success in high school and after graduation.
- High Schools that provide each high school graduate support during the first two years of post-high school career and college readiness activities to ensure that he/she both matriculates and progresses academically.
- Districts and schools that develop and provide diversity plans and hire educators of color in school administration, the teaching and the paraprofessional staff.
- Districts and schools that have decreased suspensions and expulsions for all students in general, and for boys of color, in particular.
- Districts and schools that provide common planning time for teachers to determine the best ways to ensure that all children are consistently learning and to make adjustments to curriculum and instruction in a timely manner.
- Districts that provide the development and maintenance of affinity groups that intrinsically understand the academic and social student issues that are evident and support each other in the resolution of those concerns.
- Districts that provide strong mentoring programs that are demonstrated by increased retention rates of new principals and teachers and formally pair new teachers with Master Teachers who teach similar content areas.

III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

It is hoped that the sharing of these best practices, which if effectively implemented should lead to student academic improvement, will serve as a guide for educators who are dedicated to creating culturally competent school environments.

The Council recommends that:

- School districts have the opportunity to share practices so that districts that are experiencing similar challenges may benefit from proven positive outcomes.
- DESE continues to be the front runner in providing educational information concerning race and class as it affects students in the commonwealth and in the nation.
- Through the Coordinated Program Review for districts to disaggregate and study student outcome data according to race, gender, home language, and socio-economic status to

provide an annual community friendly report that will assist families in the support of their children's academic journey in public schools within the commonwealth.

IV. COUNCIL DETAILS

Department Administrator: Nina Schlikin, Director of Literacy and Humanities

Department Liaison: Lurline Muñoz-Bennett

Co- Chairpersons: Jorgelina Abate-Vaughn and Kahris White-McLaughlin

Members of the 2014-2015 Council:

Jorgelina Abbate-Vaughn, Assistant Professor, UMASS Boston; Wellesley Community Group

Gina Chirichigno, Outreach Coordinator, National Coalition on School Diversity

Rachel Bowen Coblyn, Human Resources Director, Amherst Public Schools

Nealon Jaynes-Lewis, Community Organizer,

Kahris White-McLaughlin, Affirmative Action Officer, Cambridge Public Schools

Christine Murray, Budget Analyst, Wheelock College

Jenee Palmer Ramos, Brookline Public Schools

Council Meeting Dates: December 22, 2014, March 12, 2015, May 29, 2015, and June 19, 2015

**SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING AND MATHEMATICS (STEM)
ADVISORY COUNCIL
Annual Report**

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a growing effort to prepare graduates from high school and college with the necessary STEM skills to meet the needs of an innovation-based economy. A significant majority of Americans and Fortune 1000 STEM company CEOs believe pre-college STEM education should be a national priority for schools and the country.⁴ In 2013, Massachusetts published *A Foundation for the Future MA Plan for Excellence in STEM Education (Version 2.0): Expanding the Pipeline for All*.

Key to these efforts is an assumption that a strong foundation of STEM instruction and learning in the preschool and elementary grades supports STEM instruction and learning at higher and more sophisticated levels. Just as you must build a house starting with a strong foundation, each grade builds on the prior one in terms of concepts and skills. Educators must work to build a coherent STEM curriculum across grades to ensure every student achieves a level of STEM literacy and college and career readiness.

To address disparities between student preparation and job skills employers need, STEM instruction that helps students develop as critical thinkers and innovators should begin in early elementary school and continue through high school graduation and college.

II. 2014-2015 WORK OF THE COUNCIL

STEM Advisory Council was charged with:

Providing recommendations and input on how the Department and other policy organizations can support, develop, and stimulate coherent STEM programming through K-12 education, particularly during the transition to revised science and technology/engineering standards.

This year the Council coordinated its work with the Governor's STEM Advisory Council to align recommendations across the state. The work of the Council during 2014-2015 focused on articulating key elements of STEM education programs, college and career readiness, and implementation of revised science and technology/engineering (STE) standards.

Key elements of STEM education programs: The Council reviewed, discussed and provided feedback on a draft STEM definition initially developed by the Governor's STEM Advisory Council. It read as follows:

STEM is the integration and application of skills, competencies and knowledge in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics resulting in the ability to identify problems, ask thoughtful questions based on observations and create innovative solutions to those problems. The skills, competencies and knowledge are acquired through formal and informal experiential based learning approaches that promote creativity, curiosity, exploration and collaboration leading to an engaged and informed citizenry. A STEM

⁴ STEM Education, Science Literacy and the Innovation Workforce in America: Bayer Corporation's 2012 Making Science Make Sense report

literate citizenry leads to personal growth and advances global competitiveness and economic and social prosperity.

As a result of review and discussion the Council suggests that the definition focus on the following elements:

- the integration, intersection and application of skills, competencies, and knowledge
- the cross-connections in and among science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
- simplifying the definition to allow for maximum flexibility without constricting definition
- the inclusion of any additional details about the *how* and *why* of STEM integration should be provided in supporting text to supplement the definition, not in the definition itself

A number of suggestions and edits were incorporated into the revised definition.

College and career readiness: The Council also reviewed a draft STE College and Career Readiness definition initially developed as part of the science STE standards revision process:

Essential Competencies: Learning

Students who are college and career ready in Science and Technology/Engineering will demonstrate the academic knowledge, skills, and practices necessary to enter into and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing science, engineering or technical courses; certificate or workplace training programs requiring an equivalent level of science; or a comparable entry-level science or technical course at the institution. College and career ready students in Science and Technology/Engineering will be academically prepared to:

- *Analyze scientific phenomena and solve technical problems in real-world contexts using relevant science and engineering practices and disciplinary core ideas.*
- *Use appropriate scientific and technical reasoning to support, critique, and communicate scientific and technical claims and decisions.*
- *Appropriately apply relevant mathematics in scientific and technical contexts.*

The Council discussed the value of and need for including this definition in the Massachusetts' Definition of College and Career Readiness.⁵

Implementation of revised STE standards: The Council reviewed and helped refine the plans for a Science Ambassadors program that provides support to MA districts on implementation of revised STE standards. The Ambassadors will engage with districts to provide an overview of key shifts in the revised standards, considerations for districts as they transition to standards implementation, and suggested resources that illustrate curriculum, instruction, and assessments that result in student learning of the standards. Ambassadors will also help facilitate regional district collaboration focused on sharing resources and strategies for STE implementation. Suggestions were considered and edits to the plan were provided.

Lastly, at each meeting Council members received updates on state STEM developments, including the revised draft STE standards, PARCC, and the development of draft Digital Literacy and Computer Science standards.

⁵ <http://www.mass.edu/library/documents/2013College&CareerReadinessDefinition.pdf>

III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council urges the Department of Elementary and Secondary education implement the following recommendations:

1. Adopt a definition of STEM programs that is simple and focused on a few characteristic elements:
STEM is the integration and application of skills, competencies and knowledge in and among the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
2. Include science in the state's definition of college and career readiness (as excerpted above).
3. Increase focus on science and technology/engineering as revised standards are close to completion; support implementation of revised standards across districts PreK through high school. Support and implement the Science Ambassadors initiative and encourage district collaboration for planning and implementation.

While mathematics instruction at early grades has received significant attention in the past 10 years, science and technology/engineering has lagged. Unless we prepare and support elementary teachers to do more than a cursory overview of science and technology/engineering, middle school students will not have the background knowledge and skills to succeed.

“Without a strong foundation in math and science from elementary and secondary school, students may find themselves unprepared to train for and pursue careers in STEM fields. However, science and technology curriculums are often thin in K-12 education, and may not be enough to provide students with a solid foundation in STEM upon which to build,” Sen. Bob Casey wrote in a 2012 new report by the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee.⁶

Research shows that the quality of math and science teaching is the greatest factor in improving student achievement in STEM fields.⁷

IV. COUNCIL DETAILS

Department Administrator: Jacob Foster, Office of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

Department Liaison: Jacob Foster

Chairperson: None (Council members decided to share leadership given so few meetings.)

Members of the 2014-2015 Advisory Council:

Guy Ando, STEM Middle School Teacher, North Andover Public Schools

Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent, Arlington Public Schools

Diane Daily, Education Programs Manager, Massachusetts Cultural Council

Sharon DeCicco, Mathematics High School Teacher, Oakmont Regional Schools

Erika Ebbel Angle, Founder and Executive Chairman, Science from Scientists

Melissa Higgins, Director of Curriculum Development, Museum of Science

Melissa J. Horr Pond, Community Development Planner, City of Quincy

⁶ STEM Education: Preparing for the Jobs of the Future

⁷ Federal STEM Education: 5-Year Strategic Plan

Mark Johnston, Mathematics Department Head, Lynn Public Schools
Christyna Laubach, Science and Technology/Engineering Department Chair, Lenox Public Schools
Eileen Lee, Mathematics Consultant
Llama Maynard, Director of Academic Programs, Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School
Reinier Moquette, Founder & CEO, Advopt Technology Group
Priscilla S. Nelson, Associate Professor of Education, Gordon College
Judith J. Paolucci, Superintendent, Leicester Public Schools
Lauren Provost, Lecturer, Mathematics Department, University of New Hampshire
Janet Sun, Vice President, Symplicity
Amy Winston, Science and Technology/Engineering Department Head, High School STEM Department Head, Newton Public Schools

Council Meeting Dates: December 18, 2014 and April 2, 2015

SPECIAL EDUCATION STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Annual Report

I. INTRODUCTION

The Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) has had an active and productive year. As charged by the Massachusetts General Laws (c. 15, §1G) and federal regulations (34 CFR § 300.167) and the Commissioner, SAC deliberations focus on identifying areas of unmet needs and on developing recommendations.

The existence, mission, and composition of the Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are regulated by federal and state law. The SAC is charged to provide advice to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA 04) requires that the SAC serve to:

- advise on unmet needs within the state in the education of children with disabilities;
- provide comment on proposed rules and regulations involving special education;
- advise on evaluating services and developing responsive plans based on evaluation information and data;
- advise on developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports; and
- advise on development and implementation of policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

Federal law requires that a majority of the members be parents of children with disabilities or individuals with disabilities. Additionally, the membership must include:

- representatives of elementary, secondary, and post-secondary school and programs
- representatives from state agencies involved in child serving activities

II. 2014-2015 WORK OF THE COUNCIL

The council discussed and set annual goals to provide recommendations to the Department. The goals included:

- Extended school year criteria including factors that determine the need for extended school year programs;
- Mental health issues and services for students with disabilities;
- Significant state performance plan/annual performance (SPP/APR) review indicators for review- effective progress and achievement gap; and
- Underperforming schools and students with disabilities.
- Recommendations are listed below using Smart Goals* as a model for effective goals and action plans to help educators, schools and districts improve.
- The council was provided information on:
 - ESE Advisory: [Identifying the Need for Paraprofessional Support](#)
 - ESE Advisory: [Transition Assessment in the Secondary Planning Process](#)
 - [Use of Out-of-District Programs by Massachusetts Students with Disabilities by Dr. Thomas Hehir and Associates](#)
 - Updates on the proposed Individual Education Plan Revision project
 - Department's work on the new SPP/APR Indicator B17: State Systemic Improvement Plan
 - Notice of public comment for proposed amendments to the Physical Restraint Regulations and the regulations on Program and Safety Standards for Approved

- Public or Private Day and Residential Special Education Programs
- 2014 Determination of Need For Special Education Technical Assistance or Intervention
- The Fund Code 274 Special Education Program Improvement Grant
- Early Childhood Special Education web pages and resource information
- Early Literacy Expert Panel
- Presentation on Special Education Research and Department Strategic Actions to the Board, on November 24, 2014

III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The council recommends that the Department:

- **Extended School Year (ESY)–Criteria Including Factors that Determine the Need:**
 - Provide clarity on how/when data should be collected to determine the extent of regression
 - Re-examine implementation of ESY including post-assessment with regard to standardization across districts
 - Consider development of a flowchart for ESY eligibility and programming
 - Look for opportunities for collaboration between districts and communities
 - Utilize data collection for both eligibility and exit criteria
- **Mental Health Issues and Services for Students with a Disability:**
 - Issue updated guidance on where districts should be related to their planning and implementation of the Task Force’s recommendations
 - Recommend districts that did use the Self-Assessment Tool, re-take the assessment to gauge improvement and progress with their Behavioral Health services and outcomes for students
 - Recommend that districts that did not utilize the Self-Assessment Tool to consider its use for improved student outcomes
- **Significant SPP/APR Indicators for Review – Effective Progress:**
 - Begin to collect data on preschool and kindergarten suspension and/or expulsion
 - Investigate the correlation of family income and influence it has on child outcomes and SPP/APR Indicators
 - Continue to evaluate suspension and expulsion data for 2015-2016
- **Achievement Gap and Underperforming Schools for Students with a Disability:**
 - Offer incentives to districts to return students from out-of-district settings to more inclusive programs within the local educational agency (LEA)
 - Encourage accurate data collection and progress monitoring through electronic means of data collections
 - Consider improvements to college requirements for undergraduate and graduate degree programs to ensure that new teachers and school leaders graduate with a sense of responsibility and strong understanding of the needs of students with disabilities
 - Consider implementing on-line professional development programs that leverage best practices in supporting students with disabilities. Incentives should be created to encourage broad participation, including access for all teachers, paraprofessionals, school leaders, administrators, school committees, parents, and anyone who has an interest
 - Consider reporting MCAS achievement data using the true gap between students with and those without disabilities to see the real difference in achievement; the current data minimizes the true gap

- Discourage the use of unqualified educators to teach students with disabilities through more rigorous enforcement of teaching waivers and increased availability of professional development options. See new educator licensure waiver process - <http://www.doe.mass.edu/news/news.aspx?id=6923>
- Consider closer monitoring of the curriculum, interventions, and progress monitoring tools used by districts. School districts should be encouraged to provide public information about the general and special education curriculum and programming they use
- Ensure its Special Education Coordinated Program Reviews (CPRs) provide thorough investigations of IEPs to ensure districts are meeting requirements for implementation of proven interventions/programs, adequate measurable goals, meaningful progress monitoring, and the use of qualified teachers. In addition, CPRs should include accountability for improved outcomes for students with disabilities
- Promote adoption of a Response to Intervention (RTI) model in kindergarten through grade 3 to promote early literacy development
- Establish “common standards” for each district in order to help support the Special Education Parent Advisory Councils
- Require districts to report the use of paraprofessionals and include that data in reports related to MCAS, achievement gap, and other district reports
- Collect data related to Massachusetts Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) and offer incentives to districts who implement successful MTSS to reduce inappropriate enrollment in Special Education

IV. COUNCIL DETAILS

Department Administrator: Teri Williams Valentine, Assistant Director, Special Education Planning and Policy

Department Liaison: Martha Daigle, Special Education Planning and Policy

Co-Chairpersons: Tere Ramos, Melanie McLaughlin

Members of the 2014-2015 Advisory Council:

Nicole Baumer, Boston Children’s Hospital

Jane Buckley, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

Mary Dennehy-Colorusso, Department of Public Health – Part C

Colleen Dolan, EDCO Collaborative, MOEC Designee

David Drake, MA Association of Approved Private Schools Designee, The White Oak School

Patricia Fairbanks, Charter School (Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School)

Janet George, Department of Developmental Disability Services

Laurie Gobeil, Department of Mental Health

Gail Havelick, Department of Public Health –Maternal & Child Health

Carla B. Jentz, Massachusetts Administrators for Special Education

Christine Kenney, Department of Youth Services

Donna Lehr, Boston University

Melanie McLaughlin, Parent & Co-Chair, West Medford

Susan Moyse, Parent, Marshfield

Mary Murray, Department of Youth Services – Alternate

Evelyn Nellum, Department of Early Education and Care

Yasmin Otero, Department of Transitional Assistance

Teresita Ramos, Parent & Co-Chair, Wellesley

Sean Roberts, Parent, Halifax

Darcy Rubino, Parent, North Andover
Gina Sacco, Teacher, North Reading Public Schools
Julie Sinclair, Parent & Co-Chair (Resigned 10/2015)
Sarah Slautterback, ESE Office for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth
Jean Spera, MassUrban Designee, Cambridge Public Schools
Susan Stelk, Department of Children and Families
Martha Testa, Speech Language Pathologist – Whitman-Hanson Regional School District

Council Meeting Dates: October 14, 2014, December 9, 2014, March 10, 2015, June 16, 2015.

We would like to thank Marcia Mittnacht, Massachusetts State Director of Special Education, Teri Williams Valentine, Special Education Planning and Policy Assistant Director, and Martha Daigle, the Department SAC liaison.

* The SMART goal concept was introduced by G.T. Doran, A. Miller and J. Cunningham in *There's a S.M.A.R.T. way to write management's goals and objectives*, Management Review 70 (11), AMA Forum, pp. 35-36. *What Makes a Goal "SMART"?* also draws from the work of Ed Costa, Superintendent of Schools in Lenox; John D'Auria, Teachers 21; and Mike Gilbert, Northeast Field Director for MASC.

VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Annual Report

I. INTRODUCTION

In Massachusetts, vocational technical education (VTE), which includes agricultural education, has a history of more than one hundred years of serving the needs of students through a relevant, meaningful, and rigorous career focused approach that adapts to and evolves with the needs of the local, state, national, and global economies. The unique strength of this educational model continues to be business/industry/registered apprenticeship partnerships that exist for every VTE program through Program Advisory Committees. The VTE community is grateful for the support it receives from Program Advisory Committee members concerning curriculum relevance, emerging trends in industry, prioritization of capital equipment needs, scholarships, donations, and cooperative education/career placement opportunities for students. This model design ensures that students are prepared with the skills necessary for success in the 21st century.

The Vocational Technical Education Advisory Council represents the interests of 46,883 students in 803 M.G.L.Chapter 74 (Chapter 74) state-approved VTE programs in 70 school districts. The Council met two times during the 2014-2015 school year holding its meetings around the state in order to visit regional vocational high schools, agricultural high schools, and comprehensive high schools that offer vocational programming.

The Council focused on the following priorities:

- Promote equitable, fair, and educationally sound state licensing opportunities for students enrolled in Chapter 74 cosmetology programs.
- Promote the development and implementation of a linkage model between secondary-level VTE and postsecondary education in community colleges and registered apprenticeship programs.
- Promote methods to ensure that VTE programming is supported to address current industry needs.
- Promote a method to ensure council membership is representative of all stakeholders.

II. 2014-2015 WORK OF THE COUNCIL

Cosmetology Student Licensure: The Council has continued to work with the Division of Professional Licensure (the Division), specifically the Board of Registration of Cosmetologists, to seek a solution that would ensure that students enrolled in Chapter 74 state-approved cosmetology programs, which offer a state-approved license through the Board of Cosmetology, are governed by licensure laws and regulations that are consistent with serving the educational interests of students and the public. Effective May 4, 2015, the Board of Registration of Cosmetology, the Board of Registration of Barbers, and the Board of Registration of Electrologists were consolidated into a new Board: Board of Registration of Cosmetology and Barbering. The Division is currently making no changes to their regulations; they are seeking two new members (applications were due on May 18, 2014). The Board will then review all current regulations and consider changes. The Council wants to ensure that a Chapter 74 Cosmetology Teacher continues to be on the Board and will continue to monitor to ensure that the needed changes are incorporated into any proposed regulations.

Postsecondary Linkages: The need exists to extend, expand, and streamline linkages between secondary-level VTE and postsecondary-level community college courses and programs. A task force was convened through joint efforts of the Office of Career/Vocational Technical Education (OCVTE) and the Massachusetts Community College Executive Office (MCCEO) in 2010 and worked successfully through the 2014 fiscal year. The last seven of the agreement were approved in November of 2014 bringing the total to 14 state-wide Articulation Agreements. However, no further work has been conducted since the fall of 2014. The last communication from the OCVTE stated that they expected work to resume on this project in the fall of 2016. The Council laments this disruption in this process and will communicate early with the OCVTE in the fall. As these opportunities continue to be developed, the Council recommends assessing the effectiveness of linkages to determine any challenges to students, high schools, or post-secondary institutions.

Promote a system of equitable access to vocational programming that is fair to students, schools and municipalities: The Council has been informed of the recent changes to the regulations addressing this issue. The new regulations support access to middle school students for the purpose of sharing information about CVTE programs. These changed regulations have also clarified concerns about the admission of non-resident students to Chapter 74 programs.

Promote methods to ensure that VTE programming is supported to address current industry needs: The Council worked to keep informed of methods to garner support for VTE programming. The Council was informed that several attempts to change the funding process or formula for regional vocational school to access MSBA funds were not forwarded to the legislature for consideration. The Council continues to see this as a significant problem and will stay informed of any new proposal or other sources of funding for updating equipment in vocational programs.

III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

CVTE Leadership: The Council recommends that the Board and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education put in place state-wide CVTE Leadership that is knowledgeable, productive, responsive, and transparent and that the Office's work is led so that it is consistent across schools and liaisons.

Cosmetology Student Licensure: The Council recommends that it continue to follow the process of regulation revisions through the Division of Professional Licensure to ensure that the proposed language ensures equitable treatment of students in Chapter 74 Cosmetology Programs.

Postsecondary Linkages: The Council recommends that the OCVTE/MCCEO Task Force on statewide articulation agreements be reactivated and allowed to continue their work. The goal remains to extend, expand, and streamline postsecondary linkages with community colleges for students enrolled in Chapter 74 state-approved vocational programs.

Promote methods to ensure that vocational programming can be supported to address current industry needs: The Council continues to recommend that the Department work with the MSBA to support existing regional vocational districts in their efforts to renovate their buildings, and provide incentives for continued regionalization over and above the existing incentives for districts forming new regions. The Council recommends that the Department continue to look for ways to support the acquisition of updated, industry standard equipment in all Chapter 74 programs.

Promote a method that will ensure membership on the Council is representative of all stakeholders: The Council was told that new members will be recruited this summer. The Council reviewed the proposed types of individuals needed for this Council and will continue to advocate for representatives from the CVTE community as well as industry clusters, post-secondary education, the Division of Licensure, Occupational Safety, students and parents, as well as geographic diversity. The Council pledges to assist with outreach activities for new members to ensure membership is representative and diverse.

IV. COUNCIL DETAILS

Department Administrator: Pati Gregson, Associate Commissioner, Vocational, Workforce and College Readiness Programs

Department Liaison: Maura Russell, Office of Career/Vocational Technical Education

Co-Chairs: Roger Bourgeois and Emily Lebo

Members of the 2014-15 Advisory Council:

Roger Bourgeois, Superintendent Greater Lowell Regional Vocational High School

Letitia K. Davis, Director of Occupational Health Surveillance Program, MA Department of Public Health

Layla D’Emilia, Deputy Director of Policy and Boards, MA Division of Professional Licensure

Alice B. DeLuca, Member, School Committee, Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical High School

David Ferreira, Executive Director, MA Association of Vocational Administrators (MAVA)

Robert Kenrick, Retired Program Manager, MA Department of Labor Standards

Emily Lebo, Director of Career and Technical Education, Boston Public Schools

Thomas A. Theroux, Executive Director, Plumbing, Heating, Cooling Contractors of MA

Erin Trabucco, Policy Advisor, Boston Chamber of Commerce

J.M. "Buck" Upson, School Committee, Cape Cod Technical High School

Sue Viens, Member, Massachusetts Vocational Association

David R. Wallace, Deputy Director, MA Department of Labor Standards

Council Meeting Dates: January 8, 2015 (cancelled due to weather), February 4, 2015 (cancelled due to weather), April 9, 2015, May 14, 2015

