

**Accountability and Assistance
Advisory Council
December 1, 2008
Holiday Inn, Marlborough
Minutes**

Attendance: Andy Churchill, Dr. Robert Consalvo, Dr. Deborah Dancy, Dr. Judy DeLucia, Joe Esposito, Dr. Anders Lewis, Sam Liao, Annie McKenzie, Beverly Miyares, Linda Noonan, Laura Perille, Dr. Pat Schettini, Steven Sharek, Susan Therriault; Robin Ahigian, Dr. Karla Baehr (ESE)

Intended outcomes:

- *Clarity and consensus about AAAC's role and responsibilities*
- *A clear framework for the ESE Framework for District Accountability and Assistance*
- *Clarity about ESE's work plan for 08-09 on accountability and assistance*
- *Awareness of steps underway to meet the legislative requirement for securing feedback from the field about ESE accountability and assistance work*
- *A draft agenda for Jan. 7th meeting*

Review of 11.3 meeting minutes

- The minutes were discussed, edited and approved. (The final version was emailed to Advisory Council members and stands as the official minutes of the meeting).

Review/discussion of revised "ESE Framework for District Accountability and Assistance"

Comments included:

- Language needs to be more universal, e.g. "learning walk protocols" should be changed to "classroom observation protocols".
- Language needs to be positive, e.g. change the word "trigger" to key/gateway/threshold.
- Need to include successes and celebrations as well as adverse actions.
- Clarity is needed between responsibility of districts and schools.
- Need to include best practices to share with districts - what it looks like at each step of the way when a district is doing well. Are there districts that are "healthy" in each category that we can list as exemplars? Perhaps include a description of exemplary practice at each level.
- Concern that the framework is based in NCLB language, which the field views as punitive. Karla explained that we need to meet the requirements of NCLB, but can do so while being thoughtful about using our limited state resources well. Early "triggers" are based on NCLB and later triggers are based on state accountability and assistance measures.
- Standards of accountability and assistance need to be research-based.

Review of Draft Work Plan for ESE

- Karla introduced the work plan by explaining that it is organized chronologically, and builds from the EQA standards.

- Karla explained that the 15 district reviews to be completed by June 2009 are mandated by statute. ESE will start with nine Commissioner's Districts and identify an additional 5-6 districts to review using a version of the EQA review.

Comments included

- ESE is beginning to develop a protocol for emergency district intervention, which will be included in a later version.
- Do not to start from scratch but use what makes sense from the EQA standards. However, the standards need to be vetted and include public comment. The field needs to be invested in this.
- The standards were seen as useful but the measurement of standards was a problem and the process was very document heavy.
- Standards and goals should be research based.
- This is also an opportunity to look at NEASC and CPR standards and be sure they dovetail to create a profile that touches on all the standards districts need to cover when they are audited/reviewed.
- Use data that districts have already provided, and make the data collection for all reviews and audits standard operation procedure.
- The goals of the work plan may be overly ambitious and ESE needs to consider what is realistic.
- Karla will revise the work plan for the January meeting based on AAAC feedback.

Draft survey to the field on accountability and assistance

- Karla and Robin explained that ESE has engaged the UMASS Donahue Institute to develop and distribute a customer satisfaction survey to superintendents and principals around ESE's service delivery. Karla explained that the purpose is to establish a baseline to examine trends over time about the field's perception of our work. Districts will not be identified individually. The group reviewed the questions that pertain to accountability and assistance and provided the following feedback:
 - It would be helpful to separate questions about schools vs. districts
 - Is it worth asking about turnover in districts, since it may impact the responses?
 - Include something about how ESE is helping with teaching.
 - There is no question on providing support to subgroups and to explore baseline perceptions related to other processes ESE is now introducing.

Draft agenda for January meeting

- Review next iteration of the framework
- Review next iteration of the work plan
- Karla will bring initial draft standards for the accountability review process.
- **Next meetings: Jan 7, Feb 11, March 11, April 8, June 10 (all 9-12 on Wednesdays) at Worcester Technical HS**