

Meeting Summary

Alliance Accountability Task Group

January 21, 2015

Chairman Joe Regano convened the meeting shortly after 9:30 a.m.

Members present were: Tom Goodney, Tom Henderson, Chad Hilliker, Clint Keener, Sherm Micsak, Bob Scott, Thomas Tucker, Tony Podojil, Jim Betts and Barb Adams.

The discussion began with a discussion led by Jim and Tony regarding the new leadership and political climate in the legislature.

The Republican majority in the House has expanded to 65-34 and remains the same in the Senate at 23-10. The number of hard right conservatives in the House has doubled from approximately 8-10 to about 16.

The new Speaker, Rep. Cliff Rosenberger, is young, 33, but very adept politically, having defeated 30-year veteran Rep. Ron Amstutz in the race for Speaker. He has not sponsored any significant education legislation. Amstutz was elected Speaker Pro Tem. New legislation opposing the Common Core will probably be introduced and testing is certain to be reviewed in great detail.

The make-up of the Senate remains basically the same, except that committee chairs have not yet been announced. It is not certain that Sen. Lehner will be reappointed.

The group then reviewed the State Superintendent's newly published report to the General Assembly regarding testing and a broad, conflicted, sometimes confusing, but fascinating discussion ensued.

The following are some of the more thoroughly discussed issues:

- Concern was expressed about the possibility that any testing limit would curtail the use of diagnostic assessments. (If the limit as written applies to the individual districts' school year, it should not impact most districts. Assuming 1200 – 1400 hundred hours per year, the percentage limit would permit a minimum of 24 testing hours for district tests (Star, Map, etc.), district tests for state requirements, and state tests, which now average a total of 19.8 hours. Teacher tests – defined as quizzes, chapter tests, final exams – which are used to drive instruction and provide frequent feedback on progress and performance, would not be affected.)
- Limiting practice would be virtually impossible.
- SLO's should not be used as part of the teacher evaluation process, in any course at any grade level.

- A consensus agreed that a fall third grade reading test should be made available, at the district's discretion, to establish baselines, so students who do not pass it could retake the parts they failed, as they are deemed prepared to do so, until they pass, prior to a date certain in May.
- A consensus also agreed that the State's math and writing diagnostic tests for grades 1-3 be made available, at the district's discretion because of mounting evidence that math scores are accurate predictors of later reading skills. ODE recommends that those mandatory tests be eliminated.
- The group discussed at length the appropriate role and place for shared attribution without reaching a consensus.
- Concern was expressed that time constraints could detrimentally affect students who are struggling, students with disabilities and English Language Learners. (Exemptions?)

In addition, the group concluded that the PARCC assessments should not be counted for purposes of the State Report Card until its diagnostic assessments are completed and available to school districts. The PARCC questions are sufficiently different in design that students should be exposed to these changes through the use of PARCC's own diagnostic assessments before being held accountable for report card purposes.