

ALLIANCE FOR HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION
Accountability Committee

September 19, 2018

9:30 A.M.

MEETING SUMMARY

In attendance on phone conference: Andrea Celico, Matt Miller, Robert Scott, Kathy Powers, Joe Regano, Kristine Qualich, Mike Hanlon, Jessica Voltolini and Tony Podojil.

Tony Podojil convened the meeting by phone conference at 9:30 a.m.

I. Graduation Requirements

A. Class of 2019 and beyond

Tony updated the Committee on the discussions by the State Board associated with changes to the current graduation requirements. The Board has been working with an advisory committee reviewing several proposals advocating for alternative pathways and additional measures as well as extending the 2018 provisions for the class of 2019. Unfortunately, the chance of having those passed out of the State Board and then approved by both the House and Senate prior to the end of the calendar year appears to be a challenge. While there appears to be some sentiment in the House to address the issue during the lame duck session, the State Senate President has already indicated publicly that he is not in support of the State Board's recommendations in terms of changes they may be considering. The Governor's office also continues to oppose any legislative effort that would simply extend the class of 2018 fix (fourth pathway) for another year or two.

The fact that all of these groups appear to be on different pages in terms of addressing this topic will make this problematic going forward. In the meantime, the class of 2019 is under the current standards for graduation (existing statute's three pathways) that require a minimum number of points earned on the end-of-course exams in order to qualify for a diploma, scoring remediation free on the ACT/SAT, or earning an industry-recognized credential. If this issue carries over into the next calendar year, getting something done in time to avoid issues with the class of 2019 increases as the end of the school year nears.

Jessica provided the Committee with an overall look at the current political landscape. She shared that the General Assembly has been on break since the end of June. The Senate is scheduled to return for only one session on 9/25 and the House is not scheduled to return until after the November election. This will leave the lame duck session as the only opportunity to pass additional legislation prior to the end of the calendar year. Depending upon which gubernatorial candidate is elected governor, we could see a very active or light lame duck session.

II. State Report Card – HB591

A. HB591- Status

Jessica provided the Committee with the history behind the development of HB591 and the involvement of several stakeholder groups and individuals in its development. The bill was introduced last May and there were three hearings on the bill prior to the House going on recess. The bill is still pending before the House Education Committee. We are not sure if the bill will have any committee hearing during the lame duck session this November-December; there will be a limited number of House Education Committee hearings. Since the sponsor of the bill, Rep. Duffey, is term-limited, there is uncertainty around what may happen to HB59 once this session wraps up in December. We have been looking for another representative to consider sponsoring the bill when the new General Assembly is sworn in, in January 2019.

The Committee then discussed the specific sections of HB591. In particular, which sections should the Alliance focus on when the bill comes back for discussion? A couple of important points made by committee members included the following:

- The Report Card is really an achievement grade. The more the focus is strictly on achievement, the easier it is to explain.
- The Performance Index score is probably the best measure of achievement on the Report Card.
- By creating an overall letter grade on the Report Card, the State Board has de-emphasized the other measures creating a situation in which districts have now been reduced to being compared on one measure. There are districts who have achieved higher performance scores but their overall grade is less than a bordering district whose achievement scores are lower but the overall grade is higher.
- The Value-Added measure continues to cause confusion and it is impossible to explain how it works. Districts are still moving from A to F without a good understanding of how they got there. Gifted students achieving at a high level, especially at the middle school, are displaying the weakest scores overall for many districts.
- K-3 Literacy sub-group scores are dramatically altering the overall grade for this measure. Returning to an overall achievement score on this measure versus a measure that only focuses on those still needing to pass the is preferred.

Jessica and Tony indicated that they would review this information with the Executive Committee when they meet next week on Wednesday. A position paper is being formulated on this topic with the intent of sharing it with both of the candidates for Governor and their policy teams in an effort to alert them of the issues and help them include some of our thought in their policy development.

III. School Funding

A. Cupp/Patterson School Funding Study

Mike Hanlon updated the Committee on the current work being done by the Cupp/Patterson funding group. They are in the process of developing a final report. At their last meeting, he indicated that they had a discussion related to developing an appropriate rationale for a funding floor and a lengthy

conversation related to the release by the educational organizations of their school finance paper in August.

At their next meeting, the members of this workgroup will be reviewing a draft printout of their districts to see how the changes they are considering will affect the funding allocations for each of those districts.

The next meeting is scheduled for **October 17, at 10:30 AM by phone conference.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.