ESSA Subcommittee Meeting – Accountability

Date, Time: Wednesday, October 5, 2016, 10:00 a.m.
Location: 135 South Union Street, Suite 215

ALSDE Facilitator: Angela Martin

Members present:

Standards, Assessment, Accountability: Sandy Ledwell, Krissie Allen, Pamela Fossett, Walter Gonsoulin

Accountability: Angela Martin, Christian Becraft, Holly Box, Ryan Cantrell, Margaret Clarke, Terri Collins, Martha Peek, Sheila Hocutt Remington

Members absent: Matt Akin

Summary: The Accountability group met with the Standards, Assessments and ELL Subcommittee to discuss the processes currently in place for English Learners. The Accountability subcommittee also discussed the school quality indicator.

- Standards, Assessments, ELL subcommittee voted to accept the EL services currently in place and agreed that they were sufficient for ESSA.

- Final decision regarding the school quality indicator:
  - Non High Schools: Attendance
  - High Schools: Attendance and CCR indicator

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 1, 10 a.m., 135 South Union Street, Suite 215
All notes below are comments with committee members and the ALSDE facilitator.

Discussion began on the use of surveys as a possibility for an additional school quality indicator.

**Surveys:**
- ALSDE facilitator has been talking with Georgia and Oklahoma about use of surveys in accountability calculations.
- Some states are using surveys but not in accountability calculation.
- Can surveys differentiate between schools? Research says maybe—due to self-reporting.
- Can results be disaggregated at school level? Research says yes, but there is no clear guidance, as surveys do not treat schools fairly.
- Need to keep research in mind in the event that surveys might be used in accountability.
- Colorado—info from website that shared information from 4 states. GA—1-5 stars, but not used in accountability calculation, just used for reporting.
- Most states are also trying to determine the school quality indicator.
- Utah: school climate survey mostly tied to alternative school. Weighed indicators counts as 10% of accountability.
- Nevada: weighted model similar to Utah (the states have weighted indicators for accountability reporting).
- Colorado: using attendance as school climate.
- Georgia: College and Career Ready Performance Indicator, also reports other information-report more than they calculate.
- Who is surveyed?
  - In Georgia, combination of parents, students, teachers, and community
  - The kinds of questions are varied (about classes, safety, etc.)
- AdvancEd still does not have instruments ready. Encouraging schools to write their own which will not allow for comparisons among different schools.
- Accountability subcommittee member mentioned that Georgia is struggling with stratifying results of surveys.
  - Vendors will say that their product is best.
  - Mentioned that we must be wary of surveys.
  - Member suggested reporting out the number of respondents by type and percentages by type. This would be a measure of stakeholder involvement.
• Concern voiced as to how these surveys might be used.
  o Other member mentioned that surveys are trying to measure quality of schools.
  o Another voices that simply reporting who responded to the survey is not going to show quality.
  o Real estate companies are already generating data.
  o Potential to perpetuate problem...already difficult reporting survey results because this reporting can perpetuate difficulties in schools.
  o Standards subcommittee member shared that information should be reported responsibly—use triangulation and avoid misrepresentation.
• Question about the types of surveys: Is there a way to develop surveys that can be reported in a way that can be used for school improvement?
  o Fellow member discussed transparency—cannot pick/choose what we want to report.
• Another Accountability member said that measuring attendance would satisfy ESSA. The survey is not needed because we’ve already met the school quality indicator requirement with attendance.
• Another member voiced that adding requirements will take focus off growth in achievement. This would make Alabama more restrictive than the federal government.
  o Adding a survey as a state indicator would not be productive.
• Question about the Continuous Improvement Plans (CIPs or ACIPs): How do the current surveys in the ACIP improve education in school? Would it be possible to change the way surveys are used for ACIP?
  o Other subcommittee member clarified that stakeholders had input in ACIP, sometimes via the surveys.
  o AdvancED is working on a new survey and will be improving their surveys.
  o Other member noted that ACIP should drive policy and funding changes.
• Clarification: two different things are being discussed: 1. ESSA Accountability; 2. The A-F State Report Card.
  o Member noted that attendance was originally left off the State Report Card because it reflected adversely on poverty schools.
  o Other member stated that if trajectory was focused on growth, that it would be the proper use of the measure.
  o Facilitator clarified that the indicators from the Report Card meet requirements for ESSA.
    ▪ Report Card is a state measure. ESSA only requires one school quality indicator.
    ▪ Accountability member mentioned that reporting the College and Career Readiness indicator (CCR) is not required, so recommended that we only use attendance.

**Break from surveys and school quality indicator to discuss ELL in Accountability**
Presentation on EL (English Learners formerly English Language Learners EL and ELL).

- Since 2004, Alabama has been part of the 38 state consortium (WIDA) for EL.
- Approximately 20,000 EL students in state.
  - 2,000 to 4,000 children are migrant.
- Focusing on parent involvement component for the next year.
- The state employs 5 EL coaches throughout the state to assist schools with EL children.
- The ALSDE offers books that contain ELL standards.
- WIDA prescribes standards for EL in Alabama.
  - The standards provide a way to test the students in EL proficiency.
  - ESSA requires that standards have domains of reading, speaking, listening, and writing and must be in line with state academic standards.
    - Alabama meets this criteria with current services in place.
- The majority of languages are Spanish.
- Mobile has 72 languages and dialects.
- Alabama is starting a new program for “newcomers” which are students who come to the United States unaccompanied and are school age.
  - These students have most likely never been in a school setting.
- ALSDE already has a process in place for identifying, screening and serving EL students.
- WIDA standards also have proficiency levels and Can Do examples.
  - The Can Do descriptors describe what EL students can do with language in different situations, and in different content areas (listening, speaking, writing, and the different levels of proficiency).

**Key Decision for ELL and Accountability:**

- States need to develop and implement uniform statewide criteria and procedures for entrance into and exit from ELL status.
  - ALSDE facilitator/presenter says Alabama meets the requirement with processes and programs currently in place.
  - May be changing cutoff score so that exiting may require a different score.
  - The standards are also already aligned.
- Standards, Assessments, ELL subcommittee voted to accept the EL services currently in place and agreed that they were sufficient for ESSA.
  - Clarification that the information is measureable.
  - EL is also part of graduation rate cohort.
  - Schools must accept children from ages 3-21 because those are the ages of eligibility.
  - Facilitator clarified that tools along with ACCESS meet this provision.
  - EL standards are tied to CCR standards.
Key Decisions for Accountability:

1. Surveys:
   - Angela noted that the survey information she shared would be presented to ALSDE leadership. Discussion centered on streamlining surveys used with ACIP.

2. College and Career Readiness (CCR) Indicator:
   - One Accountability member motioned that CCR be removed as a criteria for measurement in the ESSA plan that will be submitted to USDE
     - Attendance would be the sole measure for the school quality indicator
   - Standards member mentioned that growth should be measured and that methods of improving attendance should be studied
   - Accountability member asked why is the group no longer considering including CCR as an additional school quality indicator
   - Other Accountability member clarified that these are not for all grades—elementary is excluded in CCR. For uniformity, maybe only attendance should be considered.
   - Another Accountability member noted that overlapping is good, but is concerned about over reporting data.
   - Accountability member concerned that ESSA will be dictating how funding is sent to the state is allocated, urges caution
   - Other member said the committee could amend later and add CCR; also noted that the difference maker would be student growth.
     - An advantage of attendance as the indicator is that it is the full spectrum, K-12. Adding CCR means that high schools have an additional measure that is not required of lower grades
   - Question/ concern about setting criteria based on students’ performance on one day, on one test out of entire school year.
   - Facilitator mentioned that A-F is not a growth indicator.
     - The scale for A-F has not been identified.
   - Standards member said that CCR is tied to funding; noted that graduation rate is tied to graduation coach.
   - Facilitator noted that other CCR indicators are not tied to funding.
   - Accountability member revised the motion to keep attendance and CCR for high schools.
     - The original motion to remove CCR was not seconded, and the motion failed.
     - No revised motion was needed.
   - Accountability member made the motion to only consider attendance and CCR without surveys. Motion was seconded. There was not discussion, by unanimous decision, the motion passed.
   - Final decision regarding the school quality indicator:
     - Non High Schools: Attendance
     - High Schools: Attendance and CCR indicator
3. **English Learners Process:**
   - Recommendation to keep ELL policies as currently in place at ALSDE.
   - The motion passed unanimously.

**Next Steps:**

- Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 1, 10 a.m., 135 South Union Street