



ESSA IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

ESSA Subcommittee Meeting – Educator Effectiveness

Date, Time: Friday, June 24, 2016, 9:00 a.m. – 10:55 a.m.

Location: 135 South Union Street, Suite 215

ALSDE Facilitator: Mark Kirkemier

Members present: Thomas Rains, Sheila Hocutt Remington

Members absent: Quesha Starks, Gary Hall

Summary: Dr. Kirkemier moderated a white-board brainstorming session with Ms. Remington and Mr. Raines on several questions:

- “How would you define an effective teacher?”
- “How do you know if an educator is effective?”
- “How would you define an effective leader?”
- “How do you know if a leader is effective?”
- “How do you know if a teacher/leader is ineffective?”

Dr. Kirkemier established that the key role of the committee is to identify how the state can comply with the ESSA provision that says that the most needy children are being served properly by quality instructors. Future meetings will discuss their definitions to the aforementioned questions, and how that insight can be incorporated into ESSA requirements and Plan 2020.

Next meeting: Friday, July 22, 9 am – 11 am. 135 South Union Street, Suite 215

Detailed Notes

All notes below are comments with committee members and the ALSDE facilitator.

ESSA gives the states an opportunity to shape an implementation plan that makes sense for the state. Conversations began with the committee thinking about educator effectiveness and working backwards by defining what effective teaching looks like.

Question 1: How would you define an effective teacher? How do we know when a teacher is effective?

- Changes/adapts to needs of students.
- Engages and motivates students to learn.
- Being able to use data and information to see where the students are, and therefore where they need to go. What they need to get them there.
- Being able to meet the students where they are and help them achieve moving forward.
- Needs to be a lifelong learner. Participates in professional development. Keeps up with how things are changing within your local and state environment. Keep up with goals of federal, state, school system, and school.
- Sets goals that he/she can achieve and sticks to the mission of achieving. Able to track their progress towards their goal.
- In touch with the community outside the classroom – involved with stakeholders. Co-community leader.
- Motivates students – holding them to higher expectations, and pushing them further than they may think they can go.
- Credible relationships – open communication with stakeholders. (ESSA allows community to make choices for itself).

Question 2: Think of teachers that you thought were great. Did we capture what made them great?

- Facilitates students' ability to think through content and make decisions on his/her own with view to the future
- Believes that students can learn/achieve
- Collaborative/reflective networking with colleagues
- Setting high expectations for students
- Understands how the educational path works and fits together. (One of the reasons Plan 2020 is very helpful in helping stakeholders understand the whole picture).
- Able to look forward – understanding what's next for students (teachers who speak regularly to businesses understand what's next for the students and adapt teaching accordingly).
- Has the ability to get information out to parents. Need communication with parents to know where the students are. Keeping citizens and parents informed.
- Doesn't make excuses – looks for solutions.
- Challenges themselves. Reflective and self-evaluating.



Question 3: How do we know [a teacher is effective]? What are points of evidence?

- “Movement” – achievement and growth. As measured by multiple measures. (Committee member clarified that student achievement is not a final test score, but where they are when they enter and where they are when they leave, achievement was not about weighing tests heavily).
- Combination of formative and summative evaluations.
- Collection of data. Concerning students and teachers.
 - Developmental data.
 - Student perspectives.
 - Observational data.
- Student achievement, professional development data. (Discussion that this is a problem when students are tested for a test that they’re not developmentally ready to answer).
- Have some awareness of developmental stages and know content. (Some teachers who teach in their grade are excellent but their techniques do not adapt to other grade levels).

Question 4: What does an effective leader [administrator] do?

- Collaborative / reflective networking with colleagues.
- Great communication skills.
- Clearing barriers for teachers. (Making sure teacher can do his/her job effectively).
- Listening (leaders who are good listeners are able to give feedback without making it sound like criticism).
- Seeks input – accepts criticism well and makes changes. (clarified that effective leaders are not afraid of change).
- Motivates staff (need to be able to run an effective organization. Need to be an instructional leader)
- Focus on instructions & can also management of logistics/operations.
- Prioritizes, respect, protect learning time.
- Recognizes strengths [of teachers] and matches strength to assignment (one size doesn’t fit all. There are different strong points, and you should respect those strong points. It is frustrating to have mandatory development programs for teachers when some may already be experts).
- Identifies staff needs and helps provide guidance.
- Creating a culture to support teachers – that supports student learning.
- Providing safety/protection for risk taking.
- Provides atmosphere to support innovation. Models innovation & risk taking.
- Creates systems / processes that support staff learning & communicates to all.
- Ability to delegate.



Question 4 Continued... What does an effective leader [administrator] do?

- Advocate for children, staff, school, community, and system. (Also, effective leaders will pass on information to the right people to make things happen).
- Ability to create and execute a plan.
- Lead creation of goals – for self, staff and they are intentional and purposeful in progress towards collective goals. (Discussion of ‘accountability’ but others recommended different language).

Question 5: How do we know a leader is effective?

- Student learning / performing
- Staff learning / performing
- Culture/climate measures
 - staff initiates conversation
- Community involvement (emphasized that you’re not going to have a strong leader that doesn’t have a strong relationship with that community).
- Logistics/operations.

Question 6: Ineffective teachers – how do we know?

- No growth / lack of growth (if you survey students on how much teachers help them, you’d find data on ineffective teachers).
- Evidence through evaluation process – multiple components.
- Issues with classroom management. Absenteeism (student/teacher). (Things that reveal negative aspects of culture and climate).
- Culture / climate measures
- Lack of professional growth.

Questions 7: Ineffective leaders – how do we know?

- Evidence through evaluation process – multiple components.
- Lack of growth/performance academically.
- Evidence of a culture/climate issues that is not supportive of student learning.
- Separation of/lack of community connection or involvement.
- Operations/management issues.
- Absenteeism/discipline
- Turnover of staff
- Student perspective (surveys, data collection shows that students do no value teacher contributions to learning).
- Resistance to change (some leaders do not want things to change from how they are).



Clarifying the work of the committee

- ESSA does not mandate that we have a teacher evaluation process by state.
 - It does require us to think about underserved and underprivileged areas and if they are served disproportionately by under qualified teachers.
- Committee member hopes that educator effectiveness considers the amount of community involvement; hopes that the vision is for these areas that are underprivileged to provide help for kids outside the schools; the committee should do more than think about whether students are underserved by teachers.
- Clarification: the committee does not necessarily need to recommend an evaluation process, but the group does need an answer to the question, “how do we know we’re not underserving underprivileged children.”
- Recommended avoiding making the conversation about under qualified leaders vs. under qualified teachers. Discussions that teachers do not want to go to underprivileged areas because they don’t want to be labeled “ineffective.”
- Clarification: the committee needs to show that poor instructors are not serving children properly. Recommendation that the committee start by defining what it wants for every child. Then the committee needs to ask, “how do we know?”
 - Recommendation: lots of data collection.
- After defining what it wants for every child and how it knows, the committee will pull back to see how the work fits with other working groups, and how it fits together with the State Board of Education plan.

Next steps

- The committee agreed that the next meeting will be on Friday, July 22 from 9:00 am – 11:00 am in the same room.
- The next meeting will discuss how the definitions of teacher effectiveness will fit with Plan 2020 and the mandates of ESSA.
- The committee members were recommended to look at the chart developed by Secretary Ross that combined information about Plan 2020 and ESSA requirements.
- Committee will work to get in touch with Quesha Starks and Gary Hall.

