

Data, Assessment & Accountability
November 16, 2016

AGENDA

Attendees: Jim Applegate, Steve Cordogan, Dan Cullen, Kevin Duff, Melissa Fischer, Larry Frank, Dan Harris, Aimee Galvin, Jean Korder, Dea Meyer, Brian Minsker, Bethany Patton, Stephanie Boucek, Ben Boer, Jonathan VanderBurg, Janet Holt, Lisa Hood, Lauren Burdette, Jane Russell, Harvey Smith, Ginger Ostro, Jim Pellegrino, Nicole Upton, Robin Steans, Thalia Nawi, Elliot Regenstein, Roger Eddy, Peter Leonard, Jill Meciej, Erika Hunt, Kevin Duff, Paige Williams, Paul Zavitkovsky, Josh Kauffman, Cathy Mannen, Jim Nelson, Mark Twomey

Meeting Objectives

- Complete the discussion on which measures should be included in the indicator of school quality and student success for elementary and high schools.
- Begin discussion on supports and interventions schools will receive once they are identified (using ESSA requirements as a starting point)

Review and vote on indicators of student success and school quality

Overview

Process for reviewing each school indicator:

- Overview of Indicator area
- Preliminary vote using Poll Everywhere
- Briefly discuss the indicator area in committee
- Final vote using Poll Everywhere (if warranted by a split in first round voting)

General Process Feedback:

- There will be more internal iterations and in January the committee will provide feedback and a report to ISBE that reflects weight of opinion, even as it reflects diverse views and concerns
- For each indicator we will suggest what the definition is, but we want to keep the conversation progressing so we won't get caught up in the weeds of particular definitions

Metrics

Chronic Absenteeism

- Voting results:
 - High schools only- 9%
 - High schools and elementary schools—72%
 - Elementary schools only—3%
 - Neither type of school—16%

Group direction: To move forward with this metric in both high school and elementary contingent on definition. *NOTE: Chronic truancy/absenteeism on the Illinois State Report Card is reported and is defined as missing more than 5% of classes without a valid excuse.*

- Comments:
 - Chronic absenteeism is generally perceived as a metric to be included in the system, however a definition of this result is still necessary. While state has a working definition (see above), there is a task force considering this question.

Discipline

- Voting results:
 - High schools only- 3%
 - High schools and elementary schools—28%
 - Elementary schools only—0%
 - Neither type of school—69%

Group direction: Should not be moved forward

- Per ongoing conversation, concerns include how one would define and fairly track discipline rates/issues, along with concerns about demographically driven differences in discipline rates at the local level.

Science Achievement

- Voting results:
 - High schools only- 6%
 - High schools and elementary schools—56%
 - Elementary schools only—0%
 - Neither type of school—38%

Group direction: To move forward with metric in high school (62% support for high school use), with meaningful support for use in elementary.

- Comments:
 - What is the value of the current science assessment? The science ACT is predictive of college course success, but not as predictive as other tests and not necessarily predictive of science success.
 - Including science in the accountability shows that it is a valuable part of a whole curriculum.
 - Science, art, and social science are where the careers sit, and we want students to use skills in ELA and math to pursue careers in science.
 - Adds more weight to academic tests, which are already heavily weighted, without a demonstrable differentiating effect from Math and ELA results.

College and Career Readiness (*see attached working definition – though vote did not depend upon this definition, but instead reflected view that such elements as advanced coursework, GPA, CTE endorsements and volunteer/military/co-curricular activities were under discussion in other committees and agencies*)

- Voting results:
 - High schools only- 75%
 - High schools and elementary schools—6%
 - Elementary schools only—0%
 - Neither type of school—19%

Group direction: Move forward with metric in high school, contingent on definition of CCR

- Comments:
 - Discussion of assessment data include MAP and PARCC for use to indicate CCR.
 - Assessment data will be part of the academic indicators and there should be a discussion of how to communicate the link between assessment data and the trend towards CCR.

- Some committee members lament limiting notion of “college/career readiness” to high school, and not extending to elementary school in appropriate ways

Early Warning Indicators

NOTE: While no specific definition was used, freshman on track (which looks at whether student is ready to promote to sophomore status on time without failing core classes) was referenced as likely operational indicator.

- Voting results:
 - High schools only- 34%
 - High schools and elementary schools—31%
 - Elementary schools only—3%
 - Neither type of school—31%

Group direction: Move forward with use in high school (probably Freshman on Track) – 65% support; little consensus to use in elementary due to lack of definition and implementation constraints

- Comments
 - Wasn’t clear whether there was a freshman-on-track equivalent for earlier grades that was more reliable than chronic absenteeism (which was already supported for elementary school).
 - Some mention was made of combining absenteeism with GPA for elementary grades (being piloted), but GPA is not currently collected at the state level, raising concerns

Student Voice on School Environment

- Voting results:
 - High schools only- 0%
 - High schools and elementary schools—63%
 - Elementary schools only—0%
 - Neither type of school—37%

Group direction: The consensus was to move forward with the use of survey information, with strong concerns raised by those wary of this indicator.

- Comments:
 - When 5Es was initially implemented, the data was not intended for use in accountability, but internally to give schools feedback
 - There is concern that using it for accountability will undercut the ability to use the feedback for school improvement – this was perhaps strongest concern expressed, and was shared even by some who support use of the measure
 - There is recognition that implementation was challenging in the first year, but it has improved.
 - CPS has had concerns about the use of the 5Es in the accountability system, however it is currently part of district’s quality review rating and has been valuable
 - Concerns raised about whether use for accountability may lead to unreliable outcomes and/or whether schools might collect data in a way that could bias results. Student data, in particular, seems less likely to be influenced by accountability than teacher data – since teachers have conflicting interest of providing clear feedback and wanting to protect school from accountability interventions. CPS noted that results can be audited for inflation of scores, though this is clearly tricky.
 - A question was asked about whether other states are using student survey information

- in accountability.
- Point was made that several studies show that student (and teacher) survey data is among the most reliable in revealing school environment

Teacher Voice on School Environment

- Voting results:
 - High schools only- 0%
 - High schools and elementary schools—71%
 - Elementary schools only—0%
 - Neither type of school—29%

Group direction: There was consensus to move forward with this measure in High school and Elementary.
- Comments:
 - There was ongoing concern that teachers could be influenced to bias survey – this was expressed by individuals communicating the views of teachers they had spoken to, even as others report no such concern from other teachers.
 - However, there was also recognition that teachers have the closest eye of what’s happening in the classroom. And that teachers feel that their voice has to be heard, so this indicator is very important and, like student voice, is unlike any other indicator up for discussion.
 - Question was raised whether this would work if schools avail themselves of the option to use one of several alternatives to the 5Es survey. Can the state equate the surveys across domains? While only a small number use alternate survey (per IRC), would want to confirm that ISBE has similar reporting mechanism for other instruments.

Early Grades Indicator (meaning, an indicator that focuses on information from prek-2nd grade that might indicate challenges – working example was to separately calculate and weigh the level of chronic absenteeism in those earliest grades)

- Voting results:
 - High schools only- 0%
 - High schools and elementary schools—0%
 - Elementary schools only—67%
 - Neither type of school—33%

Group direction: Move forward with this indicator
- Comments:
 - The goal is to ensure that K-2 is represented in the accountability system
 - The main idea is to disaggregate an existing measure and weight it separately/more heavily for the early grades.
 - This could be a first step in a progression, to let ISBE know we appreciate them flagging early learning but include it now to indicate that we’re open to discussion of other possible indicators
 - Chronic absenteeism is the best example of an existing indicator that could be disaggregated for early grades and weighted more heavily in those years.
 - There was some discussion of using an Early warning indicator which would include chronic absenteeism and grades (recognizing that some schools have moved away from

grading in the early years). Was noted, however, that ISBE does not currently collect GPA data at the elementary level.

Arts Participation NOTE: Voting did not rely on a particular working definition of this indicator –i.e., would need further work on whether measure is of qualified arts personnel, ratio of courses to students, actual course-taking, etc.

- Voting results:
 - High schools only- 0%
 - High schools and elementary schools—58%
 - Elementary schools only—0%
 - Neither type of school—42%

Group direction: Soft consensus that Arts Participation should be part of the accountability system with significant concern that this would simply be a measure of available resources. It was noted that the new accountability system could lead to resource support and that concerns about resources might be addressed in other areas (e.g., follow-up analysis once a school or district is flagged as troubled).

- Comments:
 - There was discussion about whether a measure that captured participation in a full curriculum would be better than indicators of particular topics. However, it was unclear how that more complex indicator might be operationalized.
 - It was noted that an Arts indicator would encourage schools to partner with communities, incentivizing schools across resource levels to provide development for the full child
 - Additionally, looking at a district’s prioritization of the arts in the context of funding can give you a good look at the culture of the schools.
 - There was significant concern that schools with limited resources would be punished by an indicator such as this.
 - However, it was noted that this makes the assumption that under resourced schools can’t grow in the arts. Other states, such as New Jersey have found this to be an equalizer.
 - There was also concern that this was only an indicator of participation of in-school programming and how to capture out of school arts programming. CPS, for example, has a school arts certification that looks at out of school programming as well.

IN SUMMARY:

ELEMENTARY	HIGH SCHOOL
Chronic Absenteeism/Truancy	Chronic Absenteeism/Truancy
Science Achievement	Science Achievement
Student Voice	College & Career Readiness
Teacher Voice	Early Warning (e.g., Freshman On-Track rates)
Early Grades Weighting of Elementary Indicator (e.g., Chronic Absenteeism)	Student Voice
Arts Participation	Teacher Voice
	Arts Participation

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School supports and Interventions

- ESSA requires states to identify schools based on the school's performance indicators
 - Schools identified should receive targeted support for a state-determined number of years
- Must create a plan that responds to accountability concerns and identifies resource inequities
 - Subgroup of DAA will look at how ESSA might best consider and factor in resource allocation: Ginger, Josh, Jane, Melissa, Paul, Peter, Larry, Sara, they will work outside of DAA time to come up with recommendations
- Given the requirements in ESSA, what are the committee's preliminary thoughts on school improvement?
 - What types of schools should the state identify?
 - What supports should have as they create their plans? Who should provide the support?
 - How much time should schools have to implement improvements?
 - What "additional" or "rigorous" actions should schools face after several years of no improvement?
- Comments
 - In addition to a needs assessment, plans should include an asset map of the community
 - If we have a year, what's in the process to support schools in creating a quality plan?
 - How do we determine the capacity issues at a school? (leadership, funding, resource, etc.)
 - State may need to rely on more than the current Center for School Improvement to develop strong plans
 - There is a serious dearth of support and resources for actual instructional and curricular change and growth, which is likely to be at the heart of most plans. How will the state fill this critical gap?? (CSI, for example, tends to be better at data collection and analysis, more so than providing hands-on support)
 - Why does the plan assume that the indicators are independent of resources, but then offer resources after a school fails on indicators?
 - Is the center for school improvement the right mechanism? Historically, state entities have not proven especially nimble or effective. What have other states done that has worked?
 - Should there be consideration for a strike 3 provision? That is, if school/district persists in weak performance time and again, despite various support, what then?
 - How do we incorporate trajectories? We change models so much that we don't track the underperforming schools. We shouldn't always use the same metrics for underperforming schools. What if kids are making progress even if they are still in the 5%?
 - We have to recognize that the short-term infusion of funds may not be useful in chronically under-funded schools. We need to institutionalize the way they are going to use the funding to build capacity and consider longer-term funding/resource solutions.