

MINUTES of Illinois P-20 Council

Meeting date: Wednesday, October 27th, 2010

Call to order: Quarterly meeting of the Illinois P-20 Council was held on October 27, 2010. Chairman Miguel Del Valle called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm. Members participated in the Council meeting at one of three sites: Chicago, Springfield, or Edwardsville; or by phone.

Members in attendance – Roll Call

Chicago – Miguel del Valle, Josh Anderson, Andy Davis, Lizanne DeStefano (P-20 Council staff), Janel Forde, Erica Hunt, Joyce Karon, Debra Kasperski, Maggie Laslo, Dea Meyer, Cynthia Plouche, Diana Rauner, Don Sevenser (IBHE), Jason Tyszko (DCEO), John Rico, Kathy Ryg, Julie Smith, Brian Spittle, Robin Steans, Sharron Thomas-Parrot, Debbie Meisner-Bertauski (IBHE), Rep. for Rick Stephens, Rep. for Audrey Parsley

Springfield – Gary Niehaus, Susie Morrison (ISBE), Elaine Johnson (ICCB), Mitch Roth

Edwardsville – Rep for Geoff Obrzut (ICCB), SIU-Edwardsville education faculty

On Phone —Glenn Poshard, Ray Hancock (ICCB Foundation), Jerry Mitchell, Tom Choice

I. Chair report and General Updates:

- a. **Welcome and Introductions** –Chair Miguel del Valle welcomed members to the quarterly meeting of the Council. He explained that there was a long agenda to get through, and in addition, he would be rearranging the agenda to accommodate a few people who needed to leave the meeting early.

Julie Smith explained that the building was having its annual fire drill today and the meeting would be interrupted from time to time, but the P-20 Council was given permission not to leave the room for the drill proceedings.

- b. **Approval of Minutes** – Minutes of previous July 28, 2010 were approved unanimously.

II. Update on Race to the Top and Next Steps—Susie Morrison

Susie Morrison (ISBE) presented for Chris Koch on the Race to the Top and began by reaffirming that the foundation for the education reform agenda in Illinois, made before the RTT process, remains in place as the blueprint agenda for Illinois. A strong partnership continues between IBHE, ISBE, ICCB, DCEO, Regional Offices of Education, the legislature, and the business roundtable.

There were 4 elements to Race to the Top and Illinois remains committed to all of them:

1. Adoption of the Common Core Standards: English, Language Arts, and Math have been adopted; Science and Social Science Standards are being developed nationally now, and ISBE will review them for possible adoption in 2011. The standards also call for attention to be placed on what it means to be college and career ready. In addition, Illinois has joined PARCC Assessment Consortium of 6 states and Chris Koch is in a leadership role.
2. Creation of a Data System – Illinois has received \$20 million of federal money to development the Illinois Longitudinal Data System, and work is progressing well across the P-20 sectors on the development of the ILDS.

3. Development of Great Teachers and Leaders – significant pieces of legislation have been introduced to develop a valid, reliable, and fair evaluation system that will align evaluation to performance. Illinois is also revising teacher and administrator preparation programs.
4. Turning Around Lowest Performing Schools – Illinois has been awarded \$146 million in Federal funds for drastic intervention for the lowest performing schools. In the first round of grants, 10 schools in 5 districts were awarded funding. ISBE will reissue an RFP this fall to add more schools to be supported with these funds.

Susie Morrison added that ISBE is looking for support from the Illinois P-20 Council in specific areas:

1. Support for a valid, reliable, and fair assessment system; these assessments will be web-based and currently the infrastructure for broad band connectivity is not in place everywhere in Illinois; state resource support is essential for implementation of these assessments.
2. Technology support to districts, modeling the Bloomington system, is essential for implementation of the agenda.
3. Learning Exchanges in STEM and other areas are essential for advancing the agenda. Without that platform and infrastructure it will be hard to deliver on the agenda. Resource allocation to create meaningful teacher and principal evaluation systems.
4. Support for drastic interventions that are happening in the lowest performing schools. The P-20 Council could provide a public voice to support this area.
5. Support to conduct research through the Illinois Collaborative for Education Policy Research.

Chairman del Valle asked Susie Morrison to provide a brief explanation of why Illinois did not receive a RTT award. Susie explained that after doing well in the first round, the team went back to strengthen areas that they were asked to strengthen, but left areas where Illinois had scored well intact. In the second round, there was an entirely new team of evaluators, and while Illinois scored higher in the areas they had worked to improve and higher overall, in some of the areas where we had scored high the first round and made no changes, the scores actually went down.

Jason Tysko (DCEO) affirmed that DCEO is committed to the Blueprint. RTT created consensus in the state and DCEO helped create a STEM reform agenda. DCEO is realigning resources to be supportive of the blueprint.

Robin Steans (Advance Illinois) added that in 48 hours in the wake of the disappointing news about RTT, business, civic, and agency leaders all came forward to ask how do we keep this going. There are \$166 million of federal dollars from other initiatives available to put towards the blueprint.

Chairman del Valle asked if there were plans for another round of RTT and Susie Morrison said that there has been no news of another round. Miguel requested of Susie to have ISBE provide to the Illinois P-20 Council members an explanation of what happened in RTT, and a written copy of her remarks from today's Council meeting. He commented that today we're putting areas of need on the table which need resource allocation next year. The Illinois P-20 Council will make recommendations to the Illinois General Assembly about resource allocation, and these documents from ISBE will assist in the development of those recommendations.

III. Presentation of Council Annual Work Plan—Lizanne DeStefano (P-20 Council Coordinator)

Lizanne DeStefano presented the Illinois P-20 Council Work Plan, which was developed out of discussions at the July quarterly meeting, and reviewed in the interim by the Council members in draft electronic form. She reminded members that the Mission Statement was approved in final form at the spring Council meeting. She opened the discussion up to consideration of comments about the 5 goals listed.

Kathy Ryg suggested that Goal 1 be changed to reflect early childhood education in addition to those listed. Lizanne said she had received a proposal to change it to read: “Develop definitions, metrics, and strategies that promote readiness and success at all levels of the educational system, including early childhood, K-12, post-secondary, and careers.” The Council agreed to the change unanimously.

Lizanne also had received a proposal to change Goal 5 to read: “Promote the development of effective educational finance and governance mechanisms for Illinois to sustain high quality educational opportunities throughout the state.” The Council also agreed to this change.

A lengthy discussion ensued about adopting an overarching “meta-goal” for the Council, that would mirror the Lumina Foundation 2025 goal. Chairman del Valle asked if everyone could agree to adopting the goal and an agreement was reached to exactly mirror the Lumina goal. The Lumina goal reads: “To increase the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees and credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025.” So, the Illinois P-20 Council goal reads: “To increase the proportion of Illinoisans with high-quality degrees and credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025.” The goal was unanimously adopted by the Council members.

Lizanne then suggested that the draft “goals” in the work plan be changed to “objectives” to reflect the addition of a meta-goal. The Council agreed with this change.

Kathy Ryg commented that the draft work plan was considered before all of the committees had a chance to meet, and now that they have all met, she suggested that to further consider the objectives the Council might establish an Executive Committee made up of the Committee Co-Chairs and the Council Chair, with staff. The Council agreed to that suggestion.

IV. Discussion of Committee Processes and Preparation of Annual Report---Miguel Del Valle

- a. Committee Reports due December 15, 2010 – Chair del Valle asked all the committees to submit written reports by December 15th. In future years, he wants the report earlier, but for this first year the deadline is December 15th. The Council will:
 - Convene the Executive Committee
 - Finalize the objectives and the work plan
 - Develop a first report for December 15th that will be forwarded to the Governor and the General Assembly
 - Be accountable for its work and to Illinois through this work product/report
- b. The quarterly meeting in January will be an extended one, in order to review reports and develop recommendations
- c. The Council will issue annual report in time to inform Budget Address

V. Progress on Council Staffing---Lizanne DeStefano

- a. Policy Analyst Search—position search is underway
- b. Amber Kirchhoff—introduced this new Dunn Fellow who is supporting the P-20 Council through the Governor’s Office

VI. Committee Reports/Updates:

a. College and Career Readiness: Sharon Thomas-Parrott and John Rico

The committee held its first meeting on September 12, 2010 at DeVry University. They formulated their mission and vision statement on September 29th, and met again in October and adopted them. They distributed copies of both and welcome feedback from the Council members.

Chair del Valle said that they are the committee, and it’s fine for them to adopt these statements for their committee without review of the full Council. He wants the Council to move toward more work and less planning, so asked them to move ahead on these statements. He also said that he would like the committee to be sure it has a representative from the Illinois Community College Board on the committee. Elaine Johnson responded that ICCB will participate in the future, once they know meeting dates and times. The Chair again encouraged anyone who wants to get involved with a committee to do so.

b. Data, Accountability and Assessment: Ben Boer (Advance Illinois)

Ben Boer presented the “Draft Guidelines and Recommendations from the P-20 Subcommittee on Data and Assessment” and asked for individuals on the Council to comment on it. His introduction stated that as Illinois has adopted the Common Core Standards as its foundation for P-20 Education, Illinois must strive to transform, not merely reform, teaching and learning in Illinois, in order to prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. That transformation requires a new accountability system, based on a new robust assessment system that provides innovative assessments of learning and for learning and generates usable, meaningful data that will improve instruction and student learning. The draft report is what the committee proposes as the guiding principles and recommendations to inform the development of the new system. Highlights of the report include:

- Understanding 2 different kinds of authentic assessments
- Understanding where Illinois is now and where it needs to be
- The current state of assessments and accountability systems in Illinois and their shortcomings
- Guiding principles going forward should:
 - build in mechanisms to adopt accountability systems across the P-20 system
 - develop assessment systems that will look at 21st century skills
 - build a data system that will simplify data collection and analysis across P-20 stakeholders
- Recommendations to Agencies on Standards and Assessments
- Recommendations to the Illinois General Assembly on Accountability
- Recommendations for Educators and the Public on the Meaning and Use of Data

Ben Boer again stated that the committee is asking for feedback on the draft report and encouraging participation by the P-20 Council and community.

c. Teacher and Leader Quality: Josh Anderson and Erika Hunt

Josh Anderson (Teach for America) reported that he is leading the committee's efforts to make recommendations regarding evaluations of teachers, and Erika Hunt is leading the efforts regarding evaluations of leaders. He reported on the following with respect to teachers:

1. The NCTQ response is not out yet.
2. The committee does not yet have a formal response on the Teacher Pipeline/Basic Skills issues, but the emphasis will be on academic capital and strengthening diversity. They agreed to hold a dialogue on creating a pipeline for teachers of color in Illinois, which was held on October 26, 2010. Discussion covered the new, higher pass rates required for Illinois Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the negative impact they have already had on teacher candidates. September pass rates dropped from 70% to 22%, and for subgroups of students of color the numbers were even lower. Chair del Valle said he would continue to be involved in these discussions, which might include recommending Illinois look at another testing system such as PRAXIS.
3. The committee has preliminary findings in three areas—
 - Teacher Retention and Selection—need a predictive selection model; can address academic capital gaps in the near term.
 - Teacher Evaluation and Development—need a fair, robust, and differentiated evaluation approach; need to tailor and differentiate professional development; need to integrate teacher evaluation and support; need to better understand the teacher experience.
 - Teacher Retention—solid retention overall; we don't know how we do in terms of keeping strong performers and exiting chronic low performers because we don't effectively differentiate performance

Further recommendations will be included in the committee's report in December 2010.

Erika Hunt then reported on the leadership (Principal Effectiveness) group. The group held its first meeting on October 27th, 2010 so she stated that there was not much to report yet. Recommendations will be forthcoming soon for the December report.

She did ask the P-20 Council to support a letter to be sent out under the Chairman's signature which would respond to an email circulating widely in the K-12 community about proposed changes through P.A. 096-0903 to requirements in the principal preparation programs in Illinois. That email has a number of erroneous assumptions and assertions in it, and the letter from the Council would address those areas. She circulated a draft of that letter, which would go out under the Chair's signature. An education faculty member from SIU-Edwardsville pointed out that there are some legitimate issues raised by the email with respect to across the board requirements for ELL and other areas that are not applicable to many rural districts. Chair del Valle asked Erika Hunt to work with SIUE to address those concerns in the letter from the Illinois P-20 Council before it gets sent out. Erika Hunt agreed to do so.

d. Youth, Family and Community Engagement: Kathy Ryg

The committee spent its first meeting discussing the charges and parameters for the committee. It has a number of areas on which the committee is working:

1. Work with the implementation plan of the Illinois High School Dropout Prevention group, which began at a summit last fall. They had a presentation from the group summarizing the summit and next steps. They are working to identify communities to continue the work of the summit. Facilitators are trained to help implement the plan in local communities.

2. Work with the community schools concept. Since the committee meeting, Deb Strauss has presented at the Illinois Parent Information Resource Center, the Summit on Aging, the Coalition for High Schools, Southern Illinois regional schools, and at the After School Town Hall in Peoria.

They also participated in the Building a Pipeline of Highly Effective Teachers of Color group, which held its meeting on October 26th. Kathy Ryg commented that the event was a model of a meeting with all the right stakeholders in the room with the right agenda. The committee is looking for other opportunities such as this for the committee to facilitate conversations. This committee can take highly sophisticated information from the P-20 Council to the community and vice versa. She then put out a call to have information about the Council in simpler, more understandable formats. She suggested that after each committee finishes their reports in December, they create a one page sheet about their report that the Youth, Family, and Community Engagement Committee can take to communities.

e. Finance and Governance: Ray Hancock

Ray Hancock began with an 8 minute informational video of the changing world context of population demographics, data trends, communication advances, and education needs.

Ray reported that the committee has not yet met as a committee, but both chairs are now in agreement on the charge of the Finance and Governance Committee. He then read to the Council the one page Initial Report of the Committee, which reflected many of the factors that have brought Illinois to its current educational system. The committee will work with IERC and stakeholders around the state to identify best practices and sound new concepts that will enhance Illinois education, make it affordable, and bring Illinois back to the forefront of world-class public education.

He reported that they will have their initial meeting soon and they are asking for volunteers from the Council membership to serve on the committee. Chair del Valle requested that Ray inform the full Council of the date and time of their initial meeting. Ray Hancock agreed.

VII. Report on PARCC Assessment Consortium ---Elaine Johnson (ICCB)

Elaine Johnson reported that Illinois is part of the PARCC Consortium, which is primarily a K-12 assessment, but its impact on higher education is great than ever. In addition, PARCC is asking higher education to be at the table. She summarized some of the elements and their impacts on higher education:

1. Allowing colleges to use these scores and waive placement tests for entering high school graduates;
2. PARCC will not replace admissions criteria, just placement;
3. PARCC will not allow colleges and universities to set higher placement standards for courses;
4. PARCC is convening higher education partners to develop assessments. Elaine commented that the higher ed committee needs to be better informed on career readiness standards. At that point they will be better able to assist in PARCC.

VIII. Update on Educational Opportunities for Military Children—Lizanne DeStefano

The Interstate Commission on Educational Opportunities for Military Children has invited the P-20 Council to work with other states on extending and improving educational opportunities to children of military personnel. Please let Miguel del Valle or Lizanne DeStefano know if you are interested in working on this initiative.

IX. Distribution of Advance Illinois Annual Report Card---Robin Steans

Robin started by saying that she wanted to say on record that in developing the Advance Illinois Annual Report Card (provided to each Council member in their packet), they looked at a series of benchmarks on what percentage of the population have advanced degrees or credentials; they also looked at growth, and what's happening in other states. They tried to identify the leading indicators that will show us progress – test scores, e.g., are lagging indicators, but what are leading indicators? They also looked at achievement gaps and access issues. Highlights of the report include:

- Early Childhood Education is a bright spot, which was no surprise since Illinois has focused its efforts heavily on ECE in recent years. Illinois now has the most highly educated ECE workforce in the nation. The good news is tempered by the gaps in ECE bilingual education/educators.
- K-12 system news is tougher – we lag the rest of the country at both 3rd and 8th grade assessment levels. Of those states which require the ACT of all students (5 states), Illinois is the top performer. However, only 22% of high school graduates scored college ready. Only 33% of the Illinois adult population has earned an associate degree or higher. Illinois is 42nd in the nation in affordability of 4 year public institutions, which complicates already difficult access issues.

Conclusion: there are a lot of gaps out there and Advance Illinois purposely left out conclusions because there are not enough data to know the answers. The Illinois Longitudinal Data System will help us learn these answers.

Chair del Valle asked if this would be an annual report. Robin said it would probably be biannual. This is their first report, so they welcome feedback. They want to be able to expand and improve the report in its next issue.

Other Business:

Next meeting - Wednesday, January 26, 2011 - 1:00pm to 4:00pm

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.