

Attendees:

Ben Boer- Advance Illinois  
David Carson – College & Career Readiness, Rockford Public Schools  
Akeshia Craven-Howell – Pathways to College & Career, Chicago Public Schools  
Steven DePasquale – Illinois Board of Higher Education  
Lizanne DeStefano – P-20 Council  
David Deitmeyer – Moraine Valley Community College  
Marie Donovan – Department of Education, DePaul University  
Brian Durham – Illinois Community College Board  
Jennifer Foster – Adult & Family Literacy  
Larry Frank – Illinois Education Association  
Jon Furr – Office of Education System Innovation  
Ava Harston – Illinois Federation of Teachers  
Sarah Hartwick – Advance Illinois  
Elaine Johnson – Illinois Community College Board  
Amber Kirchoff – Governor’s Office  
Brenda Klostermann – Illinois Education Research Consortium  
Representative Linda Chapa LaVia – Illinois House of Representatives  
Jason Leahy – Illinois Principals Association  
Debbie Meisner-Bertauski – Illinois Board of Higher Education  
Nina Menis – P-20 Council  
Ciara Mentzer – Advance Illinois  
Brian Minsker – Illinois Parent-Teacher Association  
Melissa Mitchell – Federation of Community Schools  
Stacy Moore – Illinois Pathways Resource Center, University of Illinois  
Joy Mordica – Illinois Pathways Resource Center, University of Illinois  
Kristy Morelock – Illinois Community College Board  
Susie Morrison – Illinois State Board of Education  
Endea Murry – Advance Illinois  
Gene Olsen – St. Charles School District  
John Rico – P-20 Council  
Cheryl Rodgers – P-20 Council  
Julie Schaid – Elgin Community College  
Brian Spittle – Center for Access and Attainment, DePaul University  
Robin Steans – Advance Illinois  
Antoinette Taylor – Exceptional Needs Consultant  
Tod Treat – Richland Community Council  
Jason Tyszko – Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity  
Richard Voltz – Illinois Association of School Administrators  
Mark Williams – Academic Development Institute  
Kris Young – Parkland College

## Overview of the PWR Committee's structure and mission

### Review of proposed working model & benchmark brainstorming

### Review & discussion of potential policy findings (on Common Core/PARCC) from the last meeting

- Although PARCC could conceivably one day replace the Compass test, it would not work for entering adults. ACT would still be needed for school admission; doing so would not resolve the issue of multiple placement tests.
- We need to make sure that the needs of adults returning to education and ESL students are well represented during these discussions.
  - o Adult education, and in particular the newly aligned standards in adult education, will be addressed at the next meeting.
- We need to discuss what authentic assessment looks like. There are concerns with regard to additional forms of testing.

### Overview of on-track & early warning signs

- Rockford is trying to address this, since it seems that students don't understand the rules of the game. Before high school, they are promoted according to age, so they don't understand that they will need to pass to graduate. Students are required to participate in tutoring so that they understand what they need to know/do to pass.
- On-track measures tend to be more summative in nature; early warning signs – can typically be observed as you go along.
  - o We would need to be clear on the difference between the two if we were to switch to a proficiency model.
  - o Review of Illinois' report card on-track measures.
- College & Career Readiness project – There is a similar project through Race to the Top (RttT) in STEM areas.
  - o Juniors & Seniors participate in career counseling, advising and the curriculum is aligned to the Common Core. The second iteration of this project is just beginning. Math is the first focus. Students most likely to be able to move to the next level are being targeted.
  - o What does it mean to be leaning toward STEM? What are the pros and cons of a STEM path vs. a liberal arts path?
- We need to talk about outcomes beyond graduation. Multiple on-track measures would give the clearest picture.
- 50% of traditional students need math remediation. Math is a gateway to other parts of STEM (science, technology, engineering).
  - o Exploring 2 tracks in math – STEM & non-STEM. Working with RttT districts to do interventions before they have to come into the community colleges & pay for remediation.
- Cut scores

- Moraine Valley Community College – The inability to meet math cut scores is the single biggest factor in students deciding to drop out. 70% need math remediation there.
- We need to improve math instruction, not just raise cut scores.
- The danger of a common cut score: schools are different. We have smaller classes, lots of tutoring etc. at Heartland Community College. This is not necessarily true in all community colleges.
- Conley model – looks at more than academics. College knowledge. Importance of placement scores. Emotional intelligence. Self-motivation. Readiness is much more than a cut score.
- How do we identify on-/off-track for academic and career tracks.
- Potential on-track signs:
  - On track to graduate?
  - Prepared to work in a particular career?
  - Skills development
- Potential early warning signs:
  - Mobility – A personalized learning plan could help provide students with stable support across institutions. The longitudinal data system will improve how we keep track of mobile students.
  - Early childhood – When are children entering the school system? Are they signing up for all-day/part-day?
  - Course failure. We need to make sure that course failures are standards-based and not about homework completion, for example.
  - Suspensions
  - How many years in ESL?
  - Student attitudes/behaviors
  - Absences
  - GPA
- Career development and pathways
  - Concern about asking someone to shape their own education very early. Did you really know what you wanted to be in grade school?
  - Career development is about broadening opportunities and exposure rather than limiting students. It's not to say that we are locking kids into a career or track, but rather about creating a system that provides them with supports to be career readiness. How to better enable student decisions about careers earlier on.
  - Rockford example– We do not expect students to commit forever to a single career area, but rather believe it is important that students understand how to set goal and make a plan toward reaching that goal.
  - We need to encourage students that wouldn't normally go into STEM.
  - Aurora University is going to have its first STEM university. Going to mentor/work with kids from 5<sup>th</sup> grade on.
  - Important to orient kids toward fields that are growing.

- We don't differentiate as much between vocational and academic tracks. We need to train robust learners regardless.
- We need to be careful when student choices lower the bar, thus narrowing their options. Parents need to be well-informed.
- How might we need to update high school requirements to align with these new areas of emphasis?
  - We need to move carefully on this, and not jeopardize the good it could do by moving too quickly. So much is changing in K-12. We have to think about what we are changing and when.
- Keeping high school up-to-date and relevant
  - How do we think about Algebra in the Common Core
    - Would not necessarily be termed "Algebra II." Math coursework could be more integrated. Math I, II, III, & IV vs. Algebra I & II, etc.
    - Importance of alignment with the Common Core.
    - Would not necessarily have to be a course only on Algebra II. It could have that and other content woven in.
    - Concern that students won't take classes such as math if they test ready in their junior year.
    - Do we require four years of math in high school or require specific courses?
    - Has anyone defined "college freshman math" that students need to be ready for?
  - Meeting standards vs. completing Carnegie units.
  - We need to encourage students who are ahead of schedule to take advantage of college readiness. For example, it is an opportunity to get college credit in high school.
  - Review of intervention types for struggling students.
  - We need to create a structure of support at the state level for what needs to be happening in the schools. It needs to coordinate with what has already been set up/ is working at the local level.

## EPAS-EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT

### Recommended Policy Frameworks

- Lot of different ways to further policy
- A work in progress
- A Student-lens perspective and state and local infrastructure are needed to make student-directed pathways possible.
- What is missing? What gives us pause?

### Discussion

- Need to establish guiding principles for making improvements across the P-20 spectrum.

- We need to reach out the US Department of Education to make sure that our work aligns with what is coming federally.
- When looking at potential solutions, we need to know the difference between replicability and scalability.
- A better college and career readiness definition is needed.
  - o Cognitive: Meeting Common Core State Standards as demonstrated on PARCC (if it ends up being good), no remediation.
  - o Non-cognitive: Learning experiences student have had. Demonstrated persistence. How can social-emotional learning be better captured? How can we help students develop social capital?
  - o Different diplomas - PARCC vs. non-PARCC diploma – improvement or renaming the problem?
- Competency-based models
  - o We need more research on exit exams and other measures of proficiency.
  - o How will we define competency? Locally? By district?
  - o How do we think about dual credit in light of a competency-based system?
- GPA
  - o How much is it measuring behavior vs. achievement?
  - o What is the fidelity of that data?
  - o It could be used as one in a group of measures.
- Personalized learning plans:
  - o Could this be confused with an IEP? Would a name such as “student portfolio” prevent this? Does this signal the personalized aspect of the task effectively?
  - o It would need to be emphasized that these would need to be done for all students, regardless of ability level.
  - o Would there be an enforcement mechanism to ensure students complete one? If so, what would that look like?
  - o It would need to be portable and shareable across institutions.
  - o Language needs to capture that developing a personalized learning plan should be process of reflection with helpful guidance and support.
  - o How can students move between pathways? What is the interconnectivity between pathways?
- Counselors must talk across institutions for the good of the student.
- How can we better engage the employer community?
- The Common Core creates a different paradigm – It is less about teacher credentials and more about how to make sure they help students meet standards.
- Areas to deep dive in the future
  - o Online learning
  - o Effective counseling
  - o What are other schools/states/countries doing effectively?