

MEETING NOTES/MINUTES

December 19th, 2014

Start Time: [10:12 am CST]

End Time: [12:00 pm CST]

Committee Members Present

Rickey Berry, Vickey Berryman, Ricky Boggan, Johnny Franklin, Jenny Kern, April May, Nita Norphlet-Thompson, Mimmo Parisi, Sandra Parks, Marcie Skelton, Laurie Smith, Holly Spivey, Danny Spreitler, Jennie Sturgis, Carolyn Willis

Others Present

Kelsey Risman, Tate Gould, Kathi Gillaspy, Laura Dickson

Motions Passed

1. Dr. Mimmo Parisi motioned to approve the minutes from the previous three meetings. April May seconded the motion. The council unanimously approved the motion.
2. Dr. Parisi motioned to create a group to identify the strategic plan of SECAC. Spreitler seconded the motion to constitute a strategic planning group. The council unanimously approved the motion.
3. Spreitler motioned to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Parisi seconded the motion. The council unanimously approved the motion.

Meeting Notes

Chair Ricky Boggan called the meeting to order at 10:12 a.m.

Dr. Mimmo Parisi motioned to approve the minutes from the previous three meetings. April May seconded the motion. The council unanimously approved the motion.

Dr. Parisi presented minutes from the last two Data Committee meetings. He also presented the early childhood “rainbow” as well as the sample policy questions related to the integrated data system. Dr. Parisi asked the chair to allow the committee to review the questions and to approve them so that the data system could move forward with the ranking survey. Danny Spreitler motioned to approve the policy questions. Richard Berry seconded. The council unanimously approved the motion.

Holly Spivey said the Standards Committee would be meeting after the full SECAC meeting.

Kathi Gillaspy provided the update for the Professional and Workforce Development Committee. Gillaspy said the committee is waiting on a LifeTracks data request. The committee is also waiting on research related to articulation agreements. The committee will convene to hold a summit on alignment of early childhood education degree programs. Gillaspy discussed the advantages when degree programs are aligned across institutions of higher education. The committee will begin meeting after SECAC meetings moving forward.

Johnny Franklin said the Assessment Committee has not met, but the committee has attempted to pin down committee deliverables. He said committee needs data to be in place so that the state can understand what children are doing and why. Dr. Parisi said the Mississippi Department of Education is represented on a Data Committee subcommittee and that he intends to bring up this issue to the subcommittee. Franklin stated data should be used for program decisions, not accountability issues.

Spreitler said Frank Porter Graham is running a QRS research project, perhaps similar to the QRS committee tour. He said public schools will be a focus of the QRS committee tour. The QRS committee outcomes will address the audiences that Frank Porter Graham is not engaging.

Dr. Gould said four committees currently have work plans, and the remaining two will have work plans soon. Deliverables have been established for all committees. Work plans will be edited over the next few weeks to reflect any changes following the current set of meetings. An overall council work plan will be established soon and will help everyone sync their efforts.

Dr. Gould said the Mississippi Blueprint is being developed. The blueprint will serve as a general progress update. Dr. Gould said the outline of the document includes an introduction, a brief history, progress to date, a proposed approach to early care and education based on the six goals SECAC has agreed upon and the activities of the committees, and a conclusion.

Carolyn Willis said she feels initiatives in early care are in silos. She said Dr. Gould needs to have some “authentic conversations” about what committees are doing; committees need to speak with each other. Chair Boggan agreed and discussed the importance of understanding the best way to communicate. Franklin said Dr. Gould Tate plays an important role in being objective and deciphering the intentions and plans of the individual committees.

Dr. Parisi said the first phase of the Blueprint draft provides the content that will eventually link together. Dr. Parisi recommended constituting a group to outline the rules of working together. Spreitler cited the importance of strategic planning in uniting people into systems. Spreitler said now is the time for silos to fall.

Berry said SECAC is unsure of who it is and what its role is. He suggested SECAC needs to focus on developing the identity of SECAC. Spreitler cited the governor’s budget report, which challenges SECAC to put the pieces together, define itself, and get it together. Franklin asked if this will be the purpose of the Blueprint. Dr. Gould confirmed that it is the purpose of the Blueprint to develop the identity of SECAC, but he said he does not have the power to make the blueprint on his own. He said there is a gap that can only be filled by the types of conversations being had right now.

Norphet-Thompson said SECAC doesn’t have authority. Dr. Parisi agreed but pointed out that SECAC does have the power to advise, and advisement may go a long way in guiding legislature. Dr. Smith said the governor is in a place to listen to the council.

Dr. Parisi motioned to create a group to identify the strategic plan of SECAC.

Berry said SECAC already has such a group in place: the committee chairs meeting. Dr. Smith said it may be difficult to add that responsibility (strategic plan) to chairs who are already overloaded. Franklin said committee chairs should be happy about this task. He said they have been guiding the work all this time and may be in the best place to constitute the strategic planning group.

Parks asked for clarification on the purpose of the new group. Dr. Smith said the purpose would be to make recommendations for the strategic plan and fill in the gaps of the Blueprint. Dr. Gould echoed Dr. Smith's position.

Spreitler seconded the motion to constitute a strategic planning group. The council unanimously approved the motion.

Chair Boggan opened discussion of the bylaws. Dr. Smith said bylaws have never been adopted for SECAC. Berry clarified that this is a discussion and that a motion to approve the bylaws may be inappropriate. Spreitler agreed and said representatives need to go back to their organizations and clear the bylaws with their respective legal councils. Chair Boggan recognized the will of the council on this issue. He suggested all concerns be expressed in writing prior to the next meeting. Chair Boggan indicated to Dr. Gould that a timeline email should be sent out for written feedback.

Norphet-Thompson asked for clarification: has the committee been operating without bylaws? Skelton said she has a copy of bylaws that were approved in 2009.

The council discussed the idea of proxies. The conversation centered on naming a predetermined proxy as well as diluting the importance of the council. Skelton raised a point about people who are not directors making decisions that agencies may be held accountable to. No decisions related to this portion of the bylaws were made.

Discussion returned to whether or not the bylaws have ever been approved. There is confusion. Skelton said again that she has a copy that says "approved," but Dr. Smith said such a decision has never been documented in minutes.

Dr. Smith said the first Early Childhood Spotlight award will be presented in January.

Chair Boggan welcomed Jill Dent, who has been appointed a position at the Department of Education dealing specifically with early childhood education.

The project coordinator for B.E.E.P. (Best Early Education Practices) presented information about the organization. B.E.E.P. is a community-based organization in Meridian that seeks to address the well-being and kindergarten readiness of young children.

Berry said the First Lady is sponsoring a book program for new and young children.

Norphet-Thompson suggested defining exactly what qualifies as public comment.

Spreitler motioned to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Parisi seconded the motion. The council unanimously approved the motion. Chair Boggan adjourned the meeting at 12 p.m.