

MINUTES
TECHNOLOGY TASK FORCE
ONLINE LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: July 12, 2011
TIME: 8:30 AM
PLACE: EW42
MEMBERS: Chair: Andy Grover, Vice-Chair: Aaron McKinnon, John Goedde, Brad Patzer, Alan Dunn, Spencer Barzee, Cliff Green, Mike Caldwell

Chairman Grover: Chairman Grover called the meeting to order and had the Committee accept the minutes from the meetings in June.
Acceptance of June minutes

Jason Hancock (SDE) and Tim Hill (SDE): Jason Hancock and Tim Hill presented on fractional ADA and the decisions the subcommittee will be making in regards to fractional ADA.
Fractional ADA

In regards to questions about parent choice in online providers and exactly what the legislation states from yesterday, Jason Hancock made reference to section 6 of Senate Bill 1184, p. 22, lines 14-36.

Jason Hancock also made reference to Idaho Code 33-1002A in further explanation of fraction ADA, as stated in Senate Bill 1184, p. 11, lines 39-41:

“...attendance shall be counted and divided based on the portion of the student's daily attendance time that is spent in attendance at each school district, public charter school or online course.”

Jason Hancock pointed out to the Committee that one of their decisions is going to be how do we measure the “time” referred to in Idaho Code 33-1002A. Jason Hancock presented the Committee with three possible choices; periods, credits or minutes of instruction. Jason Hancock further explained the benefits and deficits of each measurement of time:

1. Periods
 - a. Fractions are easier to understand and communicate
 - b. Lack of uniformity in that periods are different lengths of times depending on the district, high school, or online course, resulting in equity issues.
 - c. Difficulty in accommodating different types of schedules.
 - d. Incentivizing success
 - e. No opportunity to accommodate acceleration; purely measured by a calendar rather than successful completion
2. Credit
 - a. Uniformity based on what a student has learned and accomplished
 - b. Accommodates different types of schedules
 - c. Fractions are easy to understand and communicate
 - d. Opportunity to incentivize success
 - e. The most easy to track and report
 - f. Difficult to accommodate acceleration
3. Minutes of Instruction

- a. Uniformity
- b. Accommodates different types of schedules
- c. May be able to accommodate acceleration
- d. Fractions are the most difficult to understand when discussing minutes
- e. No incentivizing success
- f. The most difficult in terms of tracking and reporting

Jason Hancock pointed out other challenges as the Committee moves forward:

1. Differentiated fractional ADA depending on the school district
2. When will the fractions be determined; single point in time, beginning of the term, etc.?
3. Challenge of acceleration; what if a student is completing an online course and they move through more quickly? This could present an overload if fractional ADA is determined by credits or minutes.
4. Summer course; what if fractions are still available because a student chose to take a lighter load during any given semester, will that student be able to extend the missed fractions into the summer months and take an online course?

The Committee discussed other issues that would occur if students were allowed to carry over fractions to summer online courses. Currently, summer school, if offered by a district, is paid for by the state for remedial purposes and at the end of a semester funding is not carried over. Jason Hancock mentioned that this is something to think about because the legislation does not specifically address this.

The Committee discussed basing the fractional ADA on one of the aforementioned choices. They expressed the need to choose the base that has the most continuity between districts, that is a measurement of what the student has learned, and that has clear, specific guidelines that are not easily manipulated. The choice that promotes student learning is the most desired.

There was further discussion by the Committee on Idaho statute criteria for earning high school credit: a minimum of 60 hours of instruction or if a student can prove mastery of the material. After further discussion in regards to the fact that fractional ADA only comes into play when a district does not have a contract with an online provider, most Committee members agreed that basing fractional ADA on credits seemed like the best choice. After further discussion it was proposed to accept credits as the base for fractional ADA; the motion was seconded. Cliff Green asked for the Committee to table the motion until further discussion; he felt that it was a little early to decide. Discussion ensued in regards to the need for further discussion or if the motion could be modified later. After further deliberation, the Committee decided to accept credits as the base for fractional ADA, the motion was seconded and all voted in favor.

Discussion ensued as to what the criteria would be to determine if a student had “completed” and earned credit for an online course, the means to determine if the online provider is to receive the totality of the fractional ADA. Jason Hancock said that the law doesn’t specify one way or another, but if the subcommittee would like to go this route, they can have the State Department of Education (SDE) draft a proposed rule based on the Committee’s

**Cliff Green:
Minnesota Online
Funding Brief**

recommendation and send it on to the State Board of Education to consider. Cliff Green shared a composed brief with Committee members, in order to overview the funding model for online education in Minnesota for possible application to Idaho code. Green had three pertinent questions for the Committee to consider in regards to fractional ADA:

1. What is the unit of calculation to be used for distribution of the funding between the district and the preferred content provider?
2. How does the funding work with dual enrolled, concurrent enrolled students?
3. How does the funding work with summer school courses?

Cliff Green presented information on Minnesota's general education funding, which is calculated on a 15 day ADM method. Currently, Minnesota has three options for funding a part-time or "one off" online class:

1. Contract: Between a vendor and a district
2. Completion: The funding is based on the state's general education funding formula and fluctuates yearly based on the input factors.
3. Enrollment: The funding is also based on the state's general education funding formula and will fluctuate yearly, but the basis for payment is beginning of semester enrollment.

The Committee discussed the pros and cons of each option in relationship to current Idaho distribution of funding. Further discussion occurred based on a possible funding model for online providers. Jason Hancock pointed out that currently funding goes to the school district directly. The fractional ADA is the mechanism by which the state has to calculate for each school district to pay the vendor for online schooling. The Committee discussed that it would be better for a school district to have a contract with a vendor so that fractional ADA would not come into play. Fractional ADA would be substantially larger for a smaller district.

Senator Goedde suggested that perhaps the state could negotiate with a vendor for a statewide contract. Jason Hancock stated that this is definitely an option in that schools could choose to go with the statewide contract or negotiate their own with a vendor that meets the criteria stated in Senate Bill 1184. This would be more beneficial for smaller districts.

Senator Goedde asked about support for fractional ADA through ISEE. Jason Hancock said those working on ISEE are aware of the law and work is underway so ISEE can set up the calculations based on the decisions that come out of the Committee meetings.

The Committee discussed state funding to schools at the beginning of each school year and fractional ADA in regards to a student completing an online course and the possibility that an online provider may not receive the full fractional ADA if a student does not complete a course based on the funding formula the Committee decides upon. In regards to an online provider possibly not receiving the full fractional ADA due to a student not completing the online course, the question arose as to whether or not a school would care if a student

completed an online course. The answer was that if a student does not complete a course, the money not paid to the online vendor would later be spent towards remediation purposes.

In regards to student movement between the districts and fractional ADA, the Committee discussed, the need for a student to be able to continue on with the same online course in a different school district.

The Committee expressed concern that rigor in online courses may not be present. Chairman Grover and Cliff Green reminded the Committee that one of the requirements of Senate Bill 1184, p. 22 states, that *“The state department of education or the Idaho digital learning academy has verified that the course meets state content standards,”* so this should not be a problem.

Further discussion focused on the monitoring of the online course that would have to take place and the possibility of incentives for online providers. Cliff Green reminded the Committee that online schools follow state rules and laws as they are written.

**Chairman Grover:
Conclusion and
agenda for August
meeting**

Chairman Grover concluded with several deciding points that the Committee needs to think over before the next meeting and bring back suggestions:

1. The idea of what a “completer” is. What level of proficiency does a student need to meet in order for it to be decided that they have completed an online course and received credit for it; grade, pass or fail, assessment score?
2. In regards to payment to the online vendor, what percentage is paid up front, and what percentage is paid at the completion of the course?
3. What would a statewide contract with an online provider look like?
4. The need for a larger district to speak to the Committee and their thoughts on fractional ADA in regards to their district.

Chairman Grover adjourned the meeting after letting the Committee know that he would be absent at August’s meeting, but would phone in. Vice-Chair Aaron McKinnon would be Chairman over the August meeting.