

MINUTES

TECHNOLOGY TASK FORCE

DATE: November 7, 2011
TIME: 8:30 am
PLACE: Senate Auditorium, WW02

MEMBERS: Spencer Barzee, George Boland, Mike Caldwell, Christopher Campbell, Linda Clark, Stefani Cook, Debbie Critchfield, Marne Curtis, Penni Cyr, Reed DeMordaunt, Keven Denton, Christine Donnell, Brian Duncan, Alan Dunn, Mike Fornander, John Goedde, Cliff Green, Wendy Horman, Wendy Jaquet, Jennifer Johnson, Desiree Laughlin, Salvatore Lorenzen, Tom Luna, Aaron McKinnon, Alan Millar, Brad Patzer, Heidi Rogers, Jayson Ronk, Gary Smith, Melinda Smyser, Bicker Therien, Chuck Winder

General Task Force Business

Superintendent Luna called the group to order at 8:35 am and gave the first presentation on measures of success for Students Come First and how all the parts of the Students Come First education reform laws are connected.

At a 60,000 foot level, our goal is to educate more students at a higher level with limited resources. At a 30,000 foot level, our goal is for every student to graduate from high school and go on to postsecondary education or the workforce without needing remediation. From there, we have to look at and monitor key student achievement measures, such as ISAT measures, the Idaho Reading Indicator, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), SAT scores, graduation rates, students going on to postsecondary education, the need for remediation, the number of college courses taken in high school, the achievement gap, and the number of adults with postsecondary certificates or degrees.

Students Come First is a comprehensive education reform with many different parts, but each part is interconnected. First, high standards are the foundation of a 21st Century Classroom. The state increased high school graduation requirements for the Class of 2013, making sure students take more Math and Science credits and a college entrance exam before graduating from high school.

Idaho has adopted the Common Core State Standards for Math and English language arts. These standards are fewer, clearer, higher and comparable with any country in the world. Through these standards, students will learn critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Idaho also implemented the Idaho Math Initiative and reworked the Idaho Reading Initiative. Through these initiatives, we have raised the bar in math and in reading.

Second, you must have great teachers and leaders. We can accomplish this through focused, relevant, individualized professional development; rigorous performance evaluations tied to student achievement; rewarding great teachers; and fair personnel practices.

Third, we must give Idaho teachers 21st Century tools for the 21st Century classroom. Idaho has made unprecedented investments in classroom technology, specifically a one-to-one ratio of mobile computing devices to students in every high school, \$13 million a year in advanced technology for every classroom, distance learning opportunities, digital content, and an instructional management system.

Fourth, we have to give every student advanced opportunities. We have implemented the Dual Credit for Early Completers Program, giving students the chance to earn up to 36 college credits if they meet high school graduation requirements early. Every student

will have access to high-quality courses and highly effective teachers through distance learning. We have expanded choice for every student.

Finally, every classroom teacher, educator and policymaker needs access to current, accurate data. The foundation for this new data system is our statewide longitudinal data system, known as ISEE. Thanks to a grant from the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation, we are implementing an Instructional Management System – known as Schoolnet – in every classroom in the state. We are also working towards the next generation of assessments to gather data on student achievement in less intrusive ways.

Auburn, Alabama Site Visit Report

Marne Curtis reported on the site visit to Auburn, Alabama. Curtis, Mary Vollmer, Alan Dunn, Gary Smith, and Alex MacDonald and Camille Wells (from the State Department of Education) participated in the site visit. The group visited Auburn Junior High School, a one-to-one mobile computing school. Auburn's technology initiative began in 2005. Students in grades 8 and 9 use a tablet PC, equipped with Dyknow software, which allows teachers to project their presentations to the student's device and monitor what the students are doing on their device. Students are able to use Dyknow to play back lessons, submit homework, and take notes/work problems. Additional software and all the school's textbooks are installed on all devices.

Curtis reported the group observed many classrooms and shared examples of how technology was being integrated in the instruction.

Curtis shared a number of Auburn's governance policies. Students are not encouraged, but are allowed, to download music onto their device. They are also allowed to personalize the desktop picture and screen saver. The devices go home with the student at night. At the end of the year, the devices are refurbished by an outside company. Theft, tracking, and filtering software are installed on every device. Each device is also engraved with the school name as an anti-theft measure. The district paid one student who frequently broke through the district's firewall to help them with their security issues. The district charges a user fee each year. Students are required to transport the device in a school purchased laptop bag. Mandatory student and parent orientation session are offered separately multiple times at the beginning of the year. Students are required to charge their own laptops at night. If a student breaks a device, the district decides whether it was accidental or negligent. The first accidental breakage is covered by the school. The second accidental breakage or a negligent breakage must be paid for by the student.

Finally, Curtis reported that Auburn administers weekly technology professional development to their teachers driven by the results of a gap analysis. They have seen increased student engagement and higher order thinking skills as a result of their technology initiative.

Maine Site Visit

Matt McCarter began the report on the site visit to Maine, which McCarter, Penni Cyr, Keven Denton, Christopher Campbell, Spencer Barzee, and Troy Wheeler (from the State Department of Education) attended. The goals of the Maine Learning Technology Initiative are to establish equity, integrate with Maine's learning results, avoid obsolescence, increase support for teacher preparation and ongoing professional

development, foster economic development, and formalize a learner-centric system of instruction.

Spencer Barzee told the group he learned it was important for teachers to have a digital presence. Increasing digital presence now will make the technology transition easier. Professional development has to be more than IT's responsibility and be delivered in many formats. Teachers are rising to the challenge in Maine, and technology is increasing accessibility for both teachers and students. Finally, a focus on digital citizenship will result in less digital mischief.

Keven Denton told the group all of Maine's RFP's are included in a single RFP. Having one RFP inclusive of everything (connectivity, tech support, professional development, etc.) means one person is responsible, and there's not finger pointing is anything goes wrong. Professional development must be offered on different levels (i.e. classroom implementation, administration implementation, technology support, etc.) and must be ongoing. Administrators, teachers, and technology staff must all be on the same page. Define your own success goals, or someone else will do it for you. It is critical to implement devices throughout an entire school, not by individual grade levels. All staff that works with students needs a device.

Penni Cyr told the group that she learned Certified Technology Integrators or Teacher Leaders are a crucial part of a successful technology program. It is crucial to include librarians and other ancillary teachers in the process, since they all work with students. Parents are an important piece of the system. It's a good idea to set "screen time" so students are not on computers all of the time. Professional development is driven by what teachers ask for. Finally, technology is a catalyst for more collaboration between teachers.

Matt McCarter concluded the presentation by reporting his observations. Maine opens school filters so students don't spend all day trying to hack around them. Instead, they let the students check their social media and email at the beginning of class for a minute or two then require their full attention for the rest of the time. Jeff Mao, Learning Technology Policy Director for Maine, suggested Idaho deploy devices to 1/3 of all schools, not 1/3 of students; otherwise, teachers end up with mixed classes and the technology doesn't get used for reasons of equity. Power and batteries are a non-issue in Maine (even in older buildings), because students take the device home to charge. Schools in Maine utilize students as resources for IT support, which serves as a learning opportunity and bolsters building level tech support. Finally, building leaders set the expectations of use with teaching staff.

High Quality Online Courses, Patrick Lowenthal

Patrick Lowenthal, adjunct faculty and instructional designer at Boise State University, presented on the elements of a high quality online course. He shared data that 5.6 million post-secondary students took one course online in 2009. iNacol estimates 4 million students are taking online courses online in K-12 today. In 2009, 1/3 (29.3%) of enrollments in post-secondary were online, and it's predicted that 50% of high school courses will be online by 2019.

Parents don't want their children to be required to take low quality versions of courses they could take face-to-face. While critics argue that online learning is somehow inferior to face-to-face courses, comparison studies, such as the *Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies*,

suggest there is no significant difference between online and face-to-face learning.

Quality online courses look different from K-12, higher education, and corporate/industry perspectives and are based on a number of variables. Despite the variables, there are things that can be done to improve the quality of nearly any course. The International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) has developed national standards for quality online learning, which breakdown elements of quality online courses, quality online programs, and quality online teaching, in order to create a quality online learning experience.

http://www.inacol.org/research/nationalstandards/iNACOL_CourseStandards_2011.pdf

Fractional ADA, Tim Hill and Jason Hancock

Tim Hill presented a brief overview of the public schools funding formula. Public School Funds come from state general funds, federal funds, state dedicated funds, and local funds. Roughly \$2 billion are distributed to schools each year (a combination of all these funds).

Average daily attendance (ADA) is calculated from data districts submit to the State Department of Education (SDE) about attendance. That ADA is then converted to support units (per Section 333-1002, Idaho Code). The divisor takes the size of the school district or charter school into consideration. The larger the ADA, the larger the divisor. The smaller the ADA, the smaller the divisor. In other words, smaller programs will require less ADA to generate a support unit, and larger programs will require more ADA to generate a support unit. This results in more funding per student for smaller programs, taking into consideration smaller class sizes that still require full-time staffing costs.

Jason Hancock then answered fractional ADA questions submitted after the last task force meeting:

- 1. How many times must [a district] fund an online provider if a student doesn't pass a course?* If a student is in a brick and mortar situation, the state still funds the district for the student to take the class again. The same will go for online courses, except there will be an online clearinghouse for students and parents to see ratings, completion rates, etc. of online courses. Another difference is that the subcommittee has recommended that part of the 2/3 that goes to an online course provider will be based on completion of the courses. That portion of the 2/3 has not been decided by the subcommittee yet.
- 2. Will fractional ADA affect seminary/release time?* No, students can still take release time, and there will not be fractional ADA.
- 3. Will fractional ADA be based on successful completion of courses online?* At least a portion. This is still to be determined by subcommittee.
- 4. Is there a defined appeal process if the district's calculations don't agree with SDE's for fractional ADA?* No formal process, but Tim Hill can help resolve if district's calculations aren't matching with SDE's.

There being no further business to come before the full task force, the task force took a break and went to the J.R. Williams Building for demonstrations by Discover Technology before moving on to subcommittee work in the afternoon.