

MINUTES
TECHNOLOGY TASK FORCE
Online Learning Implementation Subcommittee

DATE: October 10, 2011
TIME: 1:30 PM
PLACE: EW 42

MEMBERS: Chairman Andy Grover, Vice-Chair Aaron McKinnon, Spencer Barzee, Cliff Green, Mike Caldwell, Brad Patzer, Maria Nate, Penni Cyr

The Committee was called to order at 1:39 p.m.

Cliff Green gave a presentation over the work done by the Subcommittee in previous meetings. Mr. Green gave an overview of fractional ADA (based on course credits), Request for Information (RFIs) and Request for Proposal (RFPs), and the Minnesota model for online learning (vendor payment based on enrollment vs. completion)

Regarding student/parent choice, Jason Hancock, State Department of Education (SDE), clarified that districts may choose which two courses will be offered online for the online course requirements needed to graduate. Parents/students may take initiative to take additional online courses. Only overload online courses will be paid for by parents/students.

It is recommended that Idaho pays 2/3 of the provider portion of fractional ADA upon enrollment of students and the remaining 1/3 upon course completion. A larger payment will be made to the vendor at the end of the first semester, as the vendor will receive the remaining 1/3 of fractional ADA from the students who completed a course in the first semester, and the 2/3 funding for students enrolled in online courses for the second semester. Fractional ADA would not occur in districts that have their own contracts with vendors.

It is recommended that the RFP gives the same dates of payment for each provider to alleviate confusion if students in the same school take courses with different vendors. It will be difficult for the school to submit payment if payment dates are different for each vendor.

In regards to online course quality, Mr. Green explained that all vendors and curriculum must be approved by the state, all teachers must be certified according to Idaho standards and other measures can be taken to ensure quality courses, such as allowing students and parents to rate online providers and post these results online for public viewing.

In response to questions about ISEE and online courses, Mr. Hancock explained that there will be a flag set up for districts that already have a vendor contract in place, so that fractional ADA is not equated.

Regarding fractional ADA and universities, Mr. Hancock explained that dual credit courses are currently charged \$65, with the teacher usually being from the high school (not a college professor). In these situations, fractional ADA would not apply. However, it would apply in online or dual credit courses when the teacher is employed by the university instead of the school district.

There was a discussion over the benefits of fractional ADA and whether it created unnecessary confusion or gave districts another option in addition to districts creating their own contracts or using a statewide contract.

It was mentioned that Schoolnet could not be the portal for a provider grading rubric and a portal would need to be created. Parents would use the portal to view vendor ratings and register for an online course. The portal would be linked to ISEEs and the district registrar for fractional ADA purposes and/or to inform districts which students have enrolled in which courses.

Ryan Gravette, Director of Information and Technology with the Idaho Digital Learning Academy, stated that it would take about two months to develop such a portal. IDLA has joined with the Twin Falls School District and ISEE in working to register for IDLA courses quicker. There is also "Fast Pass" registration that allows the parents to register students for classes approved by the district, thereby alleviating workload on district registrar staff.

Concerns were brought up with parents enrolling students without counselor/school involvement, which led to discussion of having district/school input in the portal as well, or possibly having the portal linked to the district's counseling office to gain approval prior to course enrollment.

MOTION:

Mr. Green made a motion that SDE staff work with school districts to develop and implement a portal for parents to register students for online courses provided under Idaho Code 33-1627. Motion seconded by Maria Nate. **Motion carried on voice vote.**

Mark Little, Department of Administration, presented a rough draft of a Request for Information (RFI). There is no incentive for vendors to respond to an RFI, nor do they have to respond to a RFI in order to submit a RFP.

The Committee discussed categories to include in the RFI, including: expectations of product, pricing, quality of content, quality of instruction, quality of system (loading courses into SDE portal for parent registration), higher education/advanced placement, quality student supports, and accountability.

The Committee recessed for a ten minute break.

The Committee will draft questions for the RFIs tonight, and return to the full Committee tomorrow, after which the questions will go to Mr. Little so he may begin drafting the RFI and dispersing it to vendors.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:54 p.m.