

MEETING NOTES: MASTERY-BASED LEARNING WORK GROUP

June 20, 2019

Members Attending: Kory Kalahar, Ashley Lin, Lafayette Jones, Krestin Behr, Aurora Flores, Kevin Laverty (in place of Dr. Paul Pitre), Maria Flores (in place of Frieda Takamura)

Staff Attending: Dr. Randy Spaulding, Linda Drake, Alissa Muller

Members Absent: Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos, Rep. Chris Corry, Sen. Lisa Wellman, TBD
Republican Senator, Miguel Saldaña, Taylor Meyer, Kathe Taylor

1:00-1:30 Introductions

SBE Staff Introductions

Randy Spaulding, Executive Director of the State Board of Education, welcomed members, introduced himself and acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the traditional lands of the Nisqually and Squaxin Peoples: "As we share this acknowledgement we also recognize that as a system the people native to this land are among those who our educational institutions have not served well. We are here today to rethink our approach to educating students in our system.

'It is important that we identify and eliminate institutional policies, practices, and barriers that reinforce and contribute to predictably disparate educational outcomes and honor and actively engage communities as partners in developing and advocating for equity-driven policies, practices, and resources that meet the needs of all students.

'This is the first meeting of the Mastery-Based Education Workgroup. On behalf of the State Board of Education, I want to thank you for joining us today. This work is a priority for the Board and we appreciate the support of our legislative champions in making this work possible."

Randy introduced SBE staff who will support the workgroup. He shared the list of workgroup members, and noted that several people were not able to attend the first meeting and we will be revisiting some topics as the work moves forward. Today's meeting is critical because members will be providing input to us so that we can refine our work plan and ensure that you have the information and resources necessary to make actionable recommendations for our system.

Alissa Muller, Policy Manager for Career and College Readiness, and Linda Drake, Director of Career and College Readiness, for the State Board of Education introduced themselves.

Work Group Members introduced themselves, answering the questions, "Why did you (or do you) show up each day in high school? If not, why not?"

1:30-2:00 Scope of the Work Group

Linda reviewed the scope of the work group:

- Review barriers to mastery-based learning in Washington (Slide 6)
- Examine opportunities to increase student access to relevant and robust mastery-based academic pathways aligned to career and postsecondary goals (Slide 7)
- Review the role of the HSBP in supporting mastery-based learning (Slide 7)

No questions were raised on work group scope.

2:00-2:30 Norms of the Group

Alissa facilitated a group discussion. The agreed upon norms for the work group (to be revisited at the next meeting when additional members are present) are as follows:

- Show up
- Start and end on time
- Assume positive intent
- Everyone gets a chance to speak, even if the choice is to pass
- Stay engaged, try to avoid distractions
- Ask clarifying questions

A work group member asked a question about how decisions will be made – there was agreement to use the consensus approach and implement other processes (e.g. possible consensus building tools) as/if needed.

2:30-2:45 Public Comment

No public comment was made at this meeting.

2:45-3:00 Current State of Mastery-Based Education in Washington (Slides 9-22)

Linda presented a PowerPoint.

- “Mastery-based learning” is the terminology that is used in the law, so that is what this work group will use. Other states and people within our state use may use other terms with similar meanings, so there is a potential for confusion. “Competency-based learning” is probably the most common used term.
- A big part of the idea of mastery-based learning is that it is unique to each student, and teaching is tailored to the individual student’s personalized needs. A lot of the work around mastery-based learning has been in alternative learning and work-based learning areas.
- The law’s definition is what we will use as the goal for this work. Although, I would note that bullets #2-5 are characteristics of good instruction in a traditional setting. One of the key ideas of mastery-based learning is the individualized pacing of learning for students—based on demonstration of having mastered content. We want to increase capacity of this in our state—and that by definition this increases good instruction.
- Slides 12-18: All of these things have a funding aspect to them (current laws that govern mastery-based education in Washington).
- Group consensus: Mastery-based learning should include both soft and hard skills. Additionally, a possible recommendation from this group might include adding to the high school credit definition (in SBE rules).

- A brief summary of some of what is happening in other states on this topic was shared.

Other comments from work group members:

- Both students are aware of competency-based credit opportunities in their districts, though primarily in world languages as well as possibly in mathematics.
- The work group needs to consider course code/Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) educator banding, rigor/non-rigor course codes
- Perhaps we could do a site visit at one of the waiver schools to learn more. Do a meeting at one of the schools? A desire was also expressed to hopefully have a student panel at the school meeting.
- EOGOAC has done a lot of work focused on special education, students of color, and English Language Learners—we should look at Universal Design for Learning concepts to ensure that classrooms are set up for a spectrum of learning.
- Regarding earning a high school diploma when you earn an associate's degree—As counselors, we are constantly watching Running Start students to ensure they will earn their high school diploma while they're taking their Running Start classes/working toward their associate's degree. (In this case in slide 22, the diploma is awarded by the college not the high school, and that's happening now. To get the diploma from the high school you have to meet the high school requirements.)

3:00-3:45

Discussion

- Defining Terms
 - High School and Beyond Plan: Members felt like they need to have a discussion about the plan—how is it different using a mastery-based learning model?
 - Assessment: Evaluation tool to evaluate if a student has demonstrated proficiency/mastery
 - “Meaningful and positive for students”—need to make sure results are useful for students and can inform instruction.
 - Learning Standards
 - Members requested a glossary on our website, to include terms like Universal Design for Learning and Individualized Education Program.

• Group Discussion of Workgroup Outcomes

The legislature has requested two reports: 1. Preliminary findings / possible recommendations December 2019 2. Findings and Recommendations Dec. 2020. Beyond those reports, how will we know the work group has been successful/what do you want the outcomes to be? Work group member responses:

- Develop a bridge for mastery-based education between high school and higher education, including transcripts, plus other issues. They need to be aware of this work, and we need to develop relationships.
- High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP)
 - We need to look at the expectations of staff types in the proto-typical school model, compared to how districts are actually implementing this work. When and how is HSBP being delivered? Who is implementing?
 - The values of SBE (as outlined in their [strategic plan](#)) around equity and student voice should be extended to this group. To implement quality HSBPs, technology

alone is not a solution. Districts need to dedicate staff time to ensure individualized HSBPs for each student.

- Information to students about opportunities after high school—it is very uneven how and when students are informed. Better HSBP, and greater equity of information.
- Barriers to mastery-based education, and how to overcome. How to break the mold? Where are people doing this well? What are opportunities for awarding credit, that aren't currently being awarded?
- Finding ways to present this information to principals, students, and administrators. There are so many students for whom the system doesn't work, and they don't know what other options there are for getting their education.
- Formative assessments, some other states are taking advantage of the vertical scaling. How do we tie in this work with the current testing system—or can we tie it in? If some students are ready to jump ahead, how can we create a structure that lets them jump ahead. Or if they need to take longer, same question.
 - Differentiated—every student is different. They may be good in some subjects and need help in others.
- Example of completely performance-based—Lindsey School District in California
- In Renton, transportation is a factor, and directs some students to make particular choices. Buses designed for Running Start students would help with this.
- Seat time and minimal instructional hours. How does it align with funding?
- College-Bound scholarship students—how to message to these students.
- 24-credit requirements are a barrier for student to accessing some opportunities. Flexible options in relationship to 24-credit graduation requirements.
- Concern that 1599 and this mastery-based work could lead to tracking—how to make it student- and family-guided rather than educators projecting biases?
- High school credits in middle school results in students having more pathways in high school.
- What information do you need to achieve the statutory charge for the workgroup?
 - More information from districts who might be already doing mastery-based education, what it would look like? Could we look at examples for large, middle, small, geographic diversity?
 - Assignment table of the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB)—Title 2, there are requirements for teachers to be out of field. Endorsements, teacher credentials, how does mastery-based work with teacher preparation. How to structure the schools to support this work?
 - A usable tool that paints the picture for what the future could look like. Perhaps a video or tool kit.
 - We want to advance mastery-based work, but not make the system more complex.
 - What kind of citizen are we trying to encourage and develop—life-long learners, good citizens etc. Let's consider this as we do this work.
 - How do we elevate years 5, 6, 7. There is a stigma attached to it, but it is totally okay for students to take longer than 4 years to graduate from high school. And, if we want to do this work, then we need to allow for students who need more time, and encourage and recognize this.
 - How do we deal with acceleration? We want to make sure students are doing something valuable with their time.
 - National research

- Conferences? iNACOL
- Are there countries that are doing this?
- Bargaining—impact of mastery-based teaching, learning and credits on bargaining.
- At Westside—elective competency-based credit—no child left inside—competency-based credit in leadership and science. Mental health mini-session. Creative arts from the community. STAMP test for world language. Want to have more core-curricula options.
- Building on native speaker skills to increase literacy, so that students who have skills in a non-English can get mastery-based credit.
- Eatonville—STEM based, elementary outdoor, Northwest Trek and Mount Rainier. GRITS: a farm program—half the day, interest in expanding and giving more credit for the work the students are doing in middle school and high school. Very interesting in a regional aspect—allowing local opportunities for kids to do something meaningful in their own community and earn credit.
- More information about Everett senior seminar, credit for advisory, etc.
- Is there interest and overlap with school choice—innovation zones—SAMI, SOTA, Innovation High School, in Tacoma School District?
- Personalized learning ideas, HSPB—whatever research that might indicate how to increase personalized education.
- Universal Design for Learning in state ESSA plans.

3:45-4:00

Next Steps

We will send out iNACOL conference information, today's PowerPoint, discussion notes, and a Doodle poll for our fall meetings early next week. Thank you all for engaging with us today!