

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Meeting
September 9, 2013

Members Present: Mr. Robinson; Mr. Bowers; Mr. Drew; Sen. Fair; Sen. Hayes; Ms. Hairfield; Rep. Smith; Sen. Matthews; Dr. Merck; Rep. Neal; Mr. Whittemore; Mr. Martin, Mr. Warner; and Dr. Zais.

State Board of Education Members Present: David Blackmon; Barry Bolen; Mike Brennan; Traci Young Cooper; and Dru James.

Staff Present: Ms. Barton; Dr. Andrews; Ms. Geiger and Ms. Yow

Welcome and Introductions – Mr. Robinson welcomed the members of the State Board of Education and public to the informational meeting, an update on the status of assessments.

Dr. Zais asked to be recognized to make a short statement. Dr. Zais reiterated his non-support of the Common Core State Standards. He recommended that the state adopt one system of accountability and that the assessment chosen for the one system of accountability be the best test for the lowest price.

Sen. Fair regretted that the forum would not address the Common Core State Standards. He did advise the EOC and State Board to look at actions taken in Oklahoma, Alabama and Michigan to delay implementation of Common Core or to withdraw from the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC).

Mr. Robinson recognized the moderator for the meeting, Dr. Gene Wilhoit, Director of the National Center for Innovation in Education at the University of Kentucky, former director of the Council of Chief State School Officers and former commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Education. Dr. Wilhoit summarized the history of standards and assessments. He noted that no state has yet to align its assessment or accountability system to student expectations. Currently, there is cautious optimism in the country as all states are being reflective and aligning their assessment system to the needs of the key stakeholders: postsecondary education and business. For the first time, businesses and higher education are discussing skills like persistence that students must have to succeed. He noted that all new assessments will have to be aligned with new technology. He cautioned South Carolina to be very thoughtful and deliberative as it considers five options for a state assessment system: (1) state-developed test; (2) Smarter Balanced or PARCC; (3) contract with ACT or other non-profit vendors; (4) review outside vendors; or (5) adopt a hybrid system of assessments. He reiterated that districts should focus in 2013-14 on building the infrastructure needed regardless of which assessment is chosen. The infrastructure should include: university-support system; new teaching and learning materials; and technology. In 2014-15 the accountability system will follow with phases of implementation.

Dr. Wilhoit advised the state to consider a system of assessments:

- Summative is only part of the system;
- Interim assessments;
- Guides for teachers;
- Retake options;
- Ways to measure extremes on either end of the achievement spectrum;
- Digital library resources;
- Technology
- Testing Time

- Costs
- Scoring process
- Timeliness of scoring process
- Information to districts and state
- Validity and reliability for student results

Mr. Robinson then recognized Dr. David Gupta, Vice President and Matt Lisk, Executive Director at the College Board who discussed the current assessments used in South Carolina including the SAT, PSAT, and Advanced Placement (AP) test program. Currently, SAT has established 1550 on all three portions of the SAT as the benchmark for college and career readiness. Research indicates that students scoring a 1550 have a 65% likelihood of a B- in the first year of college. The presenters noted that the SAT, PSAT and NMSQT will be redesigned.

The new SAT will be more rigorous and include skills required in the Common Core State Standards. In the near future, the College Board is going to develop data and support tools for students in grades 6 through 11 to help with instructional framework and performance tasks. Questions were raised about how College Board chooses schools to field test the changes and how College Board will improve upon math and science with STEM being such an emphasis. Currently, the College Board is not designing an assessment to measure Common Core State Standards in grades 3 through 8.

Mr. Robinson then recognized Paul Weeks, Vice President for Career and College Readiness at ACT, Inc. Mr. Weeks discussed ACT's Aspire assessment program in English language arts, mathematics, science and writing for students in grades 3 through 8. Aspire will measure college and career readiness and is aligned to Common Core. The test will also be a predictor of college and career readiness. The test will be available in the spring of 2014. States that enter into a contract for the full battery of tests before the end of calendar 2013 will be charged a discount fee of \$11.70 per student. Currently 27 states use Explore, PLAN and ACT. Thirteen states give ACT to all 11th graders. Questions were asked concerning: (1) ability to use the battery of tests for teacher evaluation; (2) turn-around time for test results; (3) importance of preserving creativity in the classrooms; and (4) availability and importance of interim and formative assessments for classroom teachers.

Then Mr. Robinson recognized Elizabeth Jones, Director of Assessment at the South Carolina Department of Education. Ms. Jones presented an overview of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium including the amount of time that students would spend taking the Smarter Balanced Assessment in ELA and mathematics and the costs of the assessment. Questions were raised regarding the costs of technology and infrastructure at the district level to administer the test; the window of testing; the possibility of formative assessments being developed in the future; and the paper and pencil administration option which is available for three years.

Dr. Wilhoit then concluded by making several observations. South Carolina should be clear on the outcome or expectations of the summative assessment. If the expectation is that all students are college and career ready, South Carolina must define what that means for its students and citizens.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.