

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

Work Session

MINUTES

August 4, 2014

President Haas called the work session to order at 5:30 p.m. in the board room of the FNSBSD Administrative Center at 520 Fifth Avenue. The work session was called to discuss assessment strategy.

Present:

Heidi Haas, President
John Thies, Treasurer
Allyson Lambert, Clerk
Lisa Gentry, Member
Sue Hull, Member

Absent:

Wendy Dominique, Vice President
Sean Rice, Member

Staff Present:

Dr. Karen Gaborik, Interim Superintendent of Schools
Mike Fisher, Chief Financial Officer
Sandra Kowalski, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Instruction
Shaun Kraska, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Instruction
Bob Hadaway, Executive Director of Special Education
Janet Cobb, Executive Director of Technology
Peggy Carlson, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Johanna Carson, Director of Community and Public Relations
Elizabeth Schaffhauser, Director of Employment and Education Opportunity
Dan Domke, Director of Career and Technical Education
Helen Clark, Director of Federal Programs
Dr. Ellis Ott, Research Associate and Accountability Coordinator
Sharon Tuttle, Executive Assistant to the Board of Education

Educator Accountability & Assessment [0:31]

Board members and the administration discussed:

- Educator accountability timeline
 - District was on track with the state for the educator accountability implementation timeline. Districts fully implement new evaluation system in 2015-16 school year.
 - Pilot a draft teacher evaluation instrument, starting on August 14.
- 2013-2014 District Draft Assessment Calendar [1:45]
 - NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) – Grades 4, 8, & 12 at Hutchison High School.
 - Terra Nova – Grades 5 & 7 – reading, writing, & math.
 - Value of AIMS Web data and its ability to predict student achievement.
- ACT/SAT/WorkKeys Calendar [9:59]
 - High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSGQE) replaced with requirement of students to take a college and career ready assessment – ACT/SAT/WorkKeys.
 - State provided for in-school testing days.

Educator Accountability & Assessment (continued)

- **Alaska Measures of Progress (AMP)** [11:29]
 - Alaska previously administered the Standards Based Assessment (SBA). The state has selected the Achievement and Assessment Institute (AAI) to develop both an interim and summative assessment, Alaska Measures of Progress (AMP), specific to Alaska, which will measure the Alaska English Language Arts & Mathematics Standards, adopted by the state in 2012. The state is scheduled to begin using the new AMP assessment in the spring of 2015.
 - Challenges include developing assessments in all subject areas and timelines.
- **New Alaska Assessments** [17:27]
 - New assessments were needed to align and assess the new state standards. SBAs assessed the state's previous standards and not aligned to the new standards.
 - AMP assessments will be available in two formats - online and paper/pencil.
 - Administrators and educators will participate in the development of new assessments and teacher evaluation process.
 - Challenge on how to measure growth for the teacher evaluation in a way everyone can understand.

The administration presented two recommendations: [18:34]

1. (a) Continue use of AIMS Web in grades K-8 for RTI purposes.
 - Immediate feedback to teachers.
 - Special education referrals reduced.
- (b) Pilot AIMS Web in grades K-6 for use as one of the required measures of student growth in ELA and Math.
 - AIMS Web is norm-referenced in grades K-9.
 - AIMS Web is highly correlated with old SBAs.
 - Will probably be able to show it's aligned with AMP.
 - Aligned with Common Core, so should align with Alaska State Standards (AKSS).
2. Do not introduce a new norm-referenced test this year.
 - District has a tremendous amount on plate to implement AMP and new accountability system. There will be issues during the first year, especially since it is online delivery, which is new. Need to be very cognizant of teacher stress and impact on the classroom, instruction time, etc.
 - No budget.
 - Need to clarify purpose of norm-referenced tests.
 - Audience – board, administration, teachers, parents. Teachers do not typically find norm-referenced assessments such as Terra Nova or SBAs as a useful tool to inform instruction. Summative assessment – results come after the end of the school year.

Measures of Student Growth [20:28]

Measures of student growth tied to teacher evaluations. Direction and guidelines from DEED were in continual process. There were still many unanswered questions. The state has looked to Fairbanks as a model in some aspects.

- **Student Learning Data** [21:19]
 - Student learning data, as noted by the state is objective, empirical, valid measurement of a student's growth in knowledge, understanding, or skill in a subject area.
 - Included in all certified teacher and administrator evaluations.

Measures of Student Growth (continued)

- Examples of student learning data included scores from curriculum-based measures, universal screeners, standardized assessments, portfolios of student work, student projects, performances, and career and technical certifications.
- Numerous measures or assessments could be used to satisfy the student learning data requirement. Some examples: NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELs), pre-and post-curriculum-based tests, and teacher-created school/district common assessments.
- The Facts about Alaska Educator Accountability [22:49]
 - Beginning in the 2015-16 school year, teachers and administrators will be evaluated using student learning data.
 - Lots of local control. Expected to get baseline process in place this school year, pilot as much as possible, and expand on it.
 - District's evaluation workgroup has been working hard on this process.
 - Must include 60 percent of students taught – can exclude students for a variety of factors including attendance, etc. – the district's Evaluation Work Group needs to determine exclusion.
 - District's evaluation system must use two to four measures of student growth to determine administrators' and teachers' contributions to student learning. They must use statewide assessments as one of the measures of student learning, when appropriate statewide assessments are available.
 - District must assign one of four performance levels – exemplary, proficient, basic, or unsatisfactory – to each standard. In reporting to the state, the district must also assign an overall rating utilizing the same four performance levels.
 - To ensure inter-rater reliability, the district must provide evaluator training.
 - The state has mandated that in the school years of 2015-2016 and 2016-2017, 20 percent of teachers' and administrators' overall ratings will be dependent on student learning; in school year 2017-2018, 35 percent of the overall rating will be dependent on student learning; and in the school year 2018-2019 and beyond, 50 percent of the overall rating will be dependent on student learning.
- Summer Content Leadership Team Subgroup Work [25:47]
 - Content leadership teams and administration worked on developing benchmark assessments in math and English Language Arts (ELA).
 - Long-term goal is to measure student growth.
 - Start small, phase in, and expand.
 - Need formative assessment to provide teachers the information necessary to be sure students were on track for summative assessments.
 - District may consider an interim assessment.
- Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) [51:07]
 - DEED definition: Measurable, long term academic goal informed by available data that a teacher or team sets at the beginning of the year for all students or for subgroups of students.
 - State has provided an Alaska Educator Evaluation System Student Learning Objective (SLO) template.
 - Can use established assessments (AIMS Web, MAP for ELA and math). District will have to create assessment tools for all other content areas.

Measures of Student Growth (continued)

- The district will utilize Content Leadership Teams and the curriculum department to guide the process.

The administration presented three recommendations: [1:00:55]

1. Pilot AIMS Web as one of the required measures of growth for grades K-6 in ELA and math.
2. (a) Consider discontinuing administration of Terra Nova.
(b) Pilot MAP as one of the required measures of growth for grades 7-12 in ELA, math, and science.
 - If Terra Nova discontinued – district could use the funds to pilot MAP.
 - MAP is aligned to the ACT.
 - Price is \$13.50 per student for pilot or entire district.
3. Pilot benchmark assessments in ELA, math, and as many subject areas as possible in grades K-12 so there are a variety of options to consider for use in the new evaluation process.
 - Subgroups continue work in K-6 math and K-12 ELA.
 - Benchmarks for electives still needed to be created.

President Haas left the meeting at 6:34 p.m. and turned the gavel over to Mr. Thies.

Board member and administration discussion included how student growth would be shown; concern about not having formative assessments to compare district student achievement to other districts/states; concern about not evaluating students merely for teacher evaluations, but to help students; not certain if in-house assessments would provide enough information; concern about discontinuing Terra Nova; AIMS Web providing nationally normed segments that would allow even more comparisons than Terra Nova for K-6 and MAP could be nationally normed for 7-12; longitudinal data; teacher capacity; and screening tools versus formative assessment tools.

Technology Update [1:17:25]

Administration provided information on the district's current technology inventory, infrastructure, technology support, and challenges regarding its preparation for the new online assessments. The district was in good shape and had completed two online tests last year. The district was ready to support the new online assessments.

Communication Plan [1:22:35]

Administration reviewed the upcoming communication plans for rolling out the new assessments and teacher evaluation process to staff and parents. Many of the changes would be covered at the August 14 professional development day. The district was on track, but the changes were daunting.

Review [1:26:10]

Superintendent Gaborik summarized the board's input and concerns. The board wanted the district's evaluation to compare to other areas in the state and nation as much as possible; a formative assessment that directly correlated with Alaska State Standards and AMP for teachers not only had timely feedback that would impact instruction but also tied directly to the summative assessments and standards; concerns around AIMS Web; continuing to investigate whether or not MAP would be more comparable to the Terra Nova and did the district need to expand the pilot – noting the district did not have enough funding for all students;

Board members thanked the administration for the information and presentation. They thought the recommendations were good; they were just concerned that teachers and families were able to get credible information they needed to make decisions. Board members appreciated the administration's work and willingness to consider all options.

Board Comments/Announcements

Board members requested work session documents and information be provided in advance of the meeting to give them the opportunity to review the information.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by Sharon Tuttle, executive assistant to the Board of Education