**Mississippi Accountability Task Force Meeting**

**December 5, 2019**

**DRAFT Meeting Notes**

Meeting Participants

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Last Name:** | **First Name:** | **Agency:** | **Position:** |
| Burrow | Alan | MDE | Director of District and School Performance |
| Baliko | Richard | Noxubee County | Assistant Superintendent |
| Ballard | Robin | Lowndes County School District | Deputy Superintendent |
| Brewer | Elaine | Senatobia School District | Special Education Teacher |
| Brown | Demarrio | Copiah County School District | Curriculum Coordinator |
| Brown | Kelli | Petal School District | Director of Student Assessment |
| Domaleski | Chris | Center for Assessment | External Facilitator |
| Hovanetz | Christy | Foundation for Excellence in Education | External Expert |
| Davis | Miskia | Sunflower County School District | Superintendent |
| Donovan | Deborah | MDE | Data Analytics and Reporting |
| Evans | Lance | New Albany School District | Superintendent |
| Faulkner | Windy | Union County School District | Assistant Superintendent |
| Fondren | Kristen | Aberdeen School District | Principal |
| Jones | Marion | Corinth School District | Math Specialist |
| Kuykendall | Ryan | DeSoto County | Director of Accountability & Research |
| Martin | Tim | Clinton Public Schools | Superintendent |
| Menotti | Nicole | Bay Waveland School District | Director of Curicculum and Instruction |
| Michael | Lindsay | Gulfport School District | Commission on School Accreditation |
| Minor | LaToya | Vicksburg Warren | Principal |
| Pambianchi | Lee | Rankin County School District | Principal |
| Vanderford | Paula | MDE | Chief Accountability Officer |
| Peasant | Eddie | Starkville-Oktibbeha School District | Superintendent |
| Pulley | Margie | Tunica County | Superintendent |
| Aultman | Rosemary | Board of Education | Board Member |
| Seals | Charlotte | Madison County Schools | Superintendent |
| Tiblier | Vickie | Ocean Springs School District | Principal |
| Williams | Aaron | Simpson County School District | Teacher |

**Welcome and Introductions**

Following welcome remarks by Dr. Paula Vanderford and introductions, Dr. Chris Domaleski reviewed the purpose of the Accountability Task Force (ATF) and the ground rules for deliberations. Subsequently, he reviewed the proposed agenda for the meeting.

**Background: Accountability in Mississippi**

Next, Mr. Alan Burrow provided a review of all the elements of the accountability system. Mr. Burrow described the changes to the system in recent years and explained how the current system is designed and implemented. The presentation included a longitudinal review of performance data on key indicators. He highlighted Mississippi’s recent gains on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) that are leading the nation in multiple categories. Many task force members also recognized and commended this achievement.

**U.S. History in Accountability**

The State Board requested that the ATF examine the implications of potentially removing U.S. History from the accountability model. The ATF was asked to consider:

* What are some options if U.S. History is removed?
* What is the likely impact?
* Would removal necessitate establishing a new baseline?

Several options for redistributing the weights were reviewed with the ATF and some high level data was shared to estimate impact.

After reviewing and discussing the options, the ATF decided that if the State Board of Education eliminates the US History test ***the points previously associated with US history should be reallocated to science***. The data provided show that the overall interpretation and impact to the system is likely within an acceptable range such that changes to the cut scores would not be needed and claims of comparability could be supported.

At the same time, many members of the task force favored increasing the capacity of the accountability model to measure career readiness with credible measures such as work keys or industry certification or similar comparable measures. The task force would like to revisit the indicators and weights related to career readiness. Notwithstanding, the ATF recognized this process would take time to fully explore the alternatives and impact and to develop an implementation plan.

**Growth Measures**

Next the ATF reviewed the current methodology for including growth in the accountability model and discussed whether growth expectations are reasonable and appropriate for all students and schools. In particular, the task force discussed whether growth expectations for students in levels 3A, 3B are too stringent since students in these categories earn growth points at disproportionately lower rates.

Many ATF members expressed the view that maintaining a score in level 3 is an accomplishment that should be valued to some degree. Others supported adding a level ‘3C’ to provide more differentiation. Still others worried that any changes that would allow schools to earn an ‘A’ or ‘B’ with most students below level 4 should be avoided.

Before making a decision, it is important to understand whether the current distribution of growth performance reflects real stagnation in progress or if progress is obscured by the model. In other words, are students in levels 3a, 3b progressing in meaningful ways that the model is not detecting? For the next meeting, the MDE will provide more detailed information about the magnitude of progress observed across the distribution to inform whether changes should be further explored.

**Acceleration, Business Rule 9.8**

Next the ATF discussed a potential concern that students who participate in accelerated courses in the first semester and graduate in December are not included in the acceleration component calculation. These students do not have enrollment in month eight, which is the current requirement for inclusion.

The ATF discussed several options with the goal to find an approach that includes December graduates as well as those who arrive later in the fall, but may earn a credit in the spring. Ultimately, the task force made the following ‘candidate recommendation’: ***students should be included in acceleration that meet FAY for the full year OR who are enrolled for full fall or spring term.***

Further, the ATF agreed that if a students earns an acceleration credential not tied to the course, the credit will go to the last district/ school of enrollment.

MDE should explore the implications of this candidate recommendation and report back at a future meeting.

**Prioritized Topics for Future Meetings**

Each member of the ATF was asked to identify topics that should considered at future meetings. Some prominent topics suggested include the following:

* Consider approaches to expand the college and career ready component of the accountability system. It is especially important provide more indicators of accomplishments with respect to career readiness such as ACT WorkKeys or similar measures.
* Explore the ramifications of US History retesters in accountability if it is eliminated.
* Investigate how ‘banking’ of high school science scores should be implemented moving forward.
* Consider issues for atypical school configurations such as indicators for K-2 schools and grade 9 schools.
* Examine the impact of the accountability system on schools with high SES enrollment.