

Meeting Notes
Quality Education Commission
Oregon Department of Education
255 Capitol Street NE Salem, OR 97310
Studio A Conference Room
Wednesday, May 18, 2011
10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Present

Susan Massey	Brian Reeder
Sarah Boly	Jenni Deaton
Beth Gerot	Tom Owen
Frank McNamara	Laurie Wimmer
Mark Mulvihill (by phone)	
Maryalice Russell	
Peter Tromba (by phone)	
Duncan Wyse (by phone)	

Absent

David Bautista
Lynn Lundquist
Gail Rasmussen

Welcome and Introductions

Reports

- Member Updates and Information:
 - Mark: Baker, Union, and Umatilla-Morrow will soon be Intermountain ESD
 - Beth: Bond passed in Eugene, but the income tax did not. Incumbent Eugene school board members were elected.
 - Susan: OSBA is extending their deadline for the November convention to June 1; will inform if proposal is accepted by week of June 6.
 - Title for presentation: *Getting the Most from our Education Dollars*
 - Subtitle: *QEM and Student Performance*

Discussion

- Ideas for Best Practices:
 - Peter- extensive literature search on “best practices”
 - Sarah- test assumptions and research locally what has been working
 - Survey: Tease out of system what has been working well for schools; common strands; ideas that can be implemented statewide

- Best Practices Analysis Method:
 1. Determine list of best practices for possible inclusion in QEM report
 2. Conduct a survey of school staff, stakeholders, school board members, and community that are showing higher than expected student achievement (survey Celebrating Student Success schools for their progress in closing the achievement gap)
 3. Identify the practices that significantly correlate with variations in student achievement (survey top % schools for student achievement, middle, and bottom %)
 - *Which proposed best practices are being used on the ground?
 4. Follow-up with interviews of school staff who have experience implementing best practices (so report has more than just numbers)
 5. Cost out key practices (some will be easier to project out than others)

- Jon Bridges has offered to help with survey questions, SurveyMonkey, etc. as needed.
- Brian and Frank both reiterated the importance of the interviews, as they add depth and understanding to the report and provide fascinating information that surveys cannot glean.
- Frank mentioned the difficulty with common definitions, as one district can refer to a topic in a completely different way than another district. Ideas can be interpreted and implemented in many different directions.
- Peter clarified that the survey questions will be based on the specifics of the practice instead of jargon to avoid confusion with definitions.

- Reporting on his literature research, Peter shared that the term “best practice” is so commonly used at the microscopic level, as well as the big picture level, that it loses significance. It is a very difficult idea to put an established and concrete definition on.
 - More can be found in looking at sites/specifics than just the literature itself.
 - Structures necessary for successful best practice implementation:
 - Time: Practice moves through time and improves/changes/sustains learning
 - Place: How rooted the practice is in a specific context, and how it must be adapted to benefit particular schools, communities, and students.

- Brian mentioned that *Scaling Up* focuses on the idea of investigating implementation once promising practices are identified.

- Brian will check into having a *Scaling Up* contact come to a meeting or meet with Peter and Sarah
 - *Getting too far in the weeds of an individual practice can distract from the importance of implementation
 - SurveyMonkey should be a quick way to harvest elements of a continuous improvement cycle from the field
 - Mark brought up the importance of leadership capacity in effectively implementing best practices
 - What's missing when a best practice cannot be duplicated?
 - Pull out ideas that can be duplicated, and emphasize the need for teamwork and collaborative school leadership
 - Key concept: What is different about successful schools' programs? What are the differentiating "nuts and bolts" that other schools can take and implement into their own programs?
 - The outcomes should be tangible practices that schools can have conversations around
 - Duncan: Reminder of the QEC charge; in the end, we need to have costs to present to policymakers
 - Example: How much does it cost to have a quality professional learning community?
 - Practices will change and improve constantly over time so they are challenging to frame, understand, and relay
 - Question for teachers: How much time is provided to engage in dialog?
 - Frank and Maryalice both summarized that this plan will work backwards to identify the specific practices; enter in on the back end to find what the front end should look like:
 - Survey schools that have better than average results
 - Interview schools to find out what's different about them (schools with both better and worse than expected results)
 - Extract ideas- ideas may be more about environment/ implementation than a specific program
 - Be aware that concepts such as "continuous improvement cycle" may differ in definition from site to site
 - How much does it cost? (how much high performing schools need)
 - Next steps:
 - Identify who to survey
 - Draft questions for survey
 - Select area for specific investigation? (math, technology, etc)
 - Ask Tony Alpert to come to next meeting?
- Review of Model Parameters (Brian Reeder):
 - The current set-up of categories in prototype schools are not closely aligned with data collection; translating data to model can be tricky

- Organize the model around functions, then look at subjects within the functions
- Learner groups (coming out of Governor's discussions); 0-20 rather than pre-k, elementary, middle, high, etc.
 - Built around natural phases in learning
 - "Early Learning"- 0-3rd grade (literacy critical)
 - "Middle Group"- 4th-10th grade
 - "Preparing for Work/College/Advanced Study"- 11th grade- associates degree, 2 years past HS, training for specific employment, etc.
- Transitions are not as rigid around age/grade
- Back up path of resources with analysis
- Real impetus: Schooling in terms of students rather than the institutions delivering instruction
- Full continuum- make transition points logical in terms of learning, and make financial data student-oriented

- Frank: Taking money and focusing it in a different place has an impact on the area that the money has been taken from
 - Challenging impacts of differing resource allocation
- Outcome-based funding (idea of Governor): Putting resources where they have the *best* payoff
- In new QEM structure, build in a method to look at schools of different sizes

- COSA may help with distribution of survey to administration, and OEA for distribution to teachers

- Susan highlighted an article from *Ed Week*, May 16: Using Technology to Move Beyond Schools, by Richard F. Elmore and Elizabeth A. City

Next Meeting Dates:

- Thursday, June 9 – 11 am-2 pm
- Thursday, July 14
- Thursday, August 11
- Thursday, September 8