

Meeting Notes
Quality Education Commission
Oregon Department of Education
255 Capitol Street NE Salem, OR 97310
251B Conference Room
Thursday, March 15, 2012
10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Present

Susan Massey
Sarah Boly
Beth Gerot
Lynn Lundquist
Maryalice Russell
Peter Tromba
Doug Wells

Brian Reeder
Jenni Deaton
Bob Collins
Ruth Scott
Scott Muchie

Absent

David Bautista
Mark Mulvihill
Frank McNamara
Gail Rasmussen

Welcome and Introductions

Susan opened the meeting and recognized Doug for his Op-ed that ran in the *Oregonian* and the *Medford Mail Tribune* last month.

The group consensus was to submit a proposal for the OSBA Convention in November. Details will be considered in future meetings.

School Facilities discussion:

Scott Muchie: Hill International and the Center for Innovative School Facilities

Ruth Scott: The Center for Innovative School Facilities

Bob Collins: Hill International

Scott has had the opportunity to visit every school district in Oregon as a K-12 consultant for Hill International and as a board member for the Center for Innovative School Facilities (the Center). He has also visited schools in Washington and Idaho, assessing overall school facility needs and projecting future updates. This work has been enlightening as to the conditions of Oregon school facilities, and the lack of a state-wide mechanism for equitable funding. Oregon is one of only a few states with no existing state-wide facilities program.

Oregon ranks as one of the lowest for school facilities, and many schools are in danger based on their need for seismic updates. In Portland Public alone, they need \$1.6 billion just to bring facilities up to current codes. Across the state there are pockets of school districts with high voter support and enough tax base for building bonds, but there is no system in place for smaller districts to obtain such funding if they lack the same voter support and tax base.

The Center is currently collecting data to back-up Oregon's need for a facilities program, and is making an effort to publicize this need to stakeholder groups state-wide. The current moving trend to private and private charter schools does not aid in building a case for public facility needs.

Data supports that environmental factors such as lighting, air quality, and air control can negatively impact student concentration and learning. Poor facilities can send a message to students that they do not matter. Bob Collins recounted an experience from Sherwood school district, where high school students took true ownership and pride in a new high school facility and treated the building with great care and respect.

Fire, light, and safety standards should be priority for school districts. Unfortunately, many schools' safety plans of moving to the nearest school in the case of an emergency is complicated by the fact that neighboring schools' facilities are often just as poor, if not more so.

The impact of poor facilities is paramount in the minds of high quality teachers who teach in facilities that are significantly lacking or in need of facility updates. For example, a science lab with no running water greatly limits opportunities for students. Ruth mentioned the inclusion of science standards in the last QEM, and stated the need for QEC support of basic facility standards for science, as it is the subject where learning is impacted the most by facility quality. School boards need to be held accountable to ensure that basic needs for successful instruction and learning exist in school facilities.

This is a problem that can be solved in Oregon. It could be considered the worst time to bring the subject to the table with the funding deficit, but also the best time as it is presently being ignored as "out of sight, out of mind." Currently, the Center is providing voluntary support to districts who are applying for "Cool School" grants; filling a void that our state does not make provisions for. While it is very important to consider the need in Oregon for a facilities program, it is also important to communicate the need for careful maintenance of existing public facilities.

Summary of next steps/needs:

- Facility standards to support science studies
- Baseline standards for fire/life safety
- Creative ideas for funding, considering public/private partnerships

Scott will follow up with Brian to share Washington's facility program formula information.

Connection of QEC to facilities discussion:

- Cost Panel in past QEM
- Capital model built in to QEM; prototype school model (this model does not look at current conditions, or what/how/where to go)
- Information from Department of Energy
 - Brian will work with Ruth to assign school ID numbers to the data
- Share and highlight state facility programs with school administration
- Include a small facilities section in QEM to get a “foot in the door” for continued conversations
- Raise awareness of the correlation between facilities and student learning, but be careful with any hard conclusions, as there may be other factors contributing to the results
- Provide filtered important information for the Legislature
- In addition to the QEM, submit 1-2 white papers/press releases to distribute broadly

Best Practices Panel

Sarah: Survey results are in, and will be thoroughly analyzed after the site-based surveys are complete. The state-wide surveys will then be compared to the site-specific surveys.

Peter: Each identified school has received a letter and follow-up. A few schools have declined a visit, and alternate schools have been considered to fill in the gaps for the matched pairs.

Matched pairs will aid in isolating the impact of certain differences and control variables to reach evidence-based conclusions for the report.

- Doug and Frank will follow up with Irvington Elementary and Sarah will reach out to Alberta Rider Elementary (both initially declined).

Change the June 21 meeting to June 19 from 11 am – 2 pm.

Instructions for site visit interview leaders:

- Work with your interview team(s) and the principal(s) of the school(s) you are assigned to and establish the date and time of the site visit. All site visits need to be completed by April 28
 - When a date is set for the visit, contact Peter with the information so he can update the list and communicate to Commissioners.
- Send the principal a reminder and the survey link if the online survey has not been completed by staff prior to your visit. Jon Bridges will send survey results to each team leader upon the school’s(s’) completion of the survey.
- Review the interview packet material prior to the site visit.
- Establish who will ask the interview questions and who will record.
- Use the Interview Question sheet to guide your conversation with school staff.

- Send a summary of each interview for which you are responsible to Peter and Sarah by **May 14**.
- Attend the **May 31, 10 am - 1 pm** meeting of the Best Practices Panel and adjunct team members in Salem to review the draft synthesis and findings of the site visit conversations and survey results.
- Attend the **June 19, 11 am – 2 pm** meeting in Salem to discuss the draft Best Practices Panel Findings and Recommendations Report.

Model Restructure Update:

A set amount of funding is available to devote to students; location on curves where their slope is identical provides the highest payoff in performance.

Small performance drop from taking money from 5th grade, but the resulting increased gains in 8th grade override the small initial performance drop.

- The end result is the most important factor.

Results in performance/funding level graphs suggest benefits to concentrating on improvements for middle school.

- Growth = goal to get to highest level of performance

Appendix in QEM:

- Include a consolidated ranking table of all 50 states using ROI, to educate and exemplify that resources do account for outcomes.

Brian will bring in additional new data and work on translation into learning stages format.

Next Steps/Updates:

QEM Writing:

- Peter will focus on the interviews
- Sarah will conduct an analysis of survey results and work on the best practices literature review piece

Target date for final version: August 1 (this target deadline has been missed in the past)

If final version is not complete by this date, a preliminary copy can be sent to the Governor's Office in advance.

July 31: End of appointment (two terms) for Susan, Frank, and Lynn.

If not replaced directly following end of appointment, they will continue serving until replacements are appointed.

Future agenda items:

- Transition planning
- How the QEC's work aligns with the Achievement Compacts

Please send any updates/edits on the Commissioner Roster to Jenni Deaton for correction and re-distribution.

Next Meeting Dates:

- Thursday, April 12, 2012 – 10 am-1 pm in 251B
- Thursday, May 10, 2012 – 10 am-1 pm in 251B
- Tuesday, June 19, 2012 – 11 am-2 pm in 251A
- Thursday, July 12, 2012 – 10 am-1pm in 251 B