

Meeting Notes
Quality Education Commission
Oregon Department of Education
900 Court Street, Salem, Oregon 97310
July 22, 2010
10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Present

Susan Massey	Brian Reeder
Vic Backlund	Marjorie Lowe
Beth Gerot	Morgan Allen
Lynn Lundquist	Drew Hinds
Frank McNamara	Tom Owen
Mark Mulvihill	Ashlee Davis
Gail Rasmussen	Jenni Deaton
Peter Tromba	Diane Rush

Absent

Duncan Wyse

Welcome and Introductions

Reports

- Member Updates and Information
- Governor's Office Update (Marjorie Lowe)
 - Across the board adjustments within the state with adjustments for the Oregon University System
 - The Emergency Board is meeting to discuss restoring part of in-home care for senior citizens
 - The \$33 million shortfall for postsecondary education may be reduced to \$16 million
 - The next revenue forecast will be out August 26, 2010
 - National picture is not very encouraging and many factors at the national level have downward pressure
 - Efforts are being made at the national level for fiscal relief within states
 - Education jobs bill and Medicaid money (the likelihood of these bills passing is quickly falling)
 - If these bills pass, it would encourage a special session, probably in September
 - The Governor's reset report seemed to be well received from most groups
 - There will be a series of Governor editorial board visits around reset report themes
 - Both gubernatorial candidates have met with Governor Kulongoski to discuss matters in general but it is not known whether or not they discussed the reset recommendations
 - One of the candidates has been involved in the development of the reset

- Work is being done to have the work of the PSQEC placed in statute
- Race to the Top
 - Committee will begin meeting in mid-August to discuss restructuring/reform and consider next steps for Oregon schools
 - Commissioner Mulvihill is on the short list to be selected
 - Congress may continue to fund phase 3 of RTTT
 - Timeline for next round's submission is by mid-November (tied to Legislative session)
- Legislative Update (Morgan Allen)
 - \$243 million is the K-12 share of state funding
 - School districts and boards are still struggling with the reductions, and many are making significant cuts to their budgets, calendar days and staff
 - Some districts holding out for federal dollars
 - Situation is best described as 'uncertain'
 - Question whether districts should spend their reserves now or make cuts now
 - Special session is complicated related to medicaid dollars
 - Revenue forecast coming out at the end of August
 - It is difficult to predict whether the September forecast will still be on a downturn
 - Legislative Update Discussion
 - No one is proposing any way to change the inevitable
 - It is incumbent that we change some very basic ways we conduct business
 - Some ways to make changes will be discussed at the upcoming business conference
 - Districts must look at ways they will change education
 - Some districts/boards are looking at the Quality Education Model and pulling information from it
 - Beth's district is forming a group to get good ideas out for their board to consider and identify what is essential and what could be cut
 - Technology resources must be considered
 - It is less likely that there will be a special session
 - The severity and longevity of the situation will give rise to some different mindsets and it will be very real this time around
 - The classroom teacher is sacred
 - Oregon is defensive to local control but cannot afford that any longer
 - Local control vs. centralization is being considered
 - Consolidation of administrative units is an option. ESDs are among those being actively considered, but there are some obvious district consolidations that might be good choices.
 - We cannot pay for Measure 5 any longer
 - If we lose this opportunity for transformational control, we will never get it back
 - Discussion around Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 in the QEM report and could a better writing of Alternative 1 reflect some of these issues?

Discussion (Commissioners and Others)

- Full Written Report
 - Some think that format changes may give the audience the ability to select specific topics they want to read
 - Consider adding an abstract or preparing a certain section as a stand alone piece
 - Consider adding an appendix
 - Consider adding attention-catching headlines as used in the publishing industry
 - Consider a footnoted appendix as done in the Best Practices Panel's report
 - Data-driven decisionmaking is becoming more valued
 - Could renew awareness of the QEM document with specific groups
 - Using headlines could help legislators become more aware of other important information and not just the big number
 - In the past, the QEC has demonstrated the model at conferences (COSA, OSBA, OEA)
 - All stakeholders could have a conversation how this would apply to them (e.g., McMinnville School District created a staffing calculator for district use)
 - The reality is that it is time to reevaluate how we do the QEM report since it wasn't originally designed to be used by districts
 - Some school administrators do not want to look at the report because it is the funding level that will never be reached
 - Must remember that despite economic challenges in Oregon, there are still successes
 - For some, the perception of the QEM is that it doesn't matter anyway
 - Would the model change if there was more discussion of how to do education differently?
 - There is controversy about the very existence of the QEC with the legislative shift from a pure policy piece to ways the schools could better use the information
 - Could also launch a deliberate focused effort to publish the existence and purpose of the document
 - From a school board's perspective, in looking at best practices, it contains good information for boards in being more targeted and focused (it's not just for staff but also for board members on the local level)
 - At a future QEC meeting, there will be discussion on how to publicize and make the model more user-friendly
 - We should emphasize cost and outcomes if we want to present this to practitioners
 - Practitioners are looking for recommendations with low costs
 - State specific details that demonstrate 'more bang for your buck' (e.g., looping teachers is very effective and adds no cost while a mentoring program is very costly)
 - Continued discussion on specific sections of the report ('Conclusions' page should be renamed and 'Conclusions Box' should be removed) and options of how to format and change some parts without rewriting the whole document
 - Page 29 seems like an organizing page for the entire document, therefore it could make sense to move some of the paragraphs on page 29 to the Preface
 - Frank believes this change would emphasize the big number too much

- Brian suggests another option of moving some paragraphs on page 29 and the broader discussion to the front and leave the tables and detailed information in the back
- Brian and Ashlee will revise the document per the Commission's discussion and email the revised draft to everyone when it is completed in about a week, making it more readable to a different audience as well as changing some formatting
- The Commission believes transformational change is necessary if we are to come through this crisis successfully.

- Next Steps
 - The document's previously stated next steps will be eliminated in this report
 - Commission will develop an evaluation plan and feedback loop to revise the QEM report
 - The QEM will be reviewed by COSA, OSBA and OEA
 - There could also be a 'next step' related to making the data more useful by creating a tool that could be useful to the model (this would allow districts to use the spreadsheet)
 - Commissioners will email their comments on this topic to Brian and this will be topic of discussion at the next meeting
 - Printing and distribution will be handled in-house and through the State Printing Office
 - Report will be distributed in hard copy to the Governor, Legislature, Interested Parties and the Commission
 - A press release to the media will help spread the word about the Commission's report and work

Next Meeting Date: Thursday, September 23, 2010

Adjourn