

**Accountability and Program Performance Task Force
Minutes – 11/7/03**

Members Present:

Bill Sutter, Nancy Corl, Connie May, Rich Klemm, Brian Barber, Sonya Payne, Doug Wood, David J. Porter, Patricia Ojala, Gail Ganakas, MDCD Staff – Dianne Duthie, Linda Colagross, Cliff Akujobi, Kathleen Sullivan, Facilitator, Susan Pittman, Technical Support

Kathleen welcomed those who were joining the task force for the first time and provided an overview of the work the task force is undertaking.

Assessment Policy Discussions

Monika Leasure was unable to attend the meeting so Susan Pittman provided a review of the information that Monika had compiled for discussion regarding a Michigan Assessment Policy. Monika will draft an assessment policy statement for the task force based on the input from the members of the task force.

Gail Ganakas expressed concerns about limiting the number of assessment instruments to be used specifically referring to Work Keys and its use by businesses and Workforce Boards. The members discussed how infrequently Work Keys is used in adult education programs but that it has value from other areas, including its use in districts' human resources departments. Members also expressed concerns about how MAERS data would be collected based on a new assessment policy. Currently MAERS assigns students based on the lowest score on the pretest and then shows progress based on the highest scores despite the subject area in which those scores are earned. For example, a student could pretest low in Reading and then posttest high in Math and show a change in Educational Functioning Level even though there were no change actual Reading skills. It would be important to identify the specific data elements that would be collected under the new policy so that there is consistency across programs. The recommendations on data would need to be referred to the Data and Reporting Task Force.

The members discussed two major issues related to the assessment policy.

1. Do we recommend policy by programmatic area or provide a list of acceptable tests?
2. Do we provide a phase in time for implementation of the policy due to budget cutbacks?

Kathleen asked for input from the task force on three possible assessment policy models.

1. Current policy which includes a wide range of tests
2. Florida model which allows a limited number of tests and provides supplemental testing options
3. Kansas model which requires all programs to use one test, CASAS, for all program areas.

It was the consensus of the group that the Kansas model would not be appropriate for the needs of Michigan's programs. The consensus of the group was to retain a certain level of flexibility in assessment but ensure that the options were limited and that specific data was required that would provide reliable testing information.

David Porter recommended that the group consider having a test of record for each program area. All programs would be required to administer the test of record but could supplement as needed. There was a motion by Pat Ojala with a second by Bill Sutter that Michigan's assessment policy be based on David Porter's recommendation of a test of record. The motion was approved by the task force with the following recommendations.

1. The test of record for ABE and GED would be the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE).
2. The test of record for ESL would be the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)
3. The assessment policy would include the ability for local programs to use supplemental assessment including Work Keys in addition to the test of record for a specific program
4. The assessment policy would include language that would require programs to use the most current version of the test of record with the caveat that programs would have a specific phase-in period of time in order to purchase new materials possibly as much as 18 -24 months.
5. The assessment policy would include a phase-in period of up to one year to implement the tests of record for those programs that are currently using assessment such as BEST, BESTEL, etc.

Bill Sutter expressed concern about small programs such as his who have few ESL students enroll in the course of a year. The cost to purchase sets of CASAS materials would be prohibitive when he would need a limited number. The task force will explore the possibility that the Department could purchase a limited number of sets of materials and distribute these to programs that serve very limited numbers of students. For example, if CASAS requires that tests be purchased in sets of 20-25, the Department could purchase the tests and then distribute 3-5 copies of each level to the smaller programs.

Susan Pittman will provide the notes from the meeting and the supplemental assessment material review at the task force meeting to Monika for drafting of an assessment policy that will be provided at the next meeting.

Program Review Discussions

Pat Ojala and Cliff Akujobi discussed the Department's monitoring process that is required for the U.S. DOE.. Pat provided the task force with materials from an initial meeting that include Pat, Cliff, and Al Radzick. Pat was very encouraged that the monitoring process will be similar to that of the peer review process. Pat provided a list

of people who have volunteered to participate in the peer review process. Cliff informed the task force that eight (8) districts must be reviewed this year. The districts were selected based on a point system that was provided in resource material. It is expected that each review would take one day. Cliff was very concerned that the monitoring be program friendly and that it not be viewed as a way to impose sanctions but rather to highlight the good things that programs are doing and provide assistance where programs are experiencing problems.

Pat explained that the Compliance Review Procedures Manual is very similar to the former peer review process. Each task force member received a copy of The Compliance Review and Technical Assistance Procedures Manual. This document will be sent to the US DOE by the Department and is for their review purposes only but provides an overview of the process. Cliff asked the task force members to look at the Section G Self-Evaluation document and make recommendations on how to modify the document to best fit adult education programs. Currently, the document is designed for K-12. This document should be reviewed and recommendations made to Cliff by mid-December. Pat provided the task force with a sample of MAERS questions. Cliff asked that the task force develop questions that would cover each of the following program areas and be designed similar to the MAERS questionnaire.

- ABE
- GED
- ESL
- Adult High School

Cliff needs a final list by the end of next week for the Peer Review Group. The Department will provide training for the peer review volunteers after the documents are finalized.

The following individuals agreed to serve on the **Peer Review – Sub-Committee** with Pat Ojala and Sonya Payne.

- Connie May
- David Porter
- Nancy Corl

They will review the self-evaluation form and adapt to adult education. They will also develop questions (similar to the MAERS questionnaire) for each program area and provide feedback on MAERS questionnaire.

Michigan Funding Model Discussion

Brian Barber discussed the funding models that he reviewed – Minnesota and Florida. Brian provided an overview of facts about the Florida funding model including base allocations and performance points. Brian explained to the group that he had presented this information to the West Michigan group and that they were interested in using the model in a proposal to local legislators. He emphasized that one of the most important

factors in the performance funding model was that it would provide an alternative to using FTE and also provide legislators with what they are looking for – accountability.

Susan Pittman indicated Michigan could need to look at addressing one drawback in the system used in Florida – how to address increasing numbers of students who are successful, thus gaining more performance points. It would be important that Michigan set up some system for growth.

Gail Ganakas stated that there is an urgent need to develop at least a framework of a proposal so that the information could go to Dianne Duthie and Gary Tweddle who are on the Blue Ribbon Committee. The group reached consensus on developing a Michigan Adult Education funding model based on the work completed in Florida.

The following areas should be addressed in the Michigan model.

1. Include a weighting factor that would take into consideration high need areas, such as the UP.
2. Decrease the amount of performance funds that would be related to placement – possibly an 80/20 split – with 80% of the 15% going to academic completion points and the remaining 20% focusing on placement related to students moving to community college, the military, etc. However the 20% would have to be set up in such a manner that local programs could track student placements.
3. Include information that would move the state from using 2 EFLs to what is used at the national level – 1 EFL to show performance.

There was a motion from Bill Sutter, second by Pat Ojala, that Brian Barber modify the document presented to the task force based on input from the committee to be used as a basis for input from Dianne Duthie and Gary Tweddle to the Blue Ribbon Committee.

Brian and Susan will work on the document this weekend. Get it out for review on Tuesday and then send comments and the draft to Dianne Duthie.

Adult Education Policy Manual Discussion

Linda Colagross provided a copy of the draft Adult Education Policy Manual to the task force. The policy manual currently under construction is specifically for state level staff members. A field manual will be developed based on the state level manual. Linda informed the committee that Sandy Thelen is working on information for the policy manual related to 107 and 108 funding. Cliff Akujobi is also working on the manual with the group. At this point, there is a need for adult education definitions. Connie May indicated that she would be willing to work on the program definitions. Linda asked for task force members to review the draft manual and send comments back to her. Gail Ganakas and Kathleen Sullivan will review the manual and forward recommendations to Linda.

Kathleen Sullivan provided members of the task force with copies of the current State Plan and its amendments. She asked the task force to take time to review the state plan

and be ready to make recommendations for revisions at the next meeting. Task Force members were asked to read the plan and send their recommendations to Susan Pittman who will put together all of the recommendations in a single document. This will help facilitate the process of making final recommendations at the next meeting.

State Plan – members read the plan and the revisions – make recommendations – send to Susan and she will put together in a common document.

The next task force meeting is scheduled for Friday, January 9, 2004 at the Mt. Pleasant Comfort Inn Conference Center.