



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Governor's Commission on Access to Sound Basic Education
February 28, 2019
Minutes

In attendance

Dr. Fouad Abd-El-Khalick, Dr. Charles Becton, Ms. Melody Chalmers, Mr. Jim Deal, Hon. Rick Glazier, Mr. Mark Jewell, Ms. Leigh Kokenes, Dr. Helen "Sunny" Ladd, Dr. Patrick Miller, Mr. James Moore, Mr. Nick Sojka, Mr. Michael Williams, Hon. Leslie Winner, Ms. Henrietta Zalkind

Welcome

Mr. Deal, serving as Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:35 am and welcomed members. The Chair read the Conflict of Interest statement.

Commission Business and Updates

The Chair presented the minutes from the January 17, 2019 meeting of the Commission and asked if members had any edits. Hearing none, the Chair approved the minutes as presented.

The Chair recognized Ms. Leigh Kokenes for being named the National School Psychologist of the year. The Chair noted that due to multiple conflicts, the March 21, 2019 meeting of the Commission will be rescheduled.

The Chair recognized Mr. Geoff Coltrane, Senior Education Advisor to Governor Cooper, to provide an overview of the NC Department of Public Instruction's State of Teaching Report for 2017-18.

Mr. Glazier requested trend data on the 40-day vacancy rate. Ms. Zalkind noted the K-5 vacancy rate. Ms. Winner noted the need to focus on increasing the pool of candidates and retaining teachers in the pool.

Retaining High Quality Teachers in North Carolina

The Chair recognized Ms. Dawn Shephard, Chief Operating Officer, Center for Optimal Learning Environments for a presentation on the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey. The survey provides a statistically valid and reliable measure of the qualitative relationship between working conditions and student outcomes and teacher retention at the school level. In 2018, 95,000 North Carolina teachers participated in the survey.

Ms. Shephard noted that school and teacher leadership are most closely correlated with teacher retention and recommended attending to the cultural, organizational, political, and sociological features of the school.

Ms. Shephard offered the following recommendations for state action to improve teacher working conditions and teacher retention: 1) Training and development of administrators in creating positive teaching conditions and student learning conditions and 2) Creating career pathway for teachers. She noted that compensation is important but not a key aspect of their analysis because it is not in the control of those at the school level.

The Chair recognized Mr. Mark Townley, Program Manager, Kenan Fellows Program, Ms. NaShonda Bender-Cooke, Special Education Interventionist and Department Chair, Carroll Magnet Middle School of Leadership in Technology, and Mr. Dayson Pasion, Instructional Technology Facilitator/STEAM Coordinator, Graham Middle School, Alamance-Burlington Schools, to share their perspectives on retaining high quality teachers in North Carolina.

The panel began by addressing current challenges. Mr. Townley noted a lack of shared vision, leadership, flexibility, and autonomy. After 20 years in teaching, Ms. Bender-Cooke cited a lack of human resources, support, and training. Students bring an array of needs and we work to meet all of them with fewer resources each day. Mr. Pasion noted the importance of consistent leadership to building culture, consistency, and change.

In considering how the state can help to address these challenges, Mr. Townley cited a need for flexibility. Ms. Bender-Cooke noted the need for appropriate, relevant, and engaging professional development, including support for National Board Certification and advanced degrees. Mr. Pasion agreed and added that follow-up and implementation support following professional development is critical to success. He also noted that teachers need opportunities to influence their day-to-day work. He cited the Teacher Leadership Academy in Alamance County as an example. Teachers work with community and district leaders to learn and build connections.

The Chair recognized Elizabeth Pierce, Principal, E.B. Frink Middle School, Lenoir County Public Schools and Frances Herring, Associate Superintendent, Lenoir County Public Schools to share their perspectives as school and district leaders on retaining high quality teachers in North Carolina.

Ms. Herring noted that as a rural district, Lenoir County Public Schools (LCPS) must recruit in very personal, creative ways. The district currently has 15 vacancies, including 8 teachers. They began the summer with about 100 vacancies. For example, the district participates in the TIP Teaching Scholars program.

Three years ago, LCPS shifted focus from professional programs to nine non-negotiables. This requires us to focus on content, rigor, differentiation, and data rather than any program or format. Every Lenoir County school met or exceeded growth last year. This is the first step to all schools meeting proficiency.

Throughout the year, teachers and school leaders led seventy-five professional development sessions and followed-up with ongoing coaching and support. LCPS is supporting students who are dealing with generational poverty, mental health, and educational needs. Consistent, sustained, focus support is essential if LCPS is to succeed for all our students.

Addressing the Teacher Shortage: State Efforts to Retain Excellent Educators

The Chair recognized Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond, President and CEO, Learning Policy Institute and Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education Emeritus, Stanford University and Ms. Tara Kini, Director of State Policy, Learning Policy Institute to address issues in teacher recruitment and retention.

Dr. Darling-Hammond noted that four primary issues impact teacher recruitment and retention:

Salaries and compensation: Teacher compensation is 20 percent lower than other college graduates. In North Carolina, compensation is 37 percent below other states and profession and varies widely across districts.

Working conditions: As teachers move through their careers, working conditions matter as least as much as compensation. Teachers are more likely to stay if they can succeed with their students, meet and collaborate with colleagues, provide services for children that allow them to be ready to learn, and participate in effective professional development.

Preparation: Teachers who are well-prepared stay longer and perform better. Effective preparation requires knowledge of the content area, knowledge of teaching practice, and understanding of all students.

Mentoring: Teachers are more likely to stay if they are provided support and orientation to the work of teaching.

Dr. Darling-Hammond also noted that retention is critically important to reducing shortages. Nine out of 10 teachers are hired to replace teachers who left the profession. Reducing attrition solves great deal of pipeline problem. Teacher attrition also impacts student achievement and costs the school district and state, particularly in low wealth districts.

Dr. Ladd noted the importance of school leadership in impacting teacher retention and the importance of preparing and keeping high quality principals. Dr. Darling-Hammond agreed and noted that many of the critical

working conditions are created by principals. It is important that principal compensation is stabilized, and preparation programs focus on performance and retention.

Improving Teacher Quality and Retention Through Career Pathways and Advanced Teaching Roles

The Chair recognized Dr. Trip Stallings, Director of Policy Research, Friday Institute for Educational Innovation to share information and evaluation results on Supplements, Incentives, Strategic Staffing, and Advanced Teaching Roles in North Carolina.

Dr. Stallings reviewed the history of the use of compensation in North Carolina. The Advanced Roles evaluation will provide information on the academic and instructional impact, the impact on the teaching profession, a comparative analysis of pilot programs, and the financial and policy considerations.

Implementing Career Pathways and Advanced Teaching Roles in NC's Schools and Districts

The Chair recognized Ms. Shauna Martin, Director of Professional Learning and Project ADVANCE, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools to share information on the district's career pathways and advanced teaching roles program.

Ms. Martin shared that Project ADVANCE is in its third year of implementation. The three-tiered strategic compensation system for teachers and support staff ties professional learning to salary advancement. ADVANCE connects to personalized professional learning opportunities to build educators' capacity to improve instructional practice and student outcomes, includes pathways to earning additional compensation over the course of a career, and offers options for career advancement and additional pay through building- and district-level leadership roles.

Dr. Ladd asked if ADVANCE coursework is differentiated at the school-level. Ms. Martin explained that it is not; however, at the district level courses are staffed by course facilitators who are matched by grade-level.

Ms. Winner requested information on the size of the district, the projected cost of the program, and the funding source. Ms. Martin noted that the district has 1,200 certified staff. The program was launched by adjusting the local supplemented to a flat rate of 16 percent rather than a tiered schedule of 12-25 percent. Ms. Martin will provide more detailed budget projections.

The Chair recognized Melissa Stormont, Program Manager, Success by Design, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) to share information on the district's career pathways and advanced teaching roles program. CMS awarded 3-year grant by Belk Foundation to partner with Public Impact (PI) and Education Resource Strategies (ERS) to create Success by Design, an Opportunity Culture model. Success by Design has focused on creating a new talent pool process and professional development plans for teacher-leaders and school-leaders. Success by design focuses on school culture, teacher effectiveness and retention, and student achievement. With the Advanced Roles grant funds provided by the NC Department of Public Instruction, Success by Design has focused on supporting their staff and increasing the pool of eligible candidate. Grant funds support professional development opportunities for current teacher-leaders, candidates in the talent pool, administrative staff in participating schools, and district leaders.

To support and improve these efforts, Ms. Martin asked that the state continue the class size waiver, allow Multi-Classroom Leaders to mentor and peer evaluate, allow Multi-Classroom Leaders to be evaluated under the Teacher Leadership Specialist Rubric or another specialized rubric, and create PowerSchool coding for coaches. The Chair recognized Erin Swanson, Director of Innovation, Edgecombe County Public Schools (ECPS), to share information on the district's career pathways and advanced teaching roles program. Opportunity Culture assists ECPS is achieving its vision of ensuring that all Scholars graduate prepared to design their futures, navigate change, and make the world a better place by allowing students consistent access to excellent teaching, teachers to receive ongoing support, great teachers to advance, and principals to drive change through distributed leadership.

In year one, 5 schools achieved growth and saw positive teacher retention outcomes. The faculty reported a transformation in the school culture with a focus on teaching, collaboration, data, coaching, feedback, and innovation. In year two, 5 additional schools are planning. ECPS is on track to be the first all Opportunity Culture district in the United States. However, integration must move cautiously to ensure staff is selected and prepared appropriately. It is a challenge to pay the supplements in non-Title I schools without large increases in class size, to integrate CTE and exceptional children's teachers, and to supplement the grant funds received through the NC Department of Public Instruction.

The Chair recognized Seth Brown, Director of Educator Support and Leadership Development, Pitt County Schools to share information on the district's career pathways and advanced teaching roles program. In 2016, Pitt County Schools (PCS) was awarded a combined \$21.1 million in state and federal grant funds to support the R3 Framework: Recruit, Retain, Reward initiative. This initiative provides an overarching structure and innovative solutions to reduce the district's teacher turnover rate, increase student instruction and achievement, improve professional culture, and promote the leadership development and growth of educators.

The R3 Framework is a human capital management system designed to recruit, retain, and reward highly effective teachers. Its innovation lies in the creation of teacher growth opportunities that enable PCS to recruit the best candidates within the district and across the state and nation by offering them leadership roles in schools while maintaining full-time status as classroom teachers. Teachers are rewarded with both monetary and non-monetary incentives as they progress through different career pathways.

The Career Pathways Model offers varying degrees of support, training, and leadership opportunities to teachers within the district. The first two pathways—Beginning Teacher (BT) and Professional Teacher—are points of entry for all teachers, which align with the state teacher licensure and compensation model. Four additional pathways, however, are part of the R3 Framework and offer differentiated pay and leadership opportunities on top of the LEA-level performance-based compensation system. These include the Facilitating Teacher, Collaborating Teacher, Multi-Classroom Teacher, and Co-Teacher. Additionally, two leadership pipelines are available, including the Key BT program and the Teacher's Leadership Institute.

Mr. Jewell noted that he is in favor of career pathways, but it is important not to confuse these additional opportunities with compensation needs, particularly in tight budget times.

Dr. Miller asked about the plan for sustainability after the current grants. Mr. Brown responded that PCS learned from CMS to design a sustainable program from the start. The program relies on salary steps and additional funding sources.

Mr. Deal noted that flexibility seems important to the success of these initiatives. Each county and region will need flexibility to meet the needs of their students, teachers, and schools.

Dr. Ladd noted that it will be important to have the consultant's input on the cost and flexibility. How much will an adequate education cost? If you know how much an adequate education costs, then allowing flexibility to meet needs will be important.

Discussion and Next Steps

The Chair shared information about upcoming Commission and Work Group meetings. The next meeting of the full Commission will be held on April 11, 2019 to focus on assessments and principal leadership.

The Finance Work Group may meet on March 12, 2019. A joint meeting of the Teachers and Finance Work Group will be scheduled. The Teacher Work Group will schedule an in-person meeting to discuss recommendations.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:47 pm.