

Educator Preparation Advisory Council (EPAC)

August 3, 2012

Connecticut State Department of Education
165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford

Draft Minutes

1. Call to Order & Welcome

Dr. Diane Ullman, Interim Chief Talent Officer, called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m.

Dr. Ullman welcomed the group and stated that the relationship between teacher preparation and student achievement is indisputable, and she stressed the importance of having a high-quality teacher in every classroom, every day, for every child.

2. Introductions & Opening Remarks

Dr. Ullman

Stefan Pryor, Commissioner of Education and co-chair of EPAC.

Michael Meotti, Executive Vice President of the Board of Regents for Higher Education, and co-chair of EPAC.

Members then introduced themselves:

- Diane Ullman, Interim Chief Talent Officer, State Department of Education
- Stefan Pryor, Commissioner of Education
- Mike Meotti, Executive Vice President of the Board of Regents for Higher Education
- Malia Sieve, Board of Regents for Higher Education
- Fran Rabinowitz, Superintendent of Schools, Hamden
- Karissa Niehoff, Executive Director, CT Association of Schools
- Steven Pynn, representing Reginald Mayo, Superintendent of Schools, New Haven
- Nancy Pugliese, Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification, State Department of Education
- Jess House, Dean, School of Professional Studies at WCSU
- Sandy Grande, Connecticut College
- Mary Richards, representing Sharon Palmer, President, AFT Connecticut
- Rae Ann Knopf, Executive Director, CT Council for Education Reform
- Patrice McCarthy, Deputy Director for Government Relations, CT Association of Boards of Education
- Susan Franzosa, Dean, Graduate School of Education and Allied Professions, Fairfield University
- Tom DeFranco, University of Connecticut
- Sonia Bassheva Manjon, Vice President for Institutional Partnerships, Wesleyan University
- Jeff Leake, representing Linette Brahmam and CT Education Association

- Anthony Bivona, Superintendent of Schools, Brookfield
- Gary Maynard, President, CT Federation of School Administrators
- Jack Miller, President, Central CT State University
- Kathy Butler, Dean, School of Education, University of St. Joseph
- Allan Taylor, Chair, State Board of Education
- Mary Kolek, Superintendent of Schools, New Canaan
- Tom Danehy, Superintendent of Schools, Winchester
- Ken DiPietro, Superintendent of Schools, Plainfield
- Joan Parris, Director of Early Childhood, Norwalk Community College
- Monica Marcera Filppu, Teach for America
- Abby Dolliver, Superintendent of Schools, Norwich
- Bob Villanova, Neag School of Education
- Andrew Lachman, CT Center for School Change
- Gary Chesley, Consultant and former Superintendent of Schools, Bethel

3. Framing the Work of EPAC

In addition to the charge mentioned earlier by Mr. Pryor, Dr. Ullman further discussed the legislation that led to the creation of EPAC (SB 384 and SB 458) and the State Board of Education resolution authorizing the Commissioner to establish EPAC and to assist the Board in developing a system for approval, quality, regulation, oversight and accreditation of teacher preparation programs. She reminded the group that a report with recommendations is due no later than April 1, 2013, to the State Department of Education, Board of Regents for Higher Education, University of Connecticut and the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education.

4. Focus for Today's Meeting

Dr. Ullman introduced Dr. Gary Chesley, who commented that EPAC needs to take a look at all aspects of putting young people in classrooms. Dr. Chesley stressed the importance of creating an understanding and willingness that we're all in this together.

5. Introduction of Dr. Charles Coble

Dr. Chesley stated that it would be worthwhile to have someone offer a global perspective of what's going on in schools across the country, and Dr. Charles Coble agreed to address the group. Dr. Coble is founding partner of the Third Mile Group and Teacher Preparation Analytics. He is a national expert on teacher education programs and teacher development, and former dean at East Carolina State University - one of the exemplar schools for teacher preparation in the country.

6. A National View of Teacher Preparation Trends and Initiatives

Dr. Coble opened by telling the group that they will be taking on a very complicated task. He stated that for any change worth doing, it will take 8 to 10 years to actually unfold.

Dr. Coble spoke about international education comparisons; educational attainment and personal life income; the wealth of state/nations; and technology and the global economy.

He mentioned that in Japan, inequalities are managed by the redistribution of teachers every 2 or 3 years. He also stated that the highly decentralized nature of education in the United States favors state action, or inaction at times.

In Dr. Coble's PowerPoint presentation, he revealed an analysis of responses from 32 recognized leaders in teacher education, respected critics of teacher education, and highly accomplished teachers. The main question was: What constitutes your vision of quality teacher preparation? The results were compiled into four themes: 1) Entry and Exit Standards; 2) Clinical Preparation and Induction; 3) Knowing and Teaching Disciplinary Content; and 4) Evaluation and Research to Improve Teacher Preparation.

Dr. Coble then talked about the Boulder Colloquium on Quality, which focused on the four themes noted above. From that colloquium, a consensus list of "10 Questions University/College Presidents Should Ask" was prepared.

1. Do you convey a clear and strong message for the value of quality teacher preparation at your institution?
2. Does the selection process into teacher education attract candidates with demonstrated academic success and evidence that they have the skills and dispositions that will likely lead to becoming good teachers?
3. Are there program exit standards beyond minimum state requirements that ensure the program produces competent novice teachers?
4. Does the program have a culture of evidence and accountability that tracks and assesses the progress of teacher candidates from entry to completion and as novice teachers, and uses those data to make appropriation interventions and program changes as warranted?
5. Is the program clinically based all the way from early classroom exposure to more extensive, well supervised student teaching?
6. Does the program blend courses in content and pedagogical content knowledge so that students acquire deep content knowledge and the skill to transmit core disciplinary concepts in an age-appropriate way?
7. Does the program have university-school partnerships that demonstrate a shared responsibility for teacher preparation and development within which most teacher candidates are placed for clinical experiences and student teaching?
8. Does the program engage teachers-in-resident – those with strong disciplinary backgrounds and evidence of exemplary understanding of teaching – as essential colleagues in teacher preparation?
9. Does the program ensure that classroom teachers who are assigned student teachers are master teachers or are under the supervision of a master teacher in the school or district?
10. Does the program include support to its novice teachers through an induction period as a part of its formal program?

Dr. Coble noted that the outcome of the colloquium and analysis reinforces an expanded model for teacher education, one that:

Conceives teacher preparation as an all-campus responsibility;
Begins before the actual engagement in formal studies;
Extends beyond graduation day; and
Fully embraces practicing educators and schools as essential partners.

There was a brief question/answer period.

7. Work Process & Next Steps

Dr. Chesley stated that EPAC will address four target areas of work: 1) professional competencies and key experiences, 2) robust accountability system, 3) structural issues, and 4) policy recommendations.

It was mentioned that smaller workgroups will be formed and provided to EPAC to assist in researching and completing background work. All information will then be brought to the full council for review and discussion.

8. Comments, Questions & Adjournment

Several suggestions were made by members:

Short biographies of all members were requested. This will enable others to know members' backgrounds and who they should contact with questions.

It would be helpful to first find out what we have in the state before going forward.

More interaction between members is important.

The next meeting (possibly September 6 at 9:00 a.m.) will be confirmed shortly. It is anticipated that all PEAC meetings from now through April will be scheduled at that time.

Dr. Ullman thanked Dr. Coble for speaking with the group. She closed by asking all members to suspend their disbelief and be open to change during meeting discussions.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.