



**EEC Board Committee
Planning and Evaluation**

Tuesday June 11, 2013
10:00am-12:00pm

Department of Early Education and Care
51 Sleeper St. 4th Floor
Boston, MA 02210

AGENDA

Members of the Committee Present

Eleonora Villegas-Reimers, Committee Chairperson
Cheryl Stanley, Board Member
Joni Block, Board Member
JD Chesloff, Board Chair

EEC Staff Present

Jennifer Louis, Sr. Research and Data Services Lead
Sarah Harding, Director of Human Resources
Jennifer Amaya Thompson, Head Start State Collaboration Office Director (by phone)

Guests/Board Members

Members of the Public

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 am.

Welcome and Introductions

Committee members were welcomed to the meeting.

Routine Business:

Minutes

Members had an opportunity to review the minutes. No changes were necessary for the May 23 minutes.

Disclosures

Committee Chair Eleonora Villegas-Reimers disclosed that she works for Wheelock College who is a recipient of EEC grant funds.

Board Member Joni Block disclosed that she works for Brockton Public Schools who is a recipient of EEC grant funds.

New Business and Commissioner/Committee Updates

- None

Discussion

Board Retreat/Strategic Plan Process:

(Materials- None)

Committee Chair Eleonora Villegas-Reimers reviewed with the Committee that it was decided to push the discussion of the strategic plan to the Board Retreat in July. The Committee discussed whether the Committee wanted to present anything to the Board or to leave the discussion open.

Board Member Cheryl Stanley noted that the Committee spent a lot of time on the current strategic plan and provide the rest of the Board a review of what the Committee has done up to this point.

Board Chair JD Chesloff stated that there are three options for the Board to consider at the Retreat. The first option is to take the current plan and move forward or use the current plan and rethink some of the priorities for the next two year. The current plan is a solid plan but needs some refreshing on the priorities which can be the focus at the retreat. The second option is to have the Planning and Evaluation Committee present what the Committee had previously completed and to continue going down that path or use the completed work to inform priorities for the coming year. The third option is to start a new strategic plan from the beginning. Though this is a longer process, it is hopeful that by the Retreat a new Commissioner will be chosen and there will be a new Board Chair at that point.

Committee Chair Eleonora Villegas-Reimers noted to the Committee that with all the changes in the Department, a new Commissioner and most likely a new Board Chair that it might be beneficial to keep something, the Strategic Plan, stable. Additionally, there will be added change in 2 years when the Governor and Administration changes.

Board Member Joni Block asked the Committee if the Strategic Plan is evaluated. The Committee noted that the Legislative Report is the evaluation piece of the plan and that the executive summary married the Strategic Plan and the Report together. It was also noted that the Report is structured from the information in the Strategic Plan.

Board Chair JD Chesloff thought the Board taking the current plan and the work the Committee **did** makes the most sense because it takes time to ramp up a new plan.

WIDA Presentation Feedback and Next Steps

(Materials- None)

Director of Human Resources Sarah Harding provided the Committee with an overview of how EEC and WIDA got where they are today. She worked to engage with WIDA last year (2012) as WIDA started to work on early learning standards for dual language learners for 2.9 to kindergarten. Massachusetts is a WIDA state at the ESE level but not at the early childhood level.

The beginning conversations with WIDA involved a lot of engagement from Former Commissioner Sherri Killins and Committee Chair Eleonora Villegas-Reimers and involved Maria Brisk from BC and others and discussion. The understanding was that by contracting with WIDA, EEC would influence what the standards would be in the end. Illinois is also participating in this project and WIDA had met with experts there but EEC wanted to involved experts from across the country to determine whether the standards are useful in the 2.5 to Kindergarten space. The K-12 standards were academically framed but EEC wanted to make sure that WIDA think more about developmental appropriateness for children 2.5 to K.

Board Member Joni Block asked if the framework for the early childhood standards were the same as the standards for K-12. Committee Chair Eleonora Villegas-Reimers noted that they are not. For early childhood social emotional is not a separate domain from language arts or any other domain like it is with the K-12 standards. For the K-12 standards the purpose is not learning language but learning academic language and is driven by the common core.

EEC's Head Start State Collaboration Director Jennifer Amaya Thompson has been getting up to speed on this project and provided the Committee with feedback on the Standards. She noted that the standards do align with the HS framework and the MA standards however she doesn't see a lot of substance in the development of the standards. She noted that not many states have separate standards for dual language learners.

The Committee questioned the issue of professional development regarding the standards. EEC Director of Human Resources Sarah Harding noted that WIDA would put together a toolbox for professional development. The Committee thought it would be helpful to have a train the trainers training with WIDA.

The Committee discussed whether or not to consolidate the dual language learner standards with the current standards or leave them separate. The Committee discussed the issue of separating the learning of language with the learning of a second language. There are many children not learning language even though they are exposed to English. Many children arrive in kindergarten with little language experience (grammar etc.). Children from educated families have 3000 more words than a low income family. Low income children and other children also need the academic language.

Board Member Cheryl Stanley asked what age do ELL standards need to exist. Committee Chair Eleonora Villegas-Reimers explained that by 2.5 children have a general working knowledge of their home language, however prior to that might be too soon.

The Committee began a conversation about the next steps and what is needed from them today. EEC Director of Human Resources Sarah Harding noted that WIDA is going to continue doing what they are doing and will move the standards forward nationally, however the next steps for Massachusetts is the issue of wanting to continue a contract or if this was for the Committee's information. Board Member Joni Block suggested that it might be beneficial to have a conversation with Sharon Lynn Kagan as well since she is working on the standards alignment project to get her thoughts on this. Committee Chair Eleonora Villegas-Reimers noted that she finds the standards helpful but for any child who lacks a well developed language system and not just for ELL. She also noted that if EEC wants to continue with a contract it would need to include the development of professional development either through WIDA themselves or another organization. Board Member Joni Block felt that EEC is committed to working with families too so any training or guidance given to the provider should also be given to families. Board Member Cheryl Stanley noted that it is lacking in the strategies.

The Committee decided on some next steps. The steps are that EEC Director of Human Resources Sarah Harding and EEC Head Start State Collaboration Director Jennifer Amaya Thompson will go back to WIDA and ask questions regarding the discussion today as well as questions about any proprietary issues that may arise with a train the trainer model. The answers to the questions will be brought back to this committee in September. It might be helpful to have the first hour of the September meeting as a joint meeting with the Policy and Research Committee.

The next meeting of the Planning and Evaluation Committee is TBD.

Possible Agenda items:

- WIDA follow up on next steps
- New calendar for meetings- Before Board meetings or Thursday after the meeting. Put together the calendar

The Committee adjourned at 11:53 am.