Executive Director’s Report  
Missouri State Board of Education Meeting  
September 16, 2013

As usual the meeting began with a quick series of initial activities that were dispensed with quickly—minutes, board member reports, consent agenda, etc.

Agenda Item A—Teaching and Learning for Generation  
Ryan Waters, 3rd year Law student, did the initial study and report.  
Definition—Gen Z consists of students born after 2000. Another term you hear quite a bit is “digital natives” In other words these students have never known a world without computers and social media. Essentially the report is about the things we need to do and already are doing in order to best teach these students. The report seemed to minimize challenges of engagement and achievement. He almost predicted that as long as we have the proper equipment and technology savvy teachers all would be well. The challenges the presenter foresees are all infrastructure related.

- access to the internet is the real one. He suggests that new fiber optic networks and microwave transmission systems may be the solution.
- access to student devices will be crucial. Many districts are providing the equipment.
- school infrastructure is often outdated. Bandwidth within the schools will need to be upgraded
- PD for teachers in new technologies will need to be constant and ongoing.

We are then introduced to representatives from Jefferson College, the County, and the 11 school districts in JefCo who are working together to create a new cooperative effort to utilize technology for students. Board questions—

- Shields asks if any parents are opting out? The answer goes all around the question but he re-asks and eventually gets them to say none yet.
- Jones asks about the regulatory environment and how that could be a challenge. The answer is that we must be aware and flexible.
- Herschend—are you far enough into the process to see actual results with the new program? The answer is that this is a young program and results encouraging so far

For the full report’s powerpoint that was shown to the State Board please go to—
http://dese.mo.gov/stateboard/meetings/September/documents/GenZ.pdf

Agenda Item E—Top 10 by 20 Progress Report
This turns into mostly a rundown of programs in place to make sure the progress continues. Irony moment—The report completely ignores student achievement results and concentrates on processes and resources in place. In other words the very things they do not want to use to evaluate school districts are the substance of this report to help the Board gauge progress on Top 10 by 20. Why? The results they presented last meeting were less than stellar. Some points in the presentation—

- Helmig—College and Career Ready objectives; sets out a list of ambitious goals for steps they are taking. The resources currently available are being rewritten and reorganized
- Cooper—MSIP 5 rolled out and accountability now trackable all the way to the building level.
- New charter law and oversight will improve this area. MoLead is rolling out. DESE electronic tools now available that will be useful in identifying underperforming schools. The new program for Accredited With Distinction (AWD) will raise the bar for districts. The competency based learning task force has reported and procedures are under development
- educators prep, certification is under development and evaluation. Accomplishments so far and plans for the upcoming year are discussed.
- Cooper goes back to Goal 2—All students will enter K prepared for school. The new Pre-K guidelines will address this area.
- Special Ed—We are developing models for what works, instituting streamlined compliance, and trying to gather data for all 13 subgroups
- DESE operations themselves are constantly being reviewed for efficiency
- Adult learning has a DDS pilot program for adult learning programs.
- DESE communications staff is redesigning the DESE website
- Finance is following up on the goal to streamline things.

Yep, this report is pretty darn boring. It definitely seems to be a pollyanna kind of report. I’m trying to listen for anything that really identifies challenges or problems that DESE has encountered where their programs have not worked well.

Questions from the Board members—
- Shields asks about the objective measurements and when and if those will be available. He saw through the lack of results being presented. The staff says that’s being worked on.
- Herschend concurs and asks that it will be available in October. Not a clear yes or no.
- Jones asks how the steps outlined above affect the person in the field. Nicastro talks about audits that are being done to determine effectiveness. A quote—“If you don’t hear anything you must be doing a good job” Jones reiterates that he feels like he’s hearing the undersecretary in Defense talking but worries there’s a soldier in Afghanistan saying I’m not getting what I need.
- Demien asks about the instructional videos and if there is anyway for us to know how many people are using them? The answer is that we’re in the 2nd year of a 5 year roll out so still limited but the full report will be available by the end of the year.
- Still asks about data subgroups. He wonders if we have added some, Staff responds no, but more details are available now. Still said he was not able to get too deep in the info from Normandy, Francis Howell and the other transfer schools. Staff says we have to be aware of confidentiality, but districts do have access to more detailed info. Its noted that Nicastro sat through a hearing where she was grilled about collecting too much info. When Still continues to ask, Vandeven talks about correlation between poverty levels and achievement.
- Jones worries about institutional complacency. Will districts just ‘settle’ for where they are?
- Herschend wonders if DESE can help to spread the word about programs like the Jefferson County initiative. He reinforces the idea that the Board has committed to the Top 10 by 20 goal and emphasizes that we must keep our eyes on the prize.

For Full report presented to the Board, please go to—
http://dese.mo.gov/stateboard/meetings/September/documents/10by20Update.pdf

Break

Agenda Item F  Accredited with Distinction  THIS IS IMPORTANT!
Dr. Dennis Cooper presents a rather brief description of what AWD will depend upon. It will all be based on achieving 90% of APR and then using Core Data Screens 18 and 20 (which I gather are important parts of the districts’ annual reports) to validate all the additional criteria. 2015 is the first year that AWD will be awarded. Board action today will allow public comments to start after this meeting.

Questions from the Board—
- Demien asks what are screen 18 and 20. Good question. Answer is that’s where the districts report the offering of courses in certain areas.
- Herschend asks is it art and music or art or music. The answer is AND
• Still asks can the districts with subgroups that are traditional non performers get this AWD distinction. Answer is that it will be difficult. Still follows up and there seems to be confusion about what he really asked. Nicastro tries to clarify all points in the APR category with the point that districts must be meeting the growth standards as well.
• Shields asked if only one year. The answer is that the evidence covers a three year span. Each APR report = 3 years.
• Demien asks about world language prior to 9th grade and how districts will meet that.
• Herschend asks about how many districts actually meet all these standards now. The answer is about 10% meet the 1st two levels and that we haven’t looked at Screen 18 and 20 to check the others. The board votes to move ahead with the comment period on the guidelines.

**IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS COMMENT PERIOD TO EXPRESS OUR STRONG SUPPORT FOR ARTS PROGRAMS COUNTING TOWARD THE AWD. IT IS ALSO THE POSITION OF MAAE THAT THEATRE AND DANCE OUGHT TO BE LISTED AS PROGRAMS THAT CAN QUALIFY AS EVIDENCE OF FINE ARTS INSTRUCTION. MORE SPECIFICS ON OUR POSITION WILL BE DEVELOPED IN A FEW DAYS.**

To see full report presented to the Board please go to—

Agenda Item G  Educator Prep Performance Report.
Stakeholder meetings were held. There are 700+ programs that prepare educators in one certification or another scattered among 3 dozen colleges and universities. Those programs are now shifting from an evaluation program once every 7 years to an annual evaluation.
To see the full report presented to the Board please go to—

Agenda Item H  Educator Evaluations report
DESE is collecting data about district and building reporting of evaluation of teachers. The category of student growth as a reporting area is way behind the other areas. Stats seem to bear out that more work needs to be done on administrator evaluation as well.
• Shields asks for a review of the 7 Principles and their importance.
• Herschend worries that student achievement reporting is lagging behind.
To see the full report presented to the Board please go to—

September 17, 2013

There was a big crowd to hear the KCMO presentation. Actually a third of them were KCMO office staff which kind of is indicative of the problems they face. And that is a drastically reduced number from what used to be there.

Agenda Item I—Report from the KC school District
Superintendent Green presents a series of stats about the improvements in the last year. Essentially, they are arguing that the house is now in order and they are moving forward. Financial issues are now solved and the district has actually been in the black for 3 years. Student achievement is trending up although Comm Arts is still a problem across the district, especially at the HS level. He gives a lot more detail than I can cover here. See the powerpoint report below.
- Shields asks about the transition of the Board to a Governance model from an active hands-on kind of board. Green says yes it has improved things quite a bit.
- Shields asks about reduction in the number of contract vendors. Green says that has created some hard feelings.
- Still asks about academic progress; students moving from basic to proficient. Green says still an issue. Still asks about total enrollment; just over 16,000 Pre K-12.
- Herschend asks about charter enrollment in the district. Answer is about 10,000.
- Jones asks about whether there are some common denominators in schools that are failing. Long rambling answer from Green. Basically, the schools that succeeded followed our plan, those that did not, failed.
- Jones asks about distribution of the 30% that seems to be consistently in proficient and advanced. Ass’t Sup Morell (sp?) says they are fairly even in distribution except that the signature schools have higher concentrations of A and P.
- Jones asks about Green’s thoughts about the status and improvement measures. Basically, remember a district gets points for meeting a certain status of achievement and also for improvement in achievement. Green is very diplomatic about not condemning one or the other as a problem for his district.
- Jones asks what if KC goes the way of Normandy and R Gardens. What is the impact? Green says that means a huge financial impact. Therefore, the services for high need populations still in KC would be impacted as well.
- Jones asks what can we do as a board to support. Green replies, well, you can accredit us. One of the few laugh lines of the day. He thinks the RSIP team has helped and hopefully will continue.
- Jones adds a comment about state policy and how it has been a problem in this matter. Policy makes it confusing as to what is best for the kids.
- Herschend notes that they won’t vote today, but that DESE is working with the district to find the best way to best serve the students in KC. Herschend says SBoE has not had time to formulate final decisions yet, but we owe you the answer. Nicastro notes that new law and policies actually give DESE more flexibility in dealing with the district and so something short of wholesale transfers are quite possible.
Agenda K—Budget Request
Driven by mandatory programs and new oversight areas for department. department is asking for an increase of over $600 million to fully fund formula and take care of other needs. There is significant discussion on the special supplemental appropriation for the Normandy transfers because their money will run out this year because of transfers out.
- Jones asks if a plan is in place to address Normandy’s financial situation. The answer is it is being developed as the situation develops.
- Shields worries about the money not reaching Normandy in time. Can we advance the total foundation due them before then? Lankford, the presenter, is reluctant to establish that precedent.
- Lots of further discussion on this issue.
- Still wants to know the mechanism to pay the receiving schools. The money goes first to the sending district and then that district makes the payment. So Normandy and Riverview Gardens get their foundation money and then pay the bills from the receiving districts.
This is a decision item and so it is moved and accepted as the proposal that will go to the Legislature.

To see the full report presented to the Board, please go to—

Agenda Item K  Confluence Academies
They really raked these guys over the coals. Achievement is not good. I was a bit confused, because Grand Center for the Arts is part of Confluence, but it was not included in any of the stats or discussion. I’m a bit confused by that. No stats were given for Grand Center nor was it listed in any materials presented. The Board was obviously displeased with Missouri University of Science and Technology, the charter sponsor, and the lack of achievement of the students. Herschend was especially harsh in his criticism.

**MAAE NEEDS TO CLEARLY ESTABLISH WHERE GRAND CENTER BELONGS IN THIS MESS AND SUPPORT EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ACHIEVEMENT THERE. WE CANNOT ALLOW ARTS FOCUSED SCHOOLS TO BE INEFFECTIVE.**

To see the full report presented to the Board, please go to—

Agenda Item L  Charter Closures
This was a fairly brief item that concerned setting up a rule to deal with how to effectively move through the process of closing the school. It was an action item and therefore a motion was presented and passed.

To see the full item presented to the Board, please go to—

Agenda M  Definitions
This item simply cleans up vocational education to align with Federal changes

To see the full item presented to the Board, please go to—
Agenda Item N  HB 675 adjustments
HB 675 required DESE to formulate rules for Cades Law. These allow districts to have a consistent way of reporting whether students pass PE achievement requirements in grades 5, 7, 9. MOAPHERD was a significant player in creating these rules.
To see the full item presented to the Board please go to--

Agenda Item O  Diabetes training for teachers and staff
The Legislature required DESE to establish training regimens for school personnel in the proper way to respond to diabetic students.
To see the full item presented to the Board please go to—

The Board considered some licensure issues and then moved to closed session.

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Martin, Executive Director
Missouri Alliance for Arts Education