

Academic Standards Review Commission Meeting  
October 20, 2014

Opening: Co- Chairs André Peek and Jeannie Metcalf

- Motion to approve last meeting (September 22, 2014) minutes—approved

Commissioners' Individual Goals:

- Commissioners expressed their individual goals of the commission
- Main points: have standards that prepare students to be globally competitive; look into the concerns with Math; support from the state; commission members to have an open mind; look into NC priorities; focus on the standards not curriculum; have standards that meet the needs of students and teachers; making sure the commission is an independent body; represent the community; good for parents; look into math and English student deficiencies and look into closing the learning gaps.

Review of Guiding Principles:

- ACTION: Strike the word existing from the last sentence of the last bullet
- ACTION: Add high school after the word graduate in the first sentence of the second bullet.
- ACTION: Consider a rewrite the entire second paragraph to better reflect that not all students will go on to 4 year colleges.
- Katie Lemon will own action items and provide updates to be incorporated in next meeting's pre-reads.
- Commission discussed the expectations for students. Commission wants to ensure that expectations are high for students but are not unreasonable which may diminish a student's ability to achieve a sound basic high school education.

Framework of Commission:

- Breakdown of the Commission's calendar:
  - Operational framework: data gathering to establish foundation for fact based recommendations
  - Construct recommendations: from facts, surveys and focus groups
  - Refine recommendations: based on testing groups and keys stakeholders
  - Final recommendations: report to General Assembly
- 4 months—data and fact finding
- 2 months—developing recommendations
- 2 months—testing recommendations
- 2 months—finalizing recommendations
- Commission agreed that the once a month standing meetings may not be sufficient.

Standard Review Process: Robin McCoy-Director of K12 Curriculum Instruction:

- Dr. McCoy introduced her team: Julie Joslin, Anna Frost, Angie Stephenson, Kristy Day.
- The standard review process is to prepare student to be college and career ready and focus on best practices for students and our state to be competitive across nation and the world.
- State Board of Education policy guides the review commission.
- There is a continued process of revision and upgrading for the standards.
- Review process does not defend standards. There is a need to examine carefully and make revisions necessary to keep them at the quality they want.
  - Once every five years review content standards.
  - Review includes: surveys, input from stakeholders and College and University input
  - North Carolina Standard Course of Study: Math/ELA(Common Core) plus all other context areas (NC Essential standards)
  - The State Board of Education adopts standards
  - State must reexamine standards to ensure more quality for students to be prepared for the workforce or college.
  - Review has to look at how students matriculate from grade to grade.
- Curriculum instruction: State Board of Education adopts **standards**—LEAs and teachers pick **curriculum**
- This year: Standards Review Committee —surveys for educators, surveys for non-educators are going out February—commission is presenting to SBE—focus groups (October- February)
- Updated/Revised Standards are implemented in 2018-2019 school year.

#### Overview of ELA Standards: Julie Joslin

- Joslin gave an overview of materials given to commissioners
  - Appendix A: research that supports the information
  - Tabbed addition: standards
  - Progression view: standards
- How are the standards organized: anchor standards and grade-specific standards
- Anchor standards: college and career readiness (goal post—where we are going). Are broad expectations based off evidence and college and workforce expectations. They are a blue print and help create progression of skills
- Grade specific standards: one to one correspondence with the anchor standards. They have grade levels (K-8) and grade bands (9-12)
- Strands: major areas of studies
- ELA Strands: reading, writing, speaking and listening, language
  - Reading strand: (the only strand that is divided into sub strands):
    - 12 clusters—24 standards (10 literature, 10 information—4 foundational)
  - Writing strands:
    - 4 clusters—10 standards
  - Speaking and Listening:
    - 2 clusters—6 standards
  - Language:
    - 3 clusters—6 standards

- How do you name/code standards:
  - RL: reading literature
  - RI: reading information
  - RF: reading foundation
  - W: writing
  - SL: speaking listening
  - L: language
- Strand-Grade-Standard
- Anchor standards: Strand—CCR(anchor)—Standard
- How teachers should teach is **not** covered in the standards. This is up to the discretion of teachers and curriculum developers
- **READING:**
- Vertical alignment
  - Lower grades: getting read to multiple times
  - Grades 3-5: more independence
- LEAs choose how much time they spend, what they read
- Assessment is universal
- Educators are assisted through PD and best practices: HomeBase (DPI online initiative to share teacher lessons statewide via internet).
- If the curriculum is standardized it takes creativity out of the classroom
- Commissioners discussed wanting teachers to have creativity---don't want the standards to be too strict.
- Commissioners asked how teachers teach while kids are being assessed.
- Progression tool:
  - Differences in the standards
  - Set up to allow view of progression without clusters
  - Standard from K-12
- **WRITING:**
- Text complexity: levels of meaning, structures, language conventionality and clarity, knowledge demands
  - Qualitative and quantitative measure
- NAEP: National assessment educational process
- Reading Foundational Skills: no anchor standards. There is progression across grades
- Cursive writing standards were added: not part of the Common Core standards
- Writing standards: text types and purpose
  - Narrative:
    - Purpose: to inform, instruct, persuade
  - Argument:
    - Purpose: change the reader's point of view
  - Informative:
    - Purpose: increase reader's knowledge for the subject
- Classrooms are able to blend text types
- Research to build and present knowledge: Standard 7-9
- Range of Writing: Standard 10
- **SPEAKING AND LISTENING:**

- Clusters: comprehension, collaboration and presentation of knowledge and ideas.
- Comprehension and Collaboration – emphasizes being prepared for discussions, building on the ideas of others, evaluating a speaker’s information, integrating information
- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas – presenting information (task, purpose, audience), using diverse media, adapting speech
- **LANGUAGE:**
- L.CCR.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- L.CCR.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing.
- L.CCR.3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
- L.CCR.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.
- L.CCR.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- L.CCR.6 Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Discussion between Commission Members and Presenters:

- Unpacking document for NC is the same in other states.
- Commissioners discussed how the Common Core Standards rollout was quick.
- The Standard Review Committee is housed in DPI and is reviewing Math and LA to gain better understand and learn the standards at a deeper level.
- Prior survey gained the feedback on individual standards when they were being created and rolled out—this time educators will have a lens of already implementing standards.
  - First time there was no implementation—just rolled out.
- Commissioners spoke about Read to Achieve assessments getting mixed in with the standards.
- Discussed how background knowledge and terminology could be what is confusing the community.
  - Also discussed the purpose of professional development for the staff.
- Commissioners talked about a potential survey question asking if the issue is the terminology or something else.
  - Complexity of the response
- Commissioners discussed input they have heard: Kindergarten teachers don’t know how to teach to the standards and send children to 1<sup>st</sup> grade; teachers think the standards are not age appropriate.

- Commissioners questioned the presenters on the phase in of Common Core. Presenters said it was a discussion, but there was agreement that all students should be exposed to these standards.
- Commissioners agreed that any change they make will not be apparent for years.
- Commissioners discussed the misalignment of standards and the expectation of assessing kids: The standards need to be a natural progression.
- Commissioners discussed the need to asses kids fairly
- The Commissioners discussed quality and quantity. Standards may not be developmentally appropriate. 29 pages of standards that teachers have to teach in the hopes that they have already met the previous year's standards is risky.
  - Rigor v. number
  - Looks good on paper not in the classroom
- Need to separate the standards from the assessment without diluting the standard.
- Presenters explained the unpacking tool as a tool to really delve into what the standards mean. They are extremely comprehensive and for people who are not aware of the standards.
- Commissioners discussed the number of standards not being in the hundreds: 42 in a semester
- Commission discussed the need to look at implementation---look how teachers can teach, their lesson plans and how they can teach to the standards in 90 minutes.
- The discussion continued about students with varying abilities and the volume of information taught. Commission members questioned whether this is achievable for the vast majority of the students
- Commission members discussed their thought that Common Core is geared to the highest level students and students who are average or below average may be getting shortchanged.
- Commission members discussed different ways of learning students learn differently and some are not able to achieve this higher level of education because all children have different potential.
- Commissioners discussed the need for alignment. Some things are out of alignment and a survey could help identify these problems.
- Commission members agreed that they do not want to lower standards in the state of North Carolina and that if 48 other states have figured it out then they can figure it out.

#### Action Items:

- Budget:
  - Co-Chairs are still sorting out funding questions and are committed to finalizing as soon as possible.
  - Main problem is the per diem form Commission members and the cost for teacher subs. These dollars are promised to be made available in the near term to alleviate this immediate issue. Co-chairs will follow up with instructions to secure payments.
- Staff:
  - Need staff to report directly to the Commission.
- Website:

- DOA has established the site. We will publish the internet site address within the next week.
- Surveys:
  - Commissioners agreed this will be finalized in the coming months. Co-Chairs are trusting Commission members Katie Lemons and Laurie McCollum to continue to develop a proposed strategy for the commission to review and agree upon.
  - Survey approach needs to include surveying parents as well.
- November 17<sup>th</sup> next meeting.
- Meeting adjourned.