

Madison Metropolitan School District
Madison, Wisconsin

Art Rainwater, Superintendent

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes for Math Task Force

Wisconsin Center for Education Research
1025 West Johnson Street
Room 378
Madison, Wisconsin

November 27, 2007

The Task Force Meeting was called to order by Co-chair Merle Price at 2:31 p.m.

Membership:

Dr. Martha Alibali, Professor, Departments of Psychology and Educational Psychology, UW-Madison
Dr. David Griffeath, Professor, Department of Mathematics, UW-Madison
Dr. Eric Knuth, Associate Professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, UW-Madison
Dr. Mitchell Nathan, Department of Educational Psychology and Curriculum and Instruction, UW-Madison
Dr. Norman Webb, Senior Scientist, Wisconsin Center for Education Research, UW-Madison
Dr. Kenneth Zeichner, Associate Dean, School of Education, UW-Madison
Dr. Jim Lewis, Professor, Department of Mathematics, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Merle Price, Lecturer, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, California State University, Northridge
Jill Jokela, MMSD parent
Charles Chapin, science teacher, La Follette High School

Support staff:

William Clune, Wisconsin Center for Educational Research (WCER)
Dr. Adam Gamoran, WCER
Angela Hoistion, SCALE Administrative Activities Manager
Dr. Terry Millar, WCER
Dr. Paula White, WCER

MEMBERS PRESENT: Martha Alibali, Charles Chapin, David Griffeath, Jill Jokela, Jim Lewis, Mitchell Nathan, Merle Price, Norman Webb
MEMBERS ABSENT: Eric Knuth, Ken Zeichner
STAFF PRESENT: Bill Clune, Terry Millar, Paula White
OTHERS PRESENT: Daniel Mallin, MMSD General Counsel; David Sleasman, Knowledge Manager, Wisconsin Center for Education Research; John Smithson, Researcher, Wisconsin Center for Education Research; Brian Sniff, MMSD Coordinator of Mathematics; Bob Tabachnick, Associate Dean, School of Education; Barbara Lehman-MMSD Recording Secretary

(meeting was conducted through videoconference and recorded)

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the Math Task Force dated June 12, June 13, and October 19, 2007; as well as the minutes for the Student Achievement and Data Working Group dated November 15 and December 3, 2007 were approved as distributed by the unanimous consent of those present.

2. Wisconsin Open Meetings Law

Attorney Mallin highlighted and gave guidance on Open Meetings Law issues and policy elements that govern the Task Force meetings, as well as the working group meetings. There was some discussion about the problematic nature of creating subcommittees, defining technical work vs. meeting work, electronic communication and use of project management tools, consequences, and how the task force can function in the future to make sure the public has full access if they want it.

Mr. Mallin asked that members notify Barb Lehman when they plan to meet in order to develop official meeting notices. He also asked subcommittees to appoint someone to note any action or consensus reached on action.

It was agreed that SCALE-NET be used as a repository vs. the BASE CAMP tool used by the district.

Attorney Mallin will seek an expedited opinion from the Attorney General's Office regarding use of a public web site in order to track and make changes and give comments on documents. He noted that the law has not yet caught up with the notion of a perpetual meeting. He will get in touch with the Co-chairs next week.

Mr. Mallin left the meeting at this time.

3. *Work Group Progress Reports*

a. *Analysis of Student Achievement*

Mr. Webb gave an overview of the November 15 meeting and reviewed those things that should be addressed: 1) success of MMSD students in post-secondary math courses; 2) satisfactory progress in math to meet state and district standards; 3) 9th graders completing Algebra I; 4) data already reported by the district. By May 2008 the district will have Value-Added analysis. He thought item (1) was obtainable and raised the question about who to compare it to (e.g., districts with 15,000 or larger enrollments, namely, Racine, Kenosha, Appleton, and Green Bay, other than Milwaukee). He talked about the district's data types and history around math courses. He was encouraged by what information could be produced. The next meeting of the working group is scheduled for December 3 at 8 a.m. in room 253 of the WCER until 9:45 a.m. Mr. Kiefer has been very helpful to the subcommittee. The working group intends to continue the process of unpacking the questions and how it will answer those.

b. *Curriculum Review and Research Findings*

Mitchell Nathan took the opportunity to become acquainted with what is available and what it means to talk about curriculum at a certain level. The MMSD has district level standards at the elementary level. He proposed doing an analysis of which standards are being met by which textbooks. The situation is more clear at the middle school level. Mr. Sniff stated would shift that information from BASE CAMP to SCALE-NET. He indicated that the high schools could contribute the most new information adding that the district does not have adopted standards at that level. The Task Force could use national standards or state model standards. They could then project what are likely 3- or 4-year-course taking patterns. They would need a flow chart beginning with 9th grade then branching out picking those that are most common. He noted that the district is trying to standardize those branch points. He distributed a curriculum analysis example of addressing mathematics standards at the high school level (a copy is attached to the original of these minutes) that would be one scheme for breaking this down. He suggested doing a survey of enacted curriculum and amount of time spent on the topics addressed in the standards.

Discussion:

- One portrayal of the landscape.
- How to reflect what is happening in the classroom.
- Presents a picture of the nature of these courses; topics and math activities.
- Making charts available to parents.
- Probably going to hear a lot about alignment.
- Distinction at the high school level—some teachers are math majors—more autonomy.
- Creating a flow chart with the help of Kurt Kiefer; fairly time consuming.
- Statistical meaning--one program might see high numbers while others are low. May look bad on a chart. Have to fully define what it is we are looking for.
- Addressing the question of using so many different curricula.
- Always have the issue about one-size-fits-all vs. customized models.
- Wisconsin and MMSD long-standing tradition of teacher autonomy. Standards were written fairly vaguely to accommodate that. That is where the question is.

c. *Instruction and Teacher Preparation*

No report.

d. *Survey of Teachers, Parents, and Students*

Paula White invited John Smithson to discuss his work the MMSD and other school districts around math instruction. He distributed parts of a PowerPoint presentation and access to data viewer information.

The interactive viewer data came from 80 teachers who participated in the survey. It represents confidential information to be shared only with researchers for research uses. In light of today's conversation about alignment and what is in the content and in the standards, he indicated he could do analyses of various types of documents that provide curriculum guidance to teachers. Using the math standards, he can display topographic maps and from that do some analyses about

relationships between instruction and the standards or the assessments and provide data to help predict student performance on the state assessments. He reviewed some other charts in the PowerPoint and helped people understand the data he had gathered.

Discussion:

- The PowerPoint data could be aggregated across the district and made public but not the data viewer information. Have to maintain confidentiality.
- Frameworks vs. standards--guides assessment development--guides instruction.
- Gets at enacted curriculum. Would also be nice if we knew what textbooks were being used. Brian Sniff could break that out by curriculum as a school as to where they were in the implementation stage. It would not be know how the curriculum was supplemented. Mr. Sniff noted that the feedback is self-reporting.
- Have to develop the good questions and explore in more detail. Tells what is available and what could be done. Can compare to state, national and MMSD standards.
- If the Task Force can get enough information and enough analyses to arrive at recommendations, it will then need to know how those recommendations align to what the district already has as part of its plan.

He would be able to share more the next meeting.

4. *Topics for Future Agendas*

Options for continuing the work of the Task Force; model of operation.

5. *Future Meeting Dates*

Staff will survey the members to find a date/time within the next two weeks for another videoconference.

6. *Adjournment*

Meeting adjourned at 4:27 p.m. by the unanimous consent of those present.

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