

AccelerateED Task Force Minutes 4/30/20 Meeting

Members Present:

State Superintendent Molly Spearman, Kathy Coleman (Chairman), Tanya Addison, Missy Campbell, Latoya Dixon, Sherry East, Sherry Epplesheimer, Harrison Goodwin, Chanda Jefferson, Patrick Kelly, Brain Newsome, Chuck Saylor, Scott Turner, and Alan Walters.

Opening Remarks

Superintendent Spearman: Wanted to keep this a small working group to get this work done efficiently. So proud of the work educators have done across the state so far. We know the best way for children to learn is in the classroom, and they have lost about 30% of their learning in the classroom this year as a result of the virus.

This group really need to look at the following:

1. Summer reading programs. The SCDE is proposing to expand summer reading camps to include Math (and expand to K-3).
2. Operations over the summer.
3. Recommendations for how we go back to school in August. (Include different models and scenarios).

Kathy Coleman, Chairman

It's an honor to serve and we have some big challenges ahead of us.

Subcommittee Assignments:

Building and Student Services

Chairman: Alan Walters

Chuck Saylor

Harrison Goodwin

Chanda Jefferson

Instruction

Chairman: Patrick Kelly

Latoya Dixon

Tanya Addison

Sherry East

Operations

Chairman: Scott Turner

Brain Newsome

Missy Campbell

Sherry Epplesheimer

Summer Learning Discussion

David Mathis, Deputy Superintendent, SC Department of Education

We have been working on a summer program that would extend our summer reading camps. The framework includes: K-3 students, ELA, Literacy and Math. Since 30% of face to face learning has been lost we must create a robust program to help them.

The program would be a minimum of 4 weeks.

90 minutes of ELA

50 minutes of Math

(This could be morning and afternoon sessions)

-if it is done face to face we would need to look at meal service and transportation.

We plan to identify students who are at risk and would benefit the most for these camps the following ways:

1. Looking at state tests
2. Benchmarks
3. Screeners
4. Teacher recommendations

We would like to give a pre assessment when entering the camp and post assessment to gauge what they have learned.

Comments from Committee Members after Presentation

Chanda Jefferson

Are there measures that include social and emotional needs?

David Mathis: we will need extra help and support in this. Learning and social and emotional needs definitely go hand in hand.

Scott Tuner

What is the difference between this and a normal summer reading camp?

David Mathis: This would take the place of summer reading camps in June.

Latoya Dixon

Teaching reading will be hard to replicate virtually. We will need clearly defined criteria and skills and processes to target.

Superintendent Spearman

We get about \$8 million for traditional summer reading camps. There is an average each year of about 14, 000 students that are identified for summer reaching camps, About half of those attend. The SCDE plans to use part of our CARES Act money for a robust statewide LMS system that would assist with this. We also plan to request funding from the Governor's CARES Act money as well.

Patrick Kelly

There are obvious challenges to accessibility. We need to address access needs for special education students as well as our English/Language Learners. How will we engage these kids? We have kids who are working to help their families for monetary support.

Superintendent Spearman: We have an internal stakeholder group working on the access issue.

Sherry East

Several concerns: are we wasting money on virtual programs? Will be open this up to high school students? We know face to face is the best.

David Mathis

The plan is for face to face. Virtual will be an option if this is needed. This would help Segway in to the new year.

Tanya Addison

We need to provide guidance for what a summer program would be and allow districts to integrate this throughout the year. We need to also address the challenge and concerns for districts and look at remote locations for students with no access. Families with multiple children would have to expand their bandwidth.

Harrison Goodwin

Summer plans would now start in July? Districts should extend extra learning days as far as they can financially through the upper grades. In Chesterfield, 35% of our students do not have access to internet. Right now we are planning for a virtual program in June and face to face in July.

Scott Turner

Greenville is planning to start summer camps in July. We would like the flexibility to extend this learning into the school day if possible. We are going to have to work through the first semester this Fall with our K-3 students. We don't want to lose this generation.

Sherry Eppleshiemer

We have got to find a way to reach these kids. Possibly credit recovery?
Supt Spearman: SC qualifies for additional funding grant for extra learning and instruction.

Latoya Dixon

We need to look at 4 aspects of helping recover student learning:

1. Making sure districts have access to a learning management system (LMS).
2. High quality instructional aligned content that could be pushed into a district LMS. District could customize, and align to the district curriculum map.
3. Focus on helping teaches become diagnosticians.
4. Professional Development support on how to instruct in a remote learning environment.

Patrick Kelly

Professional development needs to be led by teachers and needs to be meaningful.

Tanya Addison

I would also like to challenge everyone to be mindful of our parent partners.

Chuck Saylor

Patrick and Latoya make good points regarding out Special Ed students. What about our career center students? What will we do for them? The business community looks to them to provide a workforce.

Alan Walters

We get contacted all the time by vendors. There are also big holes in our internet connectivity. From a safety standpoint, we need to look at the latest possible start date for summer programs.

In addition, look at training for staff on safety protocols. We need to plan for the worst and hope for the best.

Superintendent Spearman

We will need a safe environment. I have spoken with DHEC and they are working on protocols for people to consider.

John Payne (SCDE, Deputy Superintendent)

We are continuing to send guidelines. Some of our students with disabilities needs are impossible to be done virtually. In addition we are working with DHHS to increase flexibility for Medicaid billing. Supplemental services will begin in July.

Missy Campbell

We will need to look at the reimbursement piece.

Patrick Kelly

Safety: We need to create an environment where everyone feels safe coming into the building.
Staffing: we will need to make sure we have sufficient staffing to help with new protocols (class sizes). We will need to meet the needs of students in a smaller learning environment.

Latoya Dixon

We need to make sure we have mental health support for students and staff. The instructional content will be a critical piece of the students learning. We need to look at a statewide diagnostic tool.

Sabrina Moore (SCDE Director of Student Intervention Services)

We have spoken with SC Department of Mental Health and they have asked if students can keep their devices during the summer so they can provide telehealth services to them,

Scott Turner

We are currently discussing with a vendor how to collect student devices, , update them and redistribute. We also need to consider another waiver for testing next year and what our accountability system should look like for the future.

Chanda Jefferson

Teachers are very happy that tests are waived. We will need to reimagine how we assess out students.

John Payne: The SCDE and the EOC are working with the National Center for Assessments.

Akil Ross (Education Representative on the Governor's accelerateSC task force)

We need to revitalize and expand SC's economy. In addition Mr. Ross gave an overview of the Governor's taskforce.

Kathy Coleman

The consensus is for the subcommittees to look at these 5 issues:

1. Summer programs beginning in July

2. Upfront costs for districts.
3. Focus on K-3 and give districts flexibility.
4. Making sure safety protocols are in place.
5. Meeting the needs for our special population students.

The committee agreed to meet twice the following week and adjourned.