

AccelerateED Instructional Subcommittee Meeting

Thursday, June 4, 2020 (meeting 8)

8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Minutes

Instruction Subcommittee

Patrick Kelly, Chairman
Tonya Addison
Katherine Coleman
Katherine Lee D'Andrea
Latoya Dixon
Abbey Duggins
Sherry East

Anna Hall
Hollie Harrell
Tommy Hodges
Rainey Knight
Sandra Linder
Rich O'Malley
Tommy Hodges

SC Department of Education (SCDE) Staff

Ryan Brown
Rebecca Davis
Crystal Dennis
Stephanie DiStasio
Elizabeth Ann Jones
Angel Malone
David Mathis

Bradley Mitchell
Quincie Moore
John Payne
Brian J. Pratt
Anne Pressley
Laurie Traywick
Katie Nilges

Agenda: Fall 2020 Recommendations

The Instructional Subcommittee continued to review, discuss, and make recommendations to the fall recommendations working document. Areas of discussion around the draft fall recommendations included:

Step 2: Preparing for Opening

5. Communications Plans

d.) Distance Learning Contingency Plan

- i. Development of a Distance Learning Contingency Plan can be facilitated by the work of the district level task force teams.

Districts need to consider scheduling across grade levels to try to avoid situations where multiple children are accessing live materials at the same time; and students with multiple classes on their schedule can never have synchronous sessions for different classes at the same time.

- iii. District level task force teams will need to address how teachers and students will have access to high quality and affordable broadband connection.

6. Determining Student Attendance

a.) Early Survey of Students and Families

Districts need to share overview of plans for distance learning *before* sending surveys to families. Districts need to make sure families know that districts are working on plans to provide high quality distance learning options for

students in the fall. Districts needs to be clear, concise, and transparent with communication to families and the communities about planning for the fall. The collection of surveyed data can equip districts with essential information for planning for the fall. In addition to gathering family preferences on returning to school, districts should also seek to determine the rationale for family preference, with a specific focus on determining if a family has a COVID-19 related rationale for not wanting to send a child back to in-person instruction. Such reasons could include an underlying health condition for a child or for a caregiver at home.

b.) Development of District Policy for Distance Learning Access

The SC School Boards Association and/or SCDE's Office of General Council will need to assist districts in establishing a policy on what they will do to serve students who have a documented reason for not returning to in-person instruction due to COVID-19. Districts should first seek to meet the needs of students that cannot return to school through existing virtual learning platforms and resources such as homebound services. Potential distance learning options beyond what already assists: students and staff who are immune compromised and cannot return to the classroom would be live streaming of classes, cross district sharing of staff, asynchronous learning, and ETV and data casting, etc.

d.) Develop Distance Learning Resources

SCDE and districts should build learning object repositories to enhance the capacity of teachers to provide distance learning.

e.) Declaration of Intent

By late July, districts should have guidelines in place to determine student eligibility for distance learning as a result of COVID-19. Districts need to clearly articulate the options to facilitate family responses to the survey. Parents need to be aware of district scheduling model for the start of fall operations. Based on the guidelines and scheduling model selected by the district, interested families should be allowed to apply for distance learning services as a result of COVID-19. Districts should set clear deadlines for the return of the surveys to give schools sufficient time to make any necessary adjustments to their master schedules.

f.) Measuring Student Attendance

At the start of the school year, SCDE should provide necessary flexibility to districts for reporting 45 and 135 day attendance numbers. Need a mechanism for reporting distance learning attendance for students.

Step 3: Preparing for and Extending Learning

1. Preparing for Learning

The South Carolina General Assembly has allocated a significant portion of the funding made available to our state under the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic

Security (CARES) Act to allow for five additional days at the start of the 2020–2021 school year for students in grades 4K–8.

2. Extending Learning

Some of the federal recovery dollars for COVID-19 or federal funds that have been allowed to be carried forward from the 2019–2020 school year could be purposed for extending learning activities for students throughout the 2020–2021 school year.

Step 4: Structuring and Scheduling Learning

1. Start Date

Recommendation that districts should re-evaluate their 2020–2021 calendar to determine the start date that is best aligned to their local situation. Districts should maintain flexibility around their scheduling.

5. Prevention of Bullying and Harassment

b) Districts need to consider how they will deal with COVID-19 related bullying and harassment issues in the fall.

6. Ensuing a Well-Rounded Education

a) It is unanimously the recommendation of this task force that districts continue to ensure students have access to a well-rounded education, both in-person and with distance learning environments this fall. The subcommittee referred to the heads of statewide organizations in the areas of the arts (visual and performing) who helped to create a list of best practices from state and national organizations around how to operate chorus, band, orchestra, and other areas of the arts that we can include as an appendix for districts to utilize as a resource.

b) Physical education (including Reserve Officers' Training Corp – The subcommittee will contact experts to hopefully provide information to be included as an appendix.

c) Media Centers and Media Specialists – The State Librarians Association's president will provide information to be included as an appendix.

d) Career and Technical Education (CTE) – The subcommittee will reach out to CTE contacts to provide information to include as an appendix.

Model 1: "Traditional" Scheduling

In this scenario, health guidelines and facility considerations allow for all students and staff to return to a school building to open the school year due to low or no spread of COVID-19 in the area. The subcommittee discussed the additional considerations and alterations districts will need to make from "business as usual" due to the impact of COVID-19 in spring 2020 as well as due to the continued threat of COVID-19 in the fall.

Model 2: Hybrid Scheduling

In this scenario, only a portion of staff and students can report to a physical school building due to a combination of health requirements and facility/space limitations. The subcommittee discussed issues related to hybrid scheduling including:

- Student groups to prioritize for in-person learning
- Models of hybrid schedules

- Questions districts should consider and address before adopting a hybrid scheduling model

Model 3: Full Distance Learning

In this scenario, all students and staff are unable to return to a physical school building due to health conditions. The subcommittee discussed the various factors that districts need to consider when utilizing this model.

In order to best support districts that require a full distance learning model, the SCDE should consider the following:

1. Waivers from Defined Minimum Program and Seat Time Requirements – As noted in the AccelerateED summer recommendations, districts that are required to shift to a full-time distance learning model will need the flexibility provided by waivers to defined minimum program and seat time requirements.
2. Facilitating District Collaboration – SCDE should continue to facilitate collaboration among districts that are engaged in full distance learning. Such support includes continued development of the resources at scremotelearning.com.

Next Steps

- Full Task Force Meeting – Thursday, June 11, 2020 at 10 a.m.
- Next Subcommittee Meeting – Monday, June 8, 2020 at 10 a.m.

Instructional Subcommittee is asked to review the draft recommendations working document to make any final revisions, comments/suggestions prior to the next meeting on June 8th. After that meeting, the subcommittee will forward draft recommendations to the full task force for review and incorporation with the recommendations of the other two subcommittees.