

AccelerateED Instruction Subcommittee
Tuesday, May 19, 2020 (meeting 4)
2–4 pm

Instruction Subcommittee

Patrick Kelly, Chairman	Anna Hall
Tonya Addison	Hollie Harrell
Katherine Coleman	Tommy Hodges
Katherine Lee D'Andrea	Rainey Knight
Latoya Dixon	Sandra Linder
Abbey Duggins	Rich O'Malley
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SC Department of Education (SCDE) Staff

Ryan Brown	Bradley Mitchell
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Elizabeth Ann Jones	Anne Pressley
Angel Malone	Laurie Traywick
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Minutes

1. Updates on Full Task Force Work and Funding Streams
 - a. Update on instruction subcommittee recommendations
 - Patrick Kelly participated in a call with Kathy Coleman, Superintendent Spearman, Alan Walter, and Dr. Scott Turner.
 - Next Full Task Force Meeting is Thursday, May 21, 2020 from 3 – 5 p.m. The primary focus will be to review and finalize the subcommittees' Recommendations for Summer 2020.
 - All three subcommittees have shared their Recommendations for Summer Learning with Ryan Brown and Laurie Traywick. The SCDE will combine those three sets of recommendations into a consolidated Recommendation Set.
 - Superintendent Spearman's goal is for those recommendations to be shared with district superintendents, school boards, and teachers' associations in SC to give them an opportunity to provide any feedback. Superintendent Spearman would like the finalized set of Summer 2020 Recommendations to be distributed to districts from the AccelerateED Task Force by the start of next week.
 - The Summer Recommendations submitted to the Full Task Force are nearly identical to what the Instructional Subcommittee previously discussed, with one exception. The Learning Recovery Plan section about districts looking at extra instructional or extended days was deleted. This will be addressed in the Fall Recommendations. No feedback from other subcommittees was

received. Mr. Kelly anticipates the Summer Recommendations will stand as submitted.

- **CARES \$1.9 billion budget is to be spent by December 31, 2020.**

Superintendent Spearman is pushing hard for six, possibly five extra days and hopes to get approval this week. The General Assembly will need to provide input on funding. Superintendent Spearman has been working with the Governor's Office along with appropriate committees in the House and the Senate and is confident approval will be given. The amount of funding should be known in the next few days.

- The South Carolina School Board Association will provide guidance to school districts about the contractual issues for the number of days.
- On the **\$216 million** funding being requested for summer enrichment (extended days, summer reading camps, K–2 math, etc.), recommendations need to include language on allowing districts the flexibility to hold that funding, if they deem appropriate, for any other interventions needed for students in reading and math throughout the Fall. Districts should not have to immediately spend money during the summer if they cannot do something meaningful.

2. Planning for Fall 2020 due June 12, 2020

a. Developing Recommendations

- Drawn from "Questions to Answer" Work

Recommendations:

- The language is to include extending the school days, bringing in tutors, etc. for the Fall to allow district more flexibility. The Elementary and Secondary School Emergency (**ESSER**) **\$194 million** flow-through funding could be blended with how districts approach looking at other opportunities to provide to students for increased learning opportunities, and interventions and support to address the adverse effects of the pandemic.
- Districts should plan to conduct third grade reading camps as usual and use the ESSER funds, which can to be held until the Fall to add additional grades K–2. Summer Reading Camp (SRC) funds are also flexible and can be used to hold virtual camps in June 2020, be used in July, or held and rolled forward to Summer 2021.
- Distribute funds using a similar formula to CARES or Title 1 to give districts the flexibility to choose from options on how funds would be used.
- To focus on the impact of social emotional learning and how to address this when students return to school prior to any learning beginning in order to know the state of mind the students are returning to school with.

- Allow funds to be used for additional days or something such as double blocking reading and math, tutoring, or professional development for teachers around social and emotional health of students and staff.
- Districts would have to have a meaningful plan for the students identified as needing recovery learning when they return and explain how the funds will be expended by the end of 2020.
- Permit districts to choose from 3–4 options that can easily be monitored, data collected on, and the dollars accounted for.
- Ensure that every learner get an opportunity to recover what they have not mastered, not just the students who were struggling before Covid-19.
- Give districts options to have flexibility with the population of students they choose to bring back, to include high school students. For example, some students may be continuing with their Career and Technology Education program and they need to make up some hours.
- Teachers to utilize more small groups during the extra days.
- Designing effective models of instruction to support a variety of plans for the Fall.
- Possibly use the language **learning recovery** rather than make up days.
- Districts could form their own task force to look at instruction and building and operations to determine the best use of the recovery funds with guidance from the Full Task Force who would provide districts with options to choose from other than the addition of extra days.
- Use some of the money to work on SEL, trauma inform teaching, practices that are desperately needed; and we could guide that in a way that is uniformed across the state, with the flexibility of the districts to make sure that is in the hands of the practitioners in the classroom to give them the support that will be needed.
- Eliminate all the state testing possible to get back the loss of instructional time; which is about 30 percent of teaching time spent on pre-test, prep-tests, state tests, etc. That time could go back to teachers for teaching. Testing waivers need to be in place as soon as possible.
- Get everyone equipped with adequate devices, wifi, learning management system, and training.
- Using additional time for assessing diagnostic purposes and completing testing. After results are determined, the skills a student is lacking can be targeted. There will be intensive interventions for many students. Where there is flexibility with the money, there are opportunities for interventions, strategies, and core instruction to be put in place.
- The additional five or six days should be an option for districts, but not the only option for the use of funds.
- District must explicitly describe the accountability measures with desired outcomes related to learning recovery for the chosen option for approval by the SCDE. That may not mean standardize test results. Provide a

menu of options with an accountability expectation of goals, desired outcomes, and actions.

- Use funding for students who have demonstrated significant learning gaps based on the diagnostics experience given to them.
- Could happen when students' needs can best be met, given the context of a district's staffing, capacity, funding, allow ability, etc. While social emotional learning (SEL) is very important and needed by students, they often get it after it is actually needed. Certain students should receive it sooner rather than later.
- Determining when to add the additional days could be challenging since districts' calendars have already been set. Adding the days to the beginning of the school year would back up all the teacher in-service days which would start to hit into induction and affect hiring. The dates would depend on the district's needs, plans for those days, when they will occur, and what the outcome should be. Giving the districts autonomy over what to do with those days seems to make the most sense rather than the subcommittee trying to decide what is best for them.
- The first 1-2 days of re-entry would be spent on paperwork, structure, meeting everyone, schedules, lockers, rules, newly implemented guidelines due to Covid-19, etc. which would be done ahead of time to allow for more instruction time. The mental health support and counselors would be available.
- The recovery learning would be for students in grades K-12 who have demonstrated significant learning gaps.
- Saturday recovery learning classes could be an option.
- Could create learning recovery for certain students who need to recover those skills to articulate from Algebra 1 to Algebra 2 and use the CARES funds to hire retired teachers temporarily part-time to come in and work with those students.

Concerns on extra days:

- Quantifying the cost of extra days rather than extra hours could drive how the money is able to be used.
- Six days is not a lot of time to monitor, diagnosis and address learning gaps of identified students.
- Adding six days on the front end could potentially have an adverse effect on districts. They would have to expedite all teachers having to be hired and oriented, classrooms having to be ready, and planning time between now and the return of school will decrease.
- Recruitment and retention of staff is already a challenge for some districts.
- Factored into the daily cost of additional days is transportation and staffing. Whereas, it wouldn't be an issue by extending the day for a specific period of time.

- Where the six days would be added.
- Focusing solely on additional days may not be a good use of funding, especially if there is a resurgence of Covid-19.
- This year's report cards do not provide an accurate assessment of where students are academically or where the gaps might be.
- To provide funding to districts to use for the additional days would be to assume that what is happening during those days is of high quality in mitigating the learning gaps that students have.
- Is the distribution of the funds restricted to a certain number of additional days?
- A simple mandate to add five or six extra days to the school year is not an effective use of money and would not be done well.
- Some districts have started moving their summer scheduled programs to July, and if school starts early, those summer programs could possibly run into the start of school.
- Need clarification on the extra six days. Do they need to be instructional days teaching students full time or can it be creative on what teachers do?
- Testing, screenings, and progress of students that have been identified that are now on hold. The longer it takes to get that child identified and placed, the longer the child goes without instruction. Could a district use CARES money to bring special education staff in for a week in the summer to do testing and identify those kids when appropriate to get them caught up?
- The decrease of vacation time and how it effects the economy will be a concern to parents and businesses.

Funding:

- From the **\$216 million ESSER** funds, there are 12 areas of funding that districts can use to assist with the effects of the pandemic on students to be spent by December 31, 2020. Districts will have to prioritize how they spend those dollars. Spending the funds to get the biggest need should be determined based on which funds are able to be spent on what and by when. The funding cannot be used to extend the days or for Saturday enrichment.
- The districts selected to receive the Governor's funding will be accountable for it. The accountability piece is extremely important and SCDE cautions against adding more money to the pot that districts already have and to make the most of the opportunity provided. Monitoring needs to be done well so there are no risk of losing any of the allocations.
- Funding must be spent by the end of 2020, therefore the subcommittee does not have the capacity to extend the school year past December 2020. With that in mind, the recommendations are on how the money can

best be used so that it is done well and not just done for the sake of making up days as opposed to making up learning:

Subcommittees' Recommendations:

1. Professional Development for teachers
 2. Diagnostics
 3. Establishing relationships and routines
 4. Academic Instruction for districts to opt to utilize additional days to front load content for next year instead of focusing only on intervention or remediation.
 5. Extended time within the 180 days
 - i. Recommendation for the capacity for the funding for the six extra days be able to bleed into the 180 days and not necessarily be on the front end. If it is not possible, there is summer enrichment funding that could bleed into the 180 days.
 - ii. Giving districts a menu of options to choose from:
 1. Extended day
 2. Double-blocking of kids
 3. Saturday Instruction
 4. Targeted before- and after-school programs
 5. Purchase software resources / content recovery resources
- Note on "Hybrid" Scenario
 - Social distancing cannot work without doing Hybrid? Parents who don't want to do Hybrid would have to stay with the e-learning option. Child care is an area of concern.
 - Recommendation is for parents to be allowed to work from home due to child care issues.
 - Allows districts to make decisions about what students are in the building for what amount of time based on their unique needs. There needs to be some standardization of that.
 - Allows districts to be extremely individualized in the approach to addressing remediation.
 - Transportation could be an issue for a.m. / p.m. days but should not be an issue by busing half the number of students on the bus at different times. The benefit would address the social distancing requirements as well as logistical constraints outside buildings that do not have the capacity for effective social distancing.
 - Some 4-K teachers feel the hybrid model would not work for younger students. Concerns from some parents is that younger children who cannot read need more hands on assistance from the parents with e-learning.

Reminder: Encourage all teacher to take the survey conducted by SC Teacher Association and the University of South Carolina with support from Palmetto State Teachers Association, State Education Association, and SC Department of Education.

3. Next Steps

- a. Full Task Force Meeting – May 21, 2020 from 3 – 5 p.m.
- b. Next Subcommittee Meeting – May 22, 2020 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Subcommittee is asked to take some time to go over the working document, leave comments, and address topics to prepare to make Fall Recommendations.