AccelerateED Task Force May 6, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Superintendent Molly Spearman, Alan Walters, Chuck Saylors, Chanda Jefferson, Scott Turner, Kathy Coleman, Sherry East, Latoya Dixon, Patrick Kelly, Sherry Eppleshiemer, Tanya Addison, Harrison Goodwin, Brian Newsome, Missy Campbell.

Kathy Coleman, Chairman
I want to think everyone for all of their hard work. The subcommittees have been working hard. I will turn it over to Superintendent Spearman.

Superintendent Molly Spearman
I want to thank you all for your service. We spent several hours at the AccelerateSC meeting this week. There are 4 main subcommittees (Governance, Response, Protection, and Resources). K-12 really falls into all of these, but mainly the resource committee.
-There are two pots of money they are looking at: $1.9 billion and $48 million.
-We were asked to give our report on K-12's request. We asked for the following:
1. $180 million for 6 extra instructional days
2. $50 million for summer school (this could grow)
3. Food service will need extra funding.
4. Funding for PPE and cleaning
5. Technology. Approximately 150,000 households that are not connected to the internet, and about 160,000 devices needed for students.
-Senator Ryberg reported that the recommendations might not be ready until end of May or 1st of June.

Katie Nilges (SCDE Governmental Affairs)
The 3 main objectives of the governance committee of AccelerateSC are: confidence, clean and safe, and connect. We have asked for several things in the continuing resolution the General Assembly plans to take up:

1. Suspension of the 1% employer contribution
2. Waiving of statutory requirements (finance and flexibility). These have been waived by the feds but need state requirements waived.
3. Distance Learning days would count toward the 180 day count.
4. Waiver of the 17 schools districts required to sign petitions for school board races.

Akil Ross (AccelerateSC Member)
I reached out to Mayor Knox White and asked that mental/emotional health programs be extended to educators, students and first responders (with use of the CARES Act funds).

Superintendent Molly Spearman
We are anticipating a good amount of guidance from DHEC in the coming days. What we need from this committee are best practices, tips, and recommendations for how schools can operate so districts can use this and adjust.

Subcommittee Reports

A. Building and Student Services (Alan Walters, Chairman)
We reviewed each area assigned, identified measureable goals, and prioritize with time and safety.

1. Expand summer academic camps in ELA, Math, SPED and K-3.
   -enrichment at home in June
   -summer camps in July (ideally face to face, virtual, paper and pencil or any combination.
2. upfront costs to districts
   -most districts will wait how other pots of money are distributed and then reprioritize their spending.
3. broadband access
4. Social and Emotional Learning support
   -how do we identify and locate these students
   -how will evaluations be done? (may have to set up locations)

-building safety will be a huge challenge. Summer programs will be a good practice for schools this fall.
-we need to look at how we can make schools safe and educate the stakeholders on how to keep schools safe.
-class schedule ideas: we will need to look at multiple options. Do we do student and staff screening? (will need protocols, revised visitor policies, cleaning of restrooms). We also should look at moving teachers from class to class instead of students.

Superintendent Spearman
That was a very thoughtful report. There are a lot of questions right now, but as we get guidance we can answer and respond. I expect a large amount of the CARES Act money to be spend on broadband. That seems to be the way the AccelerateSC group is going. The Department has also sent a survey to districts to estimate their cleaning costs and we will share those results once we get them.

B. Instruction Subcommittee (Patrick Kelly, Chairman)
-We must keep students and staff safe.
-The bulk of our conversation centered on summer enrichment programs.
-We feel like we have more questions than answers at the moment
-We need a menu of proposals for districts, and need to serve kids beyond traditional summer camps.
-The SCDE has done great work around learning progressions, but we also need to look at addressing learning gaps instead of summer school.
-Ideally instruction would be in person, but we need to plan for virtual and packets or a combination of these.
-We need to look at how we invite and engage students, and how do we track their progress.
-We need to promote summer reading across the state to ALL kids.

Superintendent Spearman
Thank you Patrick. These are right on target with the recommendations we need. What do we do about those children that have been disengaged? Do we know who they are? I would like the committee to spend some time discussing this.

Patrick Kelly
Those who need this enrichment the most are the ones that have not engaged.

Alan Walters
We need to work on locating these students. We had a program with DMH several years ago where we walked around and knocked on doors. We may have to have something like this again.

Sherry East
We are missing the parent part where they aren't reaching out either.

Latoya Dixon
We need to keep in mind that virtual doesn't always mean it is more effective. A student requires supportive adults as well. The students we need to engage are most likely those impacted the most by COVID-19. It might be helpful to allow districts to provide transition programming (Elementary > Middle > High)

C. Operations Subcommittee (Scott Turner, Chairman)
   1. Finance
      -Currently districts have summer reading camp funds. Can this be rolled into academic recovery camps?
      -There are concerns with districts not being about to fund these camps up front because of the reimbursement model.
      -There are questions from districts about saving some of this money for mid-year budget cuts.
      -We need to build in PD days for staff and do this before we bring the kids in.
      2. Transportation
         -social distancing on a bus will not be easy.
         -6 feet apart—13 students
         -5 feet apart—26 students
         (this would be for a 77 passenger bus)
         -will need to take into account the cleaning and disinfecting of the buses
      3. Academic Recovery Camps
         -need to look at partnering with churches and community centers.
         -HIPPA issues (what to do about employees and students)
         -we will need to work with families and give districts the flexibility to have all day sessions.
      4. Cleaning
         -needs to be reimbursable.
      5. Health
         -screenings
         -PPE

-school nurses
-students being on a bus before they are screened.
-isolation rooms for students who are sick
-relocating nurses offices and stations for large groups
-signage around buildings. (one direction arrows through the building similar to grocery stores)
-social and emotional support for staff.

Harrison Goodwin
With regard to transportation, these are unrealistic numbers. ½ will not work because of the amount of hours buses are on the roads (it is also hard to keep bus drivers).
With regard to cleaning, districts right now are not allowing outside groups to use their buildings to keep up with cleaning.

Superintendent Spearman
These questions are very helpful to me and staff. New guidance should be coming out soon regarding public transit. But we have to come up with a plan that will give parents, students, and teachers CONFIDENCE that they are safe. We might need to look at classes as a unit.

Katie Nilges and John Payne (SCDE)
Dates for the different funding pots:

1. $1.9 billion can be used for costs from March 1, 2020--December 30, 2020
2. $216 million can be used from March 13, 2020—September 2021.

Latoya Dixon
We need to think very carefully about how we use these funds.

Chanda Jefferson
The SREB task force has been looking at this as well. 16 states are focusing on governance and operation, and coming up with a playbook.

Scott Turner
Scheduling will look very different for elementary, middle, and high school.

Superintendent Spearman
We might want to look at looping.

Sherry East
Have we look at athletics, band, etc…?
Supt Spearman: DHEC and the SC High School League are working together. Their main focus right now are summer camps.

Alan Walters
Band, chorus, CTE classes will be complex to figure out.

Superintendent Spearman
The Governor's order for the month of May allows districts to have the flexibility to bring in CTE students for performance task assessments, testing 1 on 1. The students and teachers both have to agree, but this can also include IEP meetings.

Scott Turner
People are being inundated by vendors. We don't want districts to be taken advantage of with this additional money. We really need to make sure the RIGHT things are being purchased.

David Mathis (SCDE Deputy Superintendent)
We are working on 20 lesson plans that people can use and modify that includes face to face, virtual, and paper/pencil packets.

Sherry East
Do we have a list that shows that platform everyone is using? (Might be available through SCASA).

Chanda Jefferson
Does ELA and Math lessons include a social and emotional piece?
David Mathis: it will absolutely have this included.

David Mathis (SCDE Deputy Superintendent)
We are looking to provide resources on how to asses students on where they are socially and emotionally.

Tanya Addison
I know that the office of standards and learning are working to create learning progressions. Could we possibly use transformation coaches to help move this along?
David Mathis: These will be completed by July 1. We are using literacy coaches, specialists and transformation coaches to help teachers with this professional development.

Latoya Dixon
We need to target essential standards.

Kathy Coleman
We want to make sure our recommendations are to open school are normal as possible. The entire state may not operate the same way.