

Educational Programs and Services
Board Committee Meeting
February 7, 2013

Minutes

Committee Members: Marc Whichard, Jill Camnitz, Benjie Forrest, Christine Waters,
Mary Williams

Present: Marc Whichard, Jill Camnitz, Benjie Forrest, Christine Waters

Staff Members Present: Cheryl Olmsted, Marty Baker, David Jenkins, Pokie Noland, Beth Ann Trueblood

Mr. Whichard called the meeting to order. On behalf of the committee, Mr. Whichard expressed his sympathy to Ms. Olmsted on the recent loss of her father. He asked for a motion to approve the December minutes. Motion to approve the December minutes was made by Mr. Forrest with a second by Ms. Camnitz. Minutes were approved with a unanimous vote. Mr. Forrest asked the committee for an adjustment to the agenda. He asked that we add Animal Science as a discussion topic. There being no objection, Animal Science was added to the agenda.

CTE Credentialing and VOCATS – continued from December 2012 meeting

As requested by the committee at the December meeting, Ms. Trueblood collected data on the number of credentials awarded this school year in each of the following courses: MSITA with 885 credentials, ServSafe with 45 credentials, First Aid & CPR with 188 credentials and NCCER with 453 credentials. The committee also asked Ms. Trueblood to gather numbers on how many students do not take the credentialing due to lack of funds. Ms. Trueblood explained that the CDCs were unable to give her this data because it has not been tracked. However, as discussed at the December meeting, the CDCs always work with students who have a need. The teachers and CDCs are able to identify these students and offer assistance to them. CTE pays for their credentialing. Ms. Trueblood has asked the CDCs to begin keeping track of the number of students that CTE pays for each school year.

Ms. Olmsted briefly recapped the CTE credentialing and VOCATS discussion from the December meeting. The committee discussed how the business community recognizes the credentialing and the committee wants to ensure that every student has the opportunity to take the credentialing test. As a result of that discussion, Mr. Jenkins and Ms. Trueblood have met with principals, and the principals have met with one another. All involved agree that we should encourage our students to take the credentialing test. Mr. Jenkins explained that the principals have some concerns about eliminating the VOCATS altogether and relying solely upon the credentialing tests as the students' grade. In part, because some credentialing tests may be taken several times as opposed to some which may only be taken once. This may pose an unfair advantage. Additionally, the principals expressed concerns over the fairness of the MSL testing as opposed to the credentialing tests. The principals are all in agreement that they would like to continue both the VOCATS and credentialing. Ms. Olmsted mentioned that we also need to consider that VOCATS data will be factored in the teachers' EVAAS data. Without the VOCATS, we will not be able to get a comparative score on how our teachers are doing across

the state. The VOCATS also provide us an exam score, whereas the credentialing will not. The exam score also helps raise the students' GPA in most cases. If we only allow the credentialing, we are possibly missing out on some of our higher student scores. Principals want to require the VOCATS but establish some type of criteria in that if the student has a specific score, then we will pay for them to take the credentialing.

Mr. Forrest advised that some counties have chosen to use just the credentialing; he asked Ms. Trueblood what she has heard about this option across the state. She replied that most of the northeast portion of the state has gone strictly post-assessment, not credentialing. Mr. Forrest asked if Ms. Trueblood has contacted DPI to get input on how other districts are proceeding. Ms. Trueblood advised that she has discussed this with Daniel Smith at DPI but he did not provide her with specifics as to which counties have chosen to offer only credentialing instead of post-assessments. Ms. Olmsted asked why districts would choose to use credentialing instead of post-assessments. Mr. Forrest explained that the credentialing is indicative of the applied learning aspect. Mr. Forrest further explained that much of the CTE community believe eventually credentialing will be the only source of testing. Ms. Olmsted understands why both forms of testing are advantageous, particularly with Standard 6 of the teacher evaluation model going statewide. We need the VOCATS data to provide us with teacher accountability data to plug into EVAAS. Ms. Trueblood shared that, as a district, we are pushing credentialing because we understand the value of credentialing and believe it is a large part of preparing our students for the workforce. Mr. Forrest stated that it is his belief that this causes teachers to be under a two tier system of measuring students' performance. There are some courses that do not offer credentialing. Ms. Trueblood advised that the state is moving towards offering credentialing in all CTE courses. Mr. Forrest asked why credentialing cannot provide us with teacher accountability data. Mr. Whichard explained that under Standard 6 of accountability and Standard 8 for principals, only certain tests have been approved to count. Credentialing cannot be substituted for VOCATS. Mr. Whichard stated there are several cases of double testing where students have to take the common exam as well as the AP exams. Mr. Forrest advised that the state has given LEAs the option to administer either the VOCATS or use credentialing as a post-assessment. Ms. Olmsted raised the concern that if we allow students to choose either credentialing or VOCATS, teachers may see that their highest performing students are opting for credentialing only, and these students scores are not being uploaded into EVAAS so teachers may discourage credentialing.

Mr. Baker expressed that it is his desire that Ayden-Grifton High School students graduate with as many certificates as possible. His concern is that if we only use credentialing, we would be omitting the teacher added value. Because VOCATS feeds into EVAAS it allows us to see the strengths and weaknesses of our teachers. Ms. Camnitz stated for clarification; for credentialing, students only receive a pass or fail result. It will not provide us with any indication of which objectives are weak. Ms. Camnitz stated that we could potentially have a teacher with areas of weaknesses that we would not be able to pinpoint without VOCATS. Mr. Baker shared his concern that without the teacher effectiveness data, we cannot provide appropriate support to our teachers because we don't know where their strengths and weaknesses lie. Mr. Whichard asked if scale score can be equated to credentialing. Ms. Trueblood stated a passing score is 700, but a student can score as high as 1200. She further explained that we would have to set up our own scoring. Also, the number of times a student is allowed to take the test comes into play. Mr. Forrest is concerned that teachers may spend too much time preparing the students to take the VOCAT instead of teaching. Mr. Forrest asked the committee if they would consider piloting a

course or two (offering only credentialing) just to see the impact. He believes that for the past 15 years we have put too much emphasis on a paper-pencil test, and applied learning is secondary. Mr. Whichard shared that with so many of the EOCs being eliminated; it is to our disadvantage to eliminate a standardized test that provides us with teacher effectiveness data. Mr. Baker stated that because many of the credentialing tests have so much flexibility, there is no common standard.

Mr. Whichard proposed that until we received further direction from the state, we continue with our current system: administering the VOCATS and encouraging students to take credentialing. We will monitor the progress and he asked committee members to bring any additional information they receive to the EPS Board Committee. Ms. Olmsted agreed with Mr. Whichard that staying the course seems the best advice and suggested that we gather some data on how the students score on VOCATS as compared to how many pass credentialing. Ms. Camnitz asked Ms. Trueblood to keep the committee informed if she speaks to someone in a county that has chosen not to use VOCATS in their district. Mr. Whichard asked Ms. Trueblood to keep an eye on Johnston County as they tend to be a leader in the CTE arena.

Cyberbullying (Against Employees by Students)

Dr. Noland advised that last summer the legislature passed a law that took effect December 1, 2012. Basically, the law states that students cannot cyberbully school personnel. Dr. Noland has worked with Delilah Jackson and Rob Sonnenberg to ensure we look at this from the employee standpoint as well as that of the students. Dr. Noland presented Policy 10.200 with the proposed changes highlighted. The proposed additions are definitions for both the school employee and the student. The policy addresses harassment separately from bullying. Sexual harassment and gender-based harassment are addressed. On page 4, Section E speaks to bullying behavior. The difference in the definition between bullying and harassment is that bullying is the misuse of power. Dr. Noland shared the proposed changes in Section II of the policy, which is "Application of Policy" as well as changes in Section III, which is "Prohibited Behaviors and Consequences". Dr. Noland read the revised portion of Section III as it pertains to using a computer or computer network to harass or bully. She also read the revised portion of Section VII pertaining to "Assignment of students convicted of cyberbullying". Mr. Whichard commented that he would prefer that students convicted of cyber-bullying a school employee would be reassigned to the alternative school, not just another school in the district. Due to the legal ramifications associated with these infractions, it could mean a 10 day suspension with a recommendation of long term. Ms. Olmsted pointed out that the last sentence of that section provides for this option by stating that the superintendent may modify the required transfer of a student on a case-by-case basis. Mr. Whichard suggested that we need to make this clear in the policy. Dr. Noland asked the committee to consider the duration of the transfer as well. After some discussion, the committee agreed the proposed policy with the following statement included "Consideration will be given for placement in an alternative learning program" is ready to go before the Policy Committee. Ms. Camnitz commented that this statement allows for consideration to be given to the student's grade level as well. Dr. Noland read the revised policy of Section VII as follows: "Assignment of students convicted of cyber-bullying. Any student who is convicted under G.S. 14-458.2 of cyber-bullying a school employee shall be transferred to another school within the local school administrative unit. Consideration will be given for placement in an alternative learning program for a finite period of time. If there is no other appropriate school within the local school administrative unit, the student shall be transferred to a different class or assigned to a teacher who was not involved as a victim of the cyber-bullying.

Notwithstanding the provisions in this section, the superintendent may modify, in writing, the required transfer of an individual student on a case-by-case basis.” Ms. Waters made a motion to approve the policy as stated and send it to the Policy Committee. Mr. Forrest seconded the motion. Mr. Whichard asked for any discussion, there being none, the committee voted and the motion passed unanimously.

Animal Science

Mr. Forrest brought up that two Ag programs (AGHS and NPHS) have requested to add Animal Science to their course offerings. Mr. Forrest asked what procedure is required to add courses. Mr. Whichard asked what type of animals these schools would like to add. Mr. Forrest advised that currently, they want to add companion animals. However, they would like to have the ability to add other animals such as chickens, rabbits and ultimately, livestock in the near future. Mr. Forrest said this has been proposed in the past, but was denied. Mr. Jenkins explained the reason for the denial was due to a concern from an animal rights organization of the treatment and possible neglect of these animals. Mr. Whichard shared that at his high school in Edgecombe County, his teacher has been approved to offer animal science. She is slowly building her program but starting with smaller animals to demonstrate her dedication and responsibility. Ms. Trueblood voiced her concern that teachers must be committed to feeding and caring for the animals on weekends, during school holidays and throughout the summer. Mr. Whichard asked Mr. Baker to speak with his Ag teacher, Mr. Scott, to see if he is interested in this type of program. The 2013-14 Registration Guide has already been printed so, if approved, this course offering would be for the 2014-15 school year. Animal Science and Veterinary Science would give our students an advantage in finding jobs right out of high schools. Mr. Baker asked if there is credentialing available in this area. Mr. Forrest advised that credentialing is being developed now and will be available soon.

Ms. Waters shared that she and Ms. Camnitz recently visited E.B. Aycock and observed how they are allowing their students to change classes as high schoolers do. Ms. Waters suggested we track these students to determine if this helps their transition to high school. Mr. Whichard suggested tracking class tardiness and discipline data. Ms. Olmsted will talk to Ms. Poplin as well as Mr. Langley at J. H. Rose to collect the data.

Mr. Whichard asked if there was any further business or discussion; there being none, Mr. Forrest motioned to adjourn with a second by Ms. Camnitz. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cheryl Olmsted