WV Smarter Balanced Higher Education Advisory Council

**November 13, 2012 meeting minutes**

1. **West Virginia SB Higher Education Plan**

Briefly discussed the plan that was submitted to Smarter Balanced summer 2012. Agreed that this was a working document and council member were encouraged to share document with others at their institutions. Question was asked about reviewing the statewide policies and procedures because the developmental education taskforce is also reviewing some of the same policies. Thus, we need to coordinate across the agency.

1. **Smarter Balanced Updates**
   1. Kathy Butler provided an update on the **Consortium Collaboration Conference in St. Louis**. She discussed ideas for building consensus and strategies that were presented at the conference.

Ideas for Building Consensus:

* Get content area faculty together to see CCSS and SBAC items.
* Get college level and high school teachers together to talk about design and implement transitional courses in high school.
* Get K-12 and higher education together to discuss curriculum throughout the entire educational system. Develop a strong partnership.
* Focus on perception rather than feelings.
* Language is very important (e.g., faculty/teacher…educators).
* Look at tone—exclusive or inclusive?
* See it as a social movement—start with common ground and principles, then go on to strategies (common ideology).
* Myth-buster—confront hidden messages/myths early.
* Refrain—not about buying or selling a test…this is about P-20 collaboration.
* Consistency of message is very important.
* Important to use data-driven information and claims.
* Start sharing information and give sufficient time for decisions.
* Role-changing—must interact with others outside of the specific situation… “breaking bread.”
* Messages for the groups…Get the information into the language of the governor, president, etc; get “turf” off the table.

Strategies:

* Hull Speed—the maximum speed you can achieve; recognize it for what it is and don’t break the boat; rather get there when you need to.
* Sleeping Bear—you have to know when “not” to poke the sleeping bear/faculty. Find the ones you can talk to (developmental education, admissions, entry faculty).
* Cone of Silence—don’t assume you have to talk to everyone about it; around most issues, only a few people really pay attention. Educate those who need to know.
* “Who’s on First”—who know the key players are in the institution. Approach those who have impact and influence.
* Mountain Top Strategy—Have one meeting with key player (well-organized) and talk for one hour about CCSS and SBA. Next step: Establish work groups and assessment of current practice. Develop a report and set another meeting in a few months to share.
  1. **Sample Items and Performance Tasks**—We reviewed the SBA goals and benefits. (Please see the PowerPoint from Sarah Beasley.) Next, we looked at various English and math sample items on the Smarter Balanced website (<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/sample-items-and-performance-tasks/>) and discussed purpose of the sample items and how they are categorized. There was concern about sample items with reading passages not engaging students because there is no context. Council members also discussed the need to teach reading comprehension and not simply phonics.
  2. **Placement Survey**—The Consortium launched a survey in late October to collect information on the placement instruments used by colleges and universities, other criteria evaluated in placement decisions, and cut scores below which students are place into remedial or developmental coursework. The data collection window closes in early December. Institutions that have completed the survey as of 11/9/12 were the following:

Glenville State College  
Potomac State College of West Virginia University  
Sheperd University  
West Virginia State University  
West Virginia State University Institute of Technology  
West Virginia Northern Community College  
Bridgemont Community and Technical College  
Blue Ridge Community and Technical College  
New River Community and Technical College

Council members were asked to encourage their chief academic officers to complete the survey.

1. **Advisory Council Input** 
   1. **Achievement Level Descriptors**—Dr. Lucie Refsland represented WV at the achievement level descriptor workshop in Las Vegas in fall 2012. She discussed the process of writing the achievement level descriptors. (Please see her PowerPoint for more details.)
   2. **Smarter Balanced College Readiness Definitions**—the Council looked at the recently released draft college content-readiness definition and policy framework document. We broke into two smaller groups. One group focused on the math definition while the other examined the ELA/literacy definition. Below are some of the suggestions/revisions offered by the groups (red indicates revisions):

English Language Arts/Literacy:

Students who perform at the College Content-Ready level in English language arts/literacy demonstrate subject-area knowledge and skills associated with readiness for entry-level, transferable, credit-bearing English and composition courses. These students also demonstrate reading, writing, listening, and research skills and inquiry necessary for ~~introductory~~ courses in a variety of disciplines.

Comments:

* Speaking skills/communication is missing
* Too vague…should specify things like critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, evaluation
* In last sentence no need to say introductory since you have “entry-level” in the previous sentence.
* Also last sentence… should “variety of disciplines” not be included since SBA is only dealing with ELA/literacy?

Mathematics:

Students who perform at the College Content-Ready level in mathematics demonstrate subject-area knowledge and skills and practices associated with readiness for entry-level, transferable, credit-bearing mathematics ~~or~~, including statistics courses. These students also demonstrate quantitative reasoning skills necessary for introductory courses in a variety of disciplines.

We did not have time to thoroughly review the “Policy Framework for Grade 11 Achievement Levels,” so council members were asked to continue to examine this and the definitions for further review. One recommendation offered for the policy framework by council members at the meeting was adding “Recommended” to Level 4 and 3 language i.e. “Recommended that student is exempt from developmental coursework.”

1. **Next Steps/Homework**

Council members were asked to continue to review the sample items and provide feedback to Smarter Balanced on these items on the SB website (<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/sample-items-and-performance-tasks-questions-and-feedback/>) and to continue to examine the college-readiness definitions and share those with other colleagues and provide input to the Council to share with SB.

We also discussed some of the outreach we have already done or have planned. For example, HEPC staff and council members have presented to or have planned presentations for the following groups:

* Higher Education Policy Commission (Dec. 7th)
* Community and Technical College Council
* GEAR UP site coordinators (Nov. 27th)
* ACF
* WV ACT State Conference
* WV Student Success Summit
* TEAC (joint K-12/higher education training Dec. 4th)

Finally, we discussed the forthcoming achievement level descriptors and planned to review those once available.