

MINUTES

Public Schools Task Force II May 27, 2009 at 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Members Present

Paul Daigle
Bruce Sievers
Maryann Minard
David Raiche
David Ferreira
James Morse
Edmund Higgins

Member Absent

Thomas Moore

Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Paul Daigle welcomed members to the first meeting of the Public Schools Commission Task Force II. Committee members introduced themselves and highlighted their experiences in K-12 public schools.

Executive Director Jacob Ludes III thanked members for their participation and outlined the work of the first Public Schools Commission Task Force chaired by David Gowell. Mr. Ludes provided a history of the three public schools dating back to the mid 1970's. Mr. Ludes stated the transformation over the last decade in the way schools operate to a more district wide approach. The formation of the One Public School Commission will affect budget year 2010-2011 and provide a significant opportunity for the future of NEASC.

At this time we do not know what the structure of the single public school commission will resemble regarding commission representatives, staffing, etc. The process will be affected by the "graying" of the commission directors. With two staff members – one Associate and one Commission director retiring in June of 2009, we must move forward. Plans for retirement are not the reason for the consolidation but it will provide an easier transition in 2011. We are focusing on educational benefits for students K through 12.

Review of Task Force I

The committee's December 2008 recommendation that it is feasible to create a single commission to carry out the work currently undertaken by CPEMS, CPSS and CTCI was approved by the Board of Trustees on December 4, 2008. Task Force II chaired by Paul Daigle has been given a specific charge to develop the plan and details for combining the Commission on Technical, Career Institutions, the Commission on Public Elementary and Middle Schools and the Commission on Public Secondary School in the six items listed below:

- i. Recommend a commission organizational structure that represents all of the constituencies involved and accommodates differences in protocols and standards.

- ii. Recommend the services to be provided by the new commission, ensuring that members have an opportunity to request services not currently offered, that would not compromise the integrity of the association. The task force will also suggest a dues and fees structure that will support the work of the new commission (recognizing that a comprehensive review of the entire association dues/fees structure is underway.)
- iii. Recommend intermediate steps in the process and a timeline for establishing a single public schools commission with a completion date of June 30, 2011.
- iv. Report on this initiative (via the Task Force) at every meeting of the Board of Trustees through the process. Written reports will also be shared regularly with each of the three commissions involved.
- v. Recommend a strategy for gaining acceptance of the plan and participate in that effort.
- vi. Undertake additional tasks as assigned by the Executive Director as the need arises.

Initial reaction to recommendation

Chairman Daigle and committee members reviewed the reactions within the three commissions to the vote of the Board of Trustees. Task Force members shared their comments on the earlier consolidation of public elementary and middle schools. The commission membership grew to accommodate the new blend of middle and elementary schools. Members of the Task Force shared the similarities and differences between the three current standards. Committee members discussed the possible alignment of the three standards. Task Force members considered the affect on the dues and learned that a separate committee will be responsible for this report.

Direction/Board of Trustees

Chairman Daigle suggested that a new category of membership, possibly Associate Membership maybe added to accommodate the differences in the standard protocols. At this point we would like to determine what is common for the three commissions.

Committee members reviewed question ii during a lengthy discussion. Utilizing professional development or a possible research arm was not viewed as a positive addition to NEASC services. Other committee members referred to workshops on professional development on best practices. These workshops were well attended and received excellent feedback from attendees.

Task Force members compared the processes of self study, two and five year reports, directed visits, focused reports, and the formation of visiting teams for the three Commissions. Questions on the new organizational structure, how one commission can be responsible for 1000 schools K-12 were reviewed. There was agreement among committee members on the formation of visiting teams and the importance of preventing them from being pigeonholed. Members discussed the communication with the commission membership on the consolidation process. A review of the mailings and website information was shared and members discussed the feedback received from the membership. Committee members agreed that we should share the rationale for this decision. It was the consensus of the committee that Chairman Paul Daigle will draft a letter to the membership reviewing the Task Force II charge and timeline for consolidation of the three public school commissions. The letter will be available on the website with an opportunity to email questions.

Task Force members briefly discussed the possible staffing of the new structure which could include one Commission Director with several Associate Directors. It was felt that this could be an opportunity to utilize ancillary staff for the work of the Association. Currently the CPEM has 118 members with CTCI at 99 members. CPEDS has recently converted to a paperless environment.

A change to one public school commission would involve a change in the by-laws. Committee members reviewed the procedures for a by-law change requiring a vote by the six Commissions at the business meetings in December of 2010. The Association delegates would vote on a by law change at the annual business meeting on Friday.

It was suggested that the alignment of the three standards could be produced by Duffy Miller and Bernie Cleland. Members agreed to pursue this suggestion with Executive Director Jacob Ludes. Maryann Minard suggested that Val Gardner, a member of the Strategic Planning Committee, might develop a working model for the standards.

Chairman Daigle recommended that the professional staff prepare a comparison of the three commission standards for the Task Force Committee. In addition, a copy of a final team report from each of the three commissions would be beneficial to the Task Force committee deliberations for the second meeting on June 10.

Next Meeting

1. Request directors to outline the process of selecting visiting teams
2. Provide a sample visiting team report from the three commissions along with the latest standards
3. Prepare a letter to the membership regarding the consolidation process from Executive Director, Jacob Ludes to the membership and on the website

Meeting Schedule – NEASC Conference Room 2 at 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

The following dates were selected by the Task Force Committee:

June 10 (Wednesday)

July 13 (Monday)

July 27 (Monday)

Chairman Paul Daigle suggested that the Task Force Committee could include an Assistant Chair. Bruce Sievers agreed to serve in this capacity.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Willis