



Task Force on Early Childhood Assessment

Meeting Notes

August 16, 2012

9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Heartland AEA, Johnston

Room 13A

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kate Bennett, Mike Bergen, Charlie Bruner, Michael Bunde, Cindy Chettinger, Jim Christensen, Cindy Duhrkopf, Pam Elwood, Lou Ann Gvist, Kere Hugh-Belding, Leone Junck, Celeste Kelling, Gayle Luze, Scott McConnell, Pam Ellis (representing Barb Merrill) , Kristen Missall, Stacie Prevo, Kathie Readout, Jennifer Schreck, Angie Squires, Joyce Vermeer, Pam Vogel, Jeanie Wade-Nagle, Vick Williams, Cindy Swanson (representing Jaci Pins) Betty Zan, Erin Clancy, Lisa DuBois, Michelle Hosp, Kimberly Johnson, Penny Milburn, Diane Moore, LauraBelle Sherman-Proehl, Caitlin Suginaka, Shanell Wagler, Amy Williamson

AGENDA ITEM: Introduction, Review of Purpose and Legislation

Expected Outcome Understand purpose and outcomes of the Task Force	Lead: Dr. David Tilly Penny Milburn	Follow Up
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Notes:

Dr. David Tilly, Division Administrator, Division of Learning and Results, welcomed everyone to the Early Childhood Assessment Task Force (identified in legislation as the Cross Agency Assessment Instrument Planning Group). He thanked everyone for their participation in this important work and reviewed the new focus of the Department. The work focuses on three big ideas including: Teacher Quality, Standards and Curriculum, and Response to Intervention (RtI). He indicated early childhood assessment would be critical to the state in order to provide quality instruction.

Penny Milburn, began with introductions. Penny did a brief overview of the guiding principles and charge of the Task Force as well as an overview of the previous and current legislation. (See handouts). The EC Assessment Task Force's role is to advise the Department in collaboration with the ECI State Board regarding a kindergarten readiness assessment. She explained that the Task Force will develop a report to the Legislature that:

- Recommends a common statewide assessment instrument that;
 - aligns with the Iowa Early Learning Standards as well as state and national curriculum and the Iowa Core;
 - addresss the requirements described in a rubric developed and approved by Task Force; and

- provides information regarding implementation costs.

The 2005 General Assembly passed IAC 279.60 requiring that all kindergarten students be assessed using DIBELS or other kindergarten literacy assessment by October 1. The 2012 General Assembly struck this language as of July 1, 2013. New legislation requires districts to assess all prekindergarten or four-year-old children using an instrument prescribed by the Department of Education. The assessment must be administered in the fall and spring. The purpose of the assessment is to measure student skills and academic growth. The legislative language regarding IAC 279.60 and the Task Force is below.

279.60 ~~Kindergarten assessment~~ Assessments — access to data — reports.

1. Each school district shall administer a kindergarten readiness assessment prescribed by the department of education to every resident prekindergarten or four-year-old child whose parent or guardian enrolls the child in the district. The assessment shall be aligned with state early learning standards and preschool programs shall be encouraged to administer the assessment at least at the beginning and end of the preschool program, with the assessment information entered into the statewide longitudinal data system. The department shall work to develop agreements with head start programs to incorporate similar information about four-year-old children served by head start into the statewide longitudinal data system.

2.

a. Each school district shall administer the dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills kindergarten benchmark assessment or other kindergarten benchmark assessment adopted by the department of education in consultation with the early childhood Iowa state board to every kindergarten student enrolled in the district not later than the date specified in section 257.6, subsection 1. The school district shall also collect information from each parent, guardian, or legal custodian of a kindergarten student enrolled in the district, including but not limited to whether the student attended preschool, factors identified by the early childhood Iowa office pursuant to section 256I.5, and other demographic factors. Each school district shall report the results of the assessment and the preschool information collected to the department of education in the manner prescribed by the department not later than January 1 of that school year. The early childhood Iowa office in the department of management shall have access to the raw data. The department shall review the information submitted pursuant to this section and shall submit its findings and recommendations annually in a report to the governor, the general assembly, the early childhood Iowa state board, and the early childhood Iowa area boards.

b. This subsection is repealed July 1, 2013.

Sec. 35. CROSS-AGENCY ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT PLANNING GROUP. The department of education and the early childhood Iowa state board shall collaborate to form a cross-agency planning group. Members of the planning

group shall include teachers and school leaders, and representatives from the departments of public health, human services, and education, the Iowa early childhood state and area boards, the state board of regents, applicable nonprofit groups, and experts in early childhood assessment and educational assessment. The planning group shall study and select one standard, multidomain assessment instrument for implementation by all school districts for purposes of section 279.60, subsection 1. The instrument shall align with agreed upon state and national curriculum standards. The planning group shall study all costs associated with implementing a universal assessment instrument. The assessment instrument shall be administered at least at the beginning and at the end of the school year to measure student skills and academic growth. The planning group shall submit its findings and recommendations in a report to the general assembly by November 15, 2012.

AGENDA ITEM: Kindergarten Entry Assessment – State and National Perspectives

Expected Outcome Perspective regarding national efforts and state efforts	Lead: Charlie Bruner, Amy Williamson,	Follow Up
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Notes:

Charlie presented a power point highlighting the national conversation related to Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA). Information from those states that received Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grants was shared. He reviewed the types of assessment as well as potential purposes included below.

Purpose: To look back at children before preschool and to help look forward to third grade. One main difference between Iowa legislation and other states is the assessment in preschool rather than kindergarten.

Types of possible assessment:

- Direct assessments
- Observational assessments
- Parent reports or assessments

Amy shared Iowa's work related to identifying universal screening and progress monitoring tools for kindergarten through sixth grade students. The purpose of this work is to allow educators to gather accurate information so better instructional decisions are made about the Iowa system, local schools, grades, classrooms and individual students. Amy described the process and the rubrics developed (see power point).

AGENDA ITEM: Technical Dimensions of Assessment

Expected Outcome Common understanding regarding quality assessment	Lead: Michelle Hosp	Follow Up
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Notes:

Michelle explained technical adequacy as it relates to assessment instruments. The following points were explained in the power point.

- 1) People involved are SKILLED
- 2) Error is always PRESENT
- 3) Comparison GROUP is Compatible
- 4) Reliability
- 5) Validity
- 6) Classification Accuracy

AGENDA ITEM: Research Regarding School Readiness Indicators

Expected Outcome Common understanding regarding school readiness indicators	Lead: Kristen Missall	Follow Up
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Notes:

Kristen reviewed the components of good assessment. These included clearly defining school readiness based on research and the intended functions of the assessment and the utility of emphasizing one domain.

The power point addressed issues in:

- defining school readiness;
- measuring school readiness in preschool;
- relations among measures; and
- prediction of later achievement.

What you are going to do with the information that is measured will determine what you want to measure.

Approaches to measuring school readiness:

- Approach/purpose
 - Narrow versus broad
 - Screening versus global function vs. diagnostic
- Format
 - Direct assessment
 - Teacher observation
- Application

- Individual or group description
- Differentiated instruction and accountability

AGENDA ITEM: Indicators of Good Assessment

Expected Outcome Common understanding of good assessment	Lead: Scott Mc Connell	Follow Up
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Notes:

Scott addressed issues in developing indicators of quality assessment.

How can we define the features of a good tool for this purpose?

- construct definition;
- intended functions;
- differentiated attention; and
- practical considerations

Amy introduced small group work addressing common indicators. Each table discussed the purpose of the Task Force work, essential elements, the domains to be addressed in assessment, concerns, wishes and hopes and a process for developing the rubrics to judge assessment.

Amy indicated the Department will summarize the information and develop a survey developed. A small workgroup will develop a draft rubric. The small group will be formed at the next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM: Review and Next Steps

Expected Outcome Common understanding of good assessment	Lead: Amy Williamson Penny Milburn	Follow Up
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Notes:

Each small group shared a big idea/thought from the day. The Task Force requested additional clarification on the purpose of the Task Force as well as the legislation.