DAPA ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PHONE CONFERENCE
MAY 17, 2005
1:00-2:30 P.M.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS MADE BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ARE NOT BINDING. THE DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DDOE) MAKES ALL FINAL DECISIONS REGARDING THE DAPA.

ATTENDEES: Barbara Ashmead, Carol Barlow, Suzie Berry, Teri Dunham, Diana Farrell, Michael Gamel-McCormick, Melanie Hoffman, Judi MacBride, Wendy Roberts, Linda Smith, Brian Touchette, and John Werner

UPDATES
Participation Guidelines:
The draft Participation Guidelines were shared at the last Advisory Committee meeting and changes were discussed. Following the meeting, these changes were brought to DDOE, and most were accepted. However, the Department did not agree with changing the PGs to include a date by which they needed to be completed. They agreed that this issue should be handled during training.

Some concern was expressed regarding the last sentence of the of the first paragraph on the Guidelines, which states: “Students who participate in DAPA are working on the same Delaware Content Standards as their peers; however they are working on these standards in less complex ways”. Some thought that this would be offensive to teachers and parents. It was suggested that this statement be changed to “less conventional ways”. However, changes can no longer be made because the Guidelines are already posted on the DDOE website.

A question was raised regarding the change from 1% to 3% of students included in an alternate assessment. This change does not indicate that 3% will now participate in DAPA; it means that 1% will participate in DAPA, and the remaining 2% will participate in another alternate assessment. DDOE is planning to apply for this 2% as there are criteria that a State must meet in order to be approved. The State will then have 12 – 18 months to develop an alternate assessment for this 2%.

Portfolio Scoring:
Portfolio scoring was completed during the first few weeks of April. All portfolios were double scored, and then resolved by a third person. If there was not agreement once the portfolio was resolved, it was sent to committee. This process slowed some areas of scoring. We plan to send the portfolios and score reports by the end of May or early June. If the reports are sent later, the appeals paperwork will be adjusted to reflect the later date.
Standards Setting:
Using a set of portfolios from this year, the portfolios were scored using both this year’s and last year’s rubrics to and the scores were then compared. The correlation for these scores from ELA was 0.84, and for Mathematics was 0.91.

Appeals Process:
The appeals letter is still in draft form, and needs to be approved by Martha Toomey. The draft letter reflects changes that have been made from last year’s letter. First, in the “Initiating” section, number two was changed to indicate that notification is needed, but this notification does not need to be a formal letter to parents and relevant parties. Also, as discussed before, the deadline of June 15th for appeals will be adjusted if the portfolios and score reports are returned later than anticipated. On page two, Section C, Science and Social Studies were added, and Supports was dropped. We did not include Progress on the appeals form because it does not affect scores this year.

Another change for this year’s appeals process is no appeals will be considered unless the Performance Level changes. For example, if a teacher appeals a score of 19, even if the score is increased to 20, the Performance Level will not change, so this appeal will not be considered. Also, Section D now asks the developer to provide what score they believe the portfolio should have received.

The expectation is that the number of appeals will likely increase this year. This is a result of the change in the system as a whole and more variation among portfolio scores.

DAPA Coordinator Hiring:
Shaunna Crossen resigned from the DAPA Coordinator position in April. Six people were interviewed for the position, and two people were invited back for a second interview. Once a decision has been made, the Advisory Committee will be informed via email.

Proficiency Level Cut Points
The committee reviewed the power point presentation regarding the recommendations for Proficiency Levels. We also discussed the status of the “Down 1” rule. Project staff made the recommendation that the rule be eliminated based on the distribution of scores from this year. A concern was raised as well from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) that the “Down 1” rule is an arbitrary rule that is not psychometrically sound. The TAC further felt that the performance levels should be determined by the final score. Without the “Down 1” rule, the distribution of scores among performance levels is very similar to the distribution from last year. Concern was raised that eliminating the rule would mean that when there is a lack of instruction in one areas, the portfolio
could still receive a Meets the Standard score. Also, some members expressed the desire to see the scores both with and without the “Down 1” rule.

The committee also reviewed the cut point recommendations. Some concern was expressed regarding the number of portfolios receiving an Exceeds the Standard score. However, others felt that because the portfolio measures educational programming over a short period of time, that this was an accurate assessment of the scores.

Committee Votes:
The committee voted on whether or not the “Down 1” rule should be eliminated. A vote of “Yes” indicated that they agreed with the elimination. The result is as follows:

   YES:  5 participants  
   NO:   1 participant

The committee also voted on the recommendations for the cut points. A vote of “Yes” indicated that they agreed with the recommended cut points presented in the power point presentation. The result is as follows:

   YES:  6 participants  
   NO:   0 participants

These recommendations will be brought to Secretary Woodruff, who will make the final decision to go to the State Board.

NOTE: THE MEETING SCHEDULED FOR MAY 24 WILL BE CANCELLED. THE NEXT MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE IN SEPTEMBER.