DAPA Advisory Committee  
Del Tech, Dover  
Sept. 29, 2005  
8:30-11:30 am  

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: Kristin Arterbridge, Carol Barlow, Susan Berry, Norma Brister, Hugh Broomall, Timothy Bush, Helen Dennis, Diana Farrell, Mary Fischer, Michael Gamel-McCormick, Christine Griswold, Letitia Jackson, Malisa Knox, Carol Lay, Judi MacBride, Patrice Madden, Kyle O’Shea, Anja Parish, Jim Salt, Vicki Spence, Brian Touchette, Doreen Walls, Janine Weisman, John Werner

Updates

New Staff  
Michael introduced the new staff and graduate students for this year: Jim will be serving as a project consultant and Malisa will be coordinating the revision/redesign process that must be undertaken to comply with NCLB and IDEA.

Trainings  
Judi and Diana provided an update about developer trainings conducted to date and plans for supplementary trainings and parent information meetings. Answers to developer questions are almost complete.

Review of Standards Setting  
Michael provided an overview of the Standards Setting work that occurred last Spring. Portfolios for 2004-2005 were scored using the old and new standards and the level of agreement between the two was 84%. The current standards will remain in place for 2005-06.

2004-05 Score Results  
Michael presented key findings about participation, scores, and appeal results. The number of students participating was higher than in previous years, reflecting the inclusion of additional grades. This year the number of students should remain about the same.

Questions were raised about the number of exemptions. Brian indicated that the numbers transfers increased, but expected the total number of exemptions would stabilize this year. Brian also noted the modifications to the portfolio requirements if students transfer in late fall.

Discussion occurred around the decrease in the percentage of scores meeting or exceeding the standards. Michael explained that this likely reflected the shift toward measuring academic standards versus the functional curriculum. Brian noted that the percentage of children in DAPA meeting or exceeding the standards is far higher than for those in the DSTP. Appeals data were then presented and several requests were made to provide more detailed data to the AC. An inquiry was made about the status of the progress dimension data. Michael indicated CDS would be examining that data in the coming months.

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Some discussion occurred around how timely the schools are receiving score reports. Several people indicated the need to receive score reports earlier to allow for more timely appeals and/or for school and district reporting needs. Michael and Diana indicated that the timeline has been changed this year to allow for timelier reporting.

DAPA 2005-2006 Changes

Diana and Judi gave an overview of the changes to the portfolio development process for 2005-06, including required components and optional data sheets. Forms will be posted by 9/30 and also be available as PDF documents. A number of questions were raised about the intensity levels on the interactions form. Michael indicated that CDS will work to address the concerns raised about the form, which included adding a key and providing some additional instructional guidance. Discussion also occurred about the purpose of including intensity levels. Michael and Brian related that intensity is based on research and is being used to gauge the nature of children’s interactions to inform later assessment work. CDS will provide references about this issue to the AC.

Redesign/Revision

Michael explained the need to further revise DAPA to fully comply with IDEA and NCLB. The need to meet these federally requirements will place limits on what the revised process will include. Within the scope of those limitations, portfolio developers, teachers, the AC, DOE, and CDS will all have input in shaping the revision. Malisa will lead a revision/redesign committee and among the first items the group will focus on will be measuring child progress and assessing additional standards.

Much discussion occurred around the purposes of alternate assessment and the federal requirements, balancing assessment needs with demands on teachers, and effective ways to voice concerns about the federal regulations. In response to several requests, CDS will provide some best practice information about alternate assessment.

DOE Peer Review

Brian gave a brief overview of the upcoming peer review of Delaware’s educational assessment program. Brian noted that some of the issues the revision/redesign work will need to address – measuring multiple standards, children’s progress, and moving away from using IEP objectives as part of assessment – are likely to be issues raised in the peer review. Brian will send his presentation and links to Jim who will forward to the AC.

Meeting Options

Michael asked if anyone wanted to try a different method of meeting, such as video or teleconferencing, given gas prices. The group decided that we would continue to meet face to face and limit the use of conference calling.

Action Steps

1. Brian – will send Jim his presentation and links and Jim will forward to the AC.
2. CDS will forward or post information about alternate assessment best practices and references regarding intensity of interactions.
3. Jim will add additional data slides to the score presentation and send that file and the standards setting file to the group.
4. Judi/Diana will explore modifications to the interactions data sheet.
5. Jim will send the answers to the developer training questions when they are ready.