

Memo To: Elliot Asp, P-20 Council, Data and Accountability Subcommittee

From : Bruce Benson, P-20 Council, Educator Subcommittee

RE: The Need For Improved Teacher Education Data

October 18, 2007

Throughout our subcommittee's deliberations it has become clear that improved data at the state level on K-12 educators is important to state level efforts to improve educator quality, recruitment and retention. Currently the subcommittee is investigating the use of alternative compensation systems for improving educator quality. We have found that improved state level data are needed:

1. To support school district implementation of alternative compensation schemes.
2. To support identification of programs (including but not limited to alternative compensation) that are effective in improving educator quality, recruitment, and retention.

The improvements the committee envisions are:

1. Unique teacher identifiers that allow linking of data for the same teacher across time, and linking of the teacher with data on the students s/he serves that includes (but is not limited to) state level assessment scores.
2. Ability to add district specific data to the state level records.
3. The ability to link teacher identifiers with data on teacher preparation in a larger P-20 data system.
4. Development of a secure system for maintaining and using the data that both protects teacher privacy (complies with FERPA) and allows the use of the data by districts and credible research organizations to use the data to improve the quality of education.

We encourage continued discussions around the protections and appropriate use of the data. All data collected should be reliable, valid, interpreted in context, and used in a supportive manner. I appreciate your efforts to create data and accountability systems that can better meet our state's education needs. I hope that the input of our committee will assist you in those efforts.