Online Task Force, Meeting #4

Monday, October 13, 2014

Link to the meeting recording:

http://connect.enetcolorado.org/p83q92pbuv7/

Meeting Notes

The meeting of the Online Task Force (OTF) was called to order by Ethan Hemming, Task Force chair. Task Force members and guests introduced themselves

OTF members and staff in attendance:

Ethan Hemming
Brian Bissell
Joe Dinnetz
Linda VanMatre
Scott Campbell
Amy Valentine
Dale McCall
Leanne Emm
Diana Gamboa
Renee Martinez
Chaille Hymes
Gretchen Morgan
Judy Bauernschmidt
Dan Morris
Kim McClelland (via phone)

Guests in attendance:

Josh Cunningham, NCSL
Todd Engdahl, Chalkbeat
Amy Atwood
Judy Stokes, Branson Schools
Jeannie Vanderburg, Capstone Group
Kara Wheeler
Dan Challer
Kris Enright
Karen Aikhan
Randy DeHoff

Housekeeping:

Guest Speakers:

John Myers spoke to the inclusion of guest speakers in OTF meetings. Additional speakers will be scheduled for the next one or two meetings (October 27 and November 17). Time will be made for public comment when there is substantive material on which to comment.

Plan of Work:

The plan of work was reviewed:

- OTF Meeting 4 is primarily dedicated to Authorizer Certification Standards
- OTF Meeting 5 (October 27) will continue the work on Authorizer Certification Standards and discussion of pilot programs
- OTF Meeting 6 (November 17), the only OTF meeting scheduled for November, will focus on finalizing Authorizer Certification Standards, pilot programs, and other recommendations
- OTF Meetings 7 and 8 (December 3 and December 6) will be dedicated to report writing, review and completion

OTF Meeting 3 Meeting Notes:

The notes from OTF Meeting 3 were reviewed and approved without comment.

Review of Agenda:

John reviewed the agenda. Ethan stated that a NACSA representative could not make the meeting, due to scheduling conflicts, and so that portion of the agenda would not happen.

Ethan shared a list of potential speakers for future meetings:

- Alex Medler, NACSA
- Jim Griffin, researcher on online school outcomes
- Elizabeth Davis, Calvert Education
- Matt Samelson, Donnel-Kay Foundation

OTF Member Comments:

John asked OTF members to share their thoughts and questions about public input and/or the proposed list of speakers.

An OTF Member requested public input be scheduled prior to the completion of the authorizer standards work.

An OTF Member recommended adding to the list of speakers Heather Hiebsch, Principal, PSD Global Academy K-12--a highly rated blended/online school in Poudre.

An OTF Member requested that when Matt Samelson speaks to the OTF, he provide background information on the pilot programs, as stated in HB 14-1382.

Data Request Review

In response to a data request, information was made available to show the ranking of the bottom 50 schools in Colorado, regardless of modality, on the School Performance Framework.

Ethan reviewed the data request, and interpreted the data as showing online schools were more greatly represented in the bottom 50 performing schools (16%) than their representative proportion of schools in the state (2%).

The requestor spoke to the intention of the request: to identify that there are non-online schools that are poorly performing but there is no additional layer of accreditation for those schools as the OTF is working to create for multi-district online schools.

Ethan responded by citing the OTF statutory obligation and the need for multi-district online schools to perform better.

Gretchen provided background to the OTF charge by stating that when multi-district online schools were allowed, additional stipulations were accepted because these schools would serve students outside of their boundaries: certification of authorizer standards are part of those stipulations, and are now statutorily required.

The requestor continued by pointing out that open enrollment exists in the state and so modality shouldn't matter when serving students across district boundaries; that the OTF was tasked with looking nationally and found no models of certification of authorizers to recommend and so it may be enough for the OTF to continue with the status quo; and ten years of school performance ratings (SPF) to show what has been done, thus far, doesn't work but shifting the focus from school to authorizer may not add benefit. The requestor called for the need to focus on pilot programs and other recommendations, where improvement could be made, instead of focusing on Authorizer Standards. An OTF member agreed with the requestor's point about cross-district open enrollment.

John offered time later in the meeting and in future meetings to further discuss the data, which is available online (http://www.cde.state.co.us/onlinelearning).

OTF members asked for clarification of the procedure for making and receiving data requests. Ethan stated that all future data requests would be shared with OTF members, through an email from Melanie, as soon as they were received.

4x4 School Survey

OTF members requested a survey be sent to the top four and bottom four SPF rated on-line schools in the state (total eight schools). This survey would gather information on what is and is not working at the school level, and to identify commonalities that may inform OTF suggestions for pilot programs and/or other recommendations. Though there was interest among OTF members to expand the survey to all online schools, the timeframe of the OTF requires limiting the survey.

OTF members suggested the following questions for the survey:

1. What has been essential to your success?
2. What are your barriers to success?
3. What support or accountability from your authorizer has positively changed practice in your school?
4. List one to three things that if changed right now would dramatically increase your potential for success?
5. Is there anything your authorizer does differently with your school, in terms of oversight or support, as compared to brick and mortar schools?
6. If you have changed authorizers, how did that impact your ability to ensure student performance?

CDE agreed to create the survey, identify the schools to be contacted, and to initiate the survey. APA will analyze the data when it is received.

An OTF member sought clarification on the use of the survey data, noting concern for validity based on the small sample size. Two additional OTF members agreed, and responded that the data was anecdotal.

Authorizer Standards

John led the review of the suggested changes and additions, and comments provided by OTF members (homework from OTF Meeting 3).

Edits were made up to the System & Process Elements, Performance Contracting section in the Authorizer Standards Draft document. Edits from this point forward will be undertaken at the next OTF meeting (October 27).

In addition to editing the authorizer standards, the OTF members moved a suggested statutory change relating to drop-in centers to the authorizer standards to other recommendations.

Revised Authorizer Standards Document

APA will provide a revised authorizer standards document, inclusive of the edits determined in this meeting, to OTF members by the end of day Thursday, October 16.

Wrap-Up

Pilot Programs and Other Recommendations

Gretchen suggested, as homework, OTF members provide a prioritized list of pilot programs and other recommendations for the next meeting (October 27).

Melanie will email OTF members the request for these two lists (pilot and other) and the statutory language applicable to each by the end of the day. OTF members agreed to provide their non-prioritized lists to Melanie by Thursday, October 16th. Melanie will collate the member responses and email these lists to OTF members that same day (October 16th). OTF members will prioritize these combined lists and email their prioritizations to Melanie by Tuesday, October 21st so that they can be prepared for consideration at OTF meeting 5 (October 27).

Note: the October 15th statutory deadline for pilot programs in HB 14-1382 does not apply because the pilot program section of the bill was not funded, according to Gretchen.

Rule Making Input
No additional input was provided for rule making. No additional rule making input will be taken after this meeting.

Close
John asked for additional questions and/or comments from the OTF members.

An OTF member requested 30 minutes, at 3 minute increments, of public input be scheduled for the next meeting (October 27).

No more questions/comments were added.

Ethan adjourned the meeting.