

PAC Virtual Meeting Minutes 1/10/24

- Catherine mentioned that she and her team are on the way to present for a \$25 million grant for low-income districts
- Catherine added that there is a lot of good news to report on:
 - Bounceback in Student Performance
 - She mentioned that the Office of Early Learning she set up when she first came into the position is now able to get more specific data down to the person through various partnerships in the community.
 - Said that in general they saw the greatest need in middle grades math and they were able to tailor their ESSER money to target that need.
 - Overall, said that this year is the 2nd year in a row that gains have been made; and all subjects but 1 have seen growth overall. Says that 3rd grade EOG scores have risen above those from before the pandemic. Expressed that local superintendents will get district specific data and they should ask for that if they have a good connection with their local superintendent.
 - She noted that the gains in reading tailed off after 5th grade, and that they are going to work with the GA in this upcoming session to bring increased professional development to those middle grade teachers teaching literacy. Added that there is also a need in lower grades math.
 - Ms. Knight asked if there is a gap due to the change in program that took place recently. Catherine said that this was exactly the case and said that this and the focus on other subjects caused this. Mentioned some research programs that back up the plan for this current model/curriculum.
 - Continued Success in K-3 Reading
 - Mentioned that she has visited a bunch of elementary schools and has seen the new curriculum in place and is overall very confident that this growth will continue over time.
 - Report to the State Board on # of CTE credentials students across the state have earned.
 - Catherine mentioned that credential attainment helps show how prepared students are after HS to enter into the workforce. Noted that she was very intentional on making sure that all credentials were encouraged and not just Microsoft office ones.
 - Noted that the most recent data says ~70% of kids aren't getting any sort of credential 6 years after graduating from High School.
 - Said that statewide credential acquisition is at the highest it's been in the state's history. Overall said that it has grown 28% this year and has previously surpassed pre-pandemic levels. Said that they are really looking at to make sure kids have a plan after HS cause it's incredibly important they do.
- Catherine mentioned that next time they'll dive deeper into the legislative agenda for the Short Session.
- Ms. Wilson asked if the increase in funding for Lexia (Middle Grades) would be for the next school year or further down the road.

- Catherine mentioned that the budget is supposed to pass by the 4th of July but the most recent one got certified a few weeks ago. Overall, she doesn't believe that it's going to start in the fall but said that the ability to let teachers take this asynchronously can help them roll it out in January.
- Ms. Wilson said that she would like to see increased support for all types of teachers to continue their education and just stressed continued support and work with teachers to continue their desire to be lifelong learners.
 - Ms. Catherine asked a follow-up question (asking what program she was mentioning in particular or overall PD) and Ms. Wilson elaborated on her point. She said that the question was a little bit of both and noted that the way teachers are doing work a lot outside of the classroom is causing them to leave in droves.
 - Catherine and Ms. Wilson noted that the district she is in is working heavily with Early Literacy Specialists – which Ms. Wilson is one. Overall, said that her recommendation is that the Early Literacy Specialists are not able to extend their work into the middle schools and they would need to work with their Supt to determine when this program is taught to their teachers.
- Mr. Glenn thanked Catherine for her leadership and for the work she's doing for the state. Asked if the 28% increase was on top of the previous 30% that had it before?
 - Catherine mentioned that the report looks at the number attained before graduation (about 400,000+) and that number itself resulted in the 28% increase overall. Said that her partnerships with the GA help to create opportunities for people to get family-sustaining wages.
 - Ms. Catherine mentioned another point but most of it was not heard due to technical difficulties.
 - Mr. Glenn – in reference to Ms. Wilson's question – mentioned that there's a line-item in the PTA budget to get Professional Development via a mini-grant of \$250. Added that there is a lot of positive feedback
 - Mr. Glenn also added that twice in the last 6 months he has heard teachers mention how grateful they are for the programs Catherine is putting into their classrooms and they are seeing results.
- Catherine mentioned that in their evaluation of how to compensate teachers they have really come to the conclusion that teachers need to be 11- or 12-month employees. Said that they are trying to create a position that would be 12 months long – and gave a few examples. Noted that it is not sustainable to ask the same for all teachers regardless of experience.
- Ms. Oxendine – in reference to students being career ready – said that she immediately thought about the CCP. She mentioned that she noticed that some students – and some parents even – that aren't even aware of the program. Asked if there was a plan to communicate that better with parents across the state.
 - Ms. Truitt mentioned that the lack of parental knowledge is on the school. Mentioned that in the School Performance Grade Redesign there will be 4 grades. One of those grades would be participation in CCP. Said that by the time kids are in High School it's on the Superintendent of that district to make sure parents are informed.
 - Ms. Oxendine asked if the state has ever done a survey of students before doing a mandatory program so that they can look at why kids are not pursuing certain careers after graduation.

- Catherine mentioned that High Schools gather self-gathered survey results regarding next steps. Says that the state is going to collect that data from the schools to analyze how many students are going to work, going to Community Colleges and/or going somewhere else.
- Ms. Sanchez agreed with what Ms. Wilson said and with what Mr. Glenn said. She added that there needs to be a new focus on getting people into the teaching profession so that they can be more competitive.
 - Said that she has heard a lot of people mention support for the 11 or 12-month teacher position. Said that also she does agree with the idea to track parents responses to certain things and asked why kids aren't going to college or working.
 - Noted that these kids could be happy living with their parents due to a high increase in tech-proliferation into our society.
 - In regards to funding she mentioned that she is strongly in support of the Governors School to make kids able to strive for something and experience an education that only top-rated colleges can provide.
- Alex mentioned that Catherine – and him – believe that it's fully funded but Ms. Sanchez noted that the overall sentiment at the 60th anniversary event she attended was different.
- Ms. Bradley said that there is so little information that parents have due to a lack of advertising for certain programs. Also added that the resources provided to students through a particular program have become so scattered that they are not receiving the small classroom instruction that they did previously. Noted that if it weren't for her son being a part of the vocational training program in high school, he would not have a job. Says that overall they need to look at blending the programs together.
- Alex mentioned that he is going to reach out to them via email regarding the committee process and other agenda items.