



Instructional Time Task Force Meeting Notes

September 18, 2012

9:30 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.

B110, Grimes State Office Building

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Craig Patterson, Anita Micich, Anne Tesar, Sahan Jayawardena, Michelle Rich, George Wheeler, Leonard Griffith, Kay Stork, Kerry Gumm, Erin Davison-Rippey, Kevin Koester, Gary Norris, Sandy Klaus, Mick Jurgensen, Mike Dick, Kimberlee Spillers, Frank Spillers, Jerry Parkin, Vic Jaras, Beth Happe, Mark Tucker, Cindi McDonald, Jens Krogstad, Maureen Tiffany, Mary Hillman, Shirley Phillips, Isaiah McGee, Mary Gannon, Brian Johnson, Dave Epley, Darryl DeRuiter, Jill Morrill, Mike Cormack, Staci Hupp, and Jody Crane.

AGENDA ITEM: Welcome

Expected Outcome	Lead Mike Cormack	Follow Up
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Notes:

Mike Cormack welcomed the group at 9:30 a.m. to the third meeting of the Instructional Time Task Force meeting. He explained the meeting format for the day stating that there would be small group work to develop bullet points to be included in the Recommendations/Major Findings section of the final report and review of the draft worked on by him, Cindi McDonald, and Bob Stouffer since the past meeting. Also, the plan was to address the model at the end of the day.

Cormack reported that he spoke to Joe Davis, who is with the Florida Afterschool Alliance. Davis suggested a bullet point indicating that local districts consider/reexamine use of Title I dollars for the availability of afterschool programming.

Cormack stated that everything in education involves time. As a teacher or administrator you always feel there is more time you can put into the school year. How can we best utilize the time that we have for our students and develop some recommendations for schools around the state? That is the focus for the day, which is how to best use time for student achievement.

Cormack reviewed the following sections of the report: Table of Contents, Senate File 2284, Task Force Membership, Meeting Schedule, and Overview. He stated that everything to this point is noncontroversial. He asked if there were any concerns and none were expressed.

The Recommendations/Major Findings section was left blank for small groups to develop approximately 8-10 bullet points that could be key/consensus items to be included in the report (e.g., start time, afterschool programming, length of school day, calendar, etc.).

Cormack suggested that the model for promising practices could either include good legislation or good practice for schools in the state.

Cindi McDonald stated that the writing group tried to get something on paper for the task force to react to and tried to think about the conversations that had taken place. Feelings will not be hurt if there is push in a different direction. The writing team was trying to capture what was heard and does not necessarily mean they agreed.

Cormack stated that the draft report being presented is a sounding board and items can be deleted or added. He pointed out that the most contentious topic is the start date and the draft report contains three options for the group to consider or any alternates that they had.

Cormack requested the group break into small groups of four to five people and asked that each group have a note taker. The group broke into those smaller groups and worked on potential changes to the draft.

AGENDA ITEM: Small group discussion and top priorities - Group work on approval/changes to draft

Expected Outcome	Lead Mike Cormack/Task Force Members	Follow Up
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Notes:

As a result of small group work, a list of priority items was developed. Mike Cormack developed draft statements that encompassed all of the priority items to be included in the Major Findings section of the report. The task force reviewed, discussed, and edited the information. Cormack explained the decision making process to ensure that all task force members' thoughts, support, and objections were considered.

The final Major Findings are as follows:

Everything that drives the discussion in this policy area should focus on quality instructional time *to improve student achievement*. Simply adding time to the day or year without thought on how that time can best be used is not beneficial. Every decision should put the focus on the student and how the use of time can best help their educational experience.

- We believe that providing a sustained focus on instructional time issues is beneficial to Iowa education. We recommend an ongoing statewide effort to determine how to best utilize the school day, facilities, and year. Because one size does not fit all, we believe there should be room for flexibility on the local level on how to best meet those needs.
- Additional sustained state-level funding is needed in any change in instructional time policy. Public-private partnerships should also be encouraged, both in terms of assisting with practical content and additional resources. Tax incentives are recommended to private sector partners who assist with focused student achievement programming.
- The education of all Iowa students should be taken into consideration in deliberating these recommendations. Research supports this task force's recommendation that policy changes which focus on quality instructional time increase student achievement. When students are not achieving proficiency, school districts must be given the authority to require their attendance in extended / supplemental learning opportunities.
- We recommend that an ongoing state advisory board, consisting of public and private sector interests, be formed by the Iowa Department of Education to advise the State Board of Education and the Iowa General Assembly on instructional time recommendations examined in this report.
- The Department of Education needs to collect information from all Iowa school districts on the current status of physical infrastructure that impacts instructional time, including, but not limited to, the status of air conditioning. Consideration should also be given to transportation costs as it does relate to additional instructional time. Local districts need to establish long-term plans, as well as state funding assistance, to best meet those needs.

Superintendent Micich and the two student members had to leave the meeting at this point due to a conflict. Cormack thanked them for their input and service, with special note of the service the student members gave. They received applause from the group.

AGENDA ITEM: Group work on approval/changes to draft

Expected Outcome	Lead Mike Cormack/Task Force Members	Follow Up
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Task force members discussed and edited the sections in the draft report on Length of Instructional Day, Length of School Year, and Alternative Calendar. The group was in agreement with the modifications.

After extensive discussion, the group voted on the Definition of School Year (Days vs. Hours) and the majority of the task force members were in favor with the suggested changes.

The section on Start Date was discussed. After extensive discussion, a majority/minority vote was taken and that information is reflected in the final report. Each side of the argument was allowed to draft their section to reflect their views. The majority view believes there should not be one uniform start date in the state while the minority view is that the current law should remain without waivers.

AGENDA ITEM: Final report adoption or additional meeting planning

Expected Outcome	Lead Mike Cormack	Follow Up
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Notes:

The task force agreed to have a conference call to develop and discuss a model for promising practices and to finalize the report. Cormack requested that task force members notify him of any conflicts. The call will be held within the next two weeks.

Cormack asked the group if there was anything in the process that wasn't addressed that they felt should have been included or if there was additional information that should have been included in the report. No one expressed any additional items to consider. Cormack thanked the group for their thoughtful debate and service to lowans.

A draft of the final report is attached which reflects information that emerged from the meeting; however, there is still information that is missing from this draft. It will continue to be refined prior to the telephonic meeting that will be held for final approval of the report.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.