



# INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

## INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION ASSESSMENT SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

July 23, 2014

Indiana Statehouse – Senate Committee Room 431  
200 W Washington St.  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204  
2:30 p.m.

Board Members Present: Superintendent Glenda Ritz (chair), Mr. Troy Albert, Mrs. O'Brien, and Ms. Cari Whicker.

Board Members Absent: Dr. Brad Oliver.

### **Welcome- Superintendent Ritz**

Superintendent Ritz announced the beginning of this subcommittee meeting and briefly explained the process of seeking a vendor. She stated because this is a competitive process information between vendors and the state agency is confidential. Superintendent Ritz stated vendors are entitled to a fair and equitable process and no vendor is entitled to have access to the Request for Proposal ("RFP") requirements before the RFP becomes public. She went on to state that once the RFP is made public each vendor will have the same amount of time to review the RFP and prepare a submission. She said no vendor should be given an unfair advantage by having access to information in the RFP ahead of time.

Superintendent Ritz explained that the day before she asked for one more ruling from the Indiana Department of Administration ("DOA") regarding the confidentiality of the documents. Ms. O'Brien asked if there would be an opportunity for the full Board to provide feedback to the Department. Superintendent Ritz stated that's part of what we are doing today. Ms. O'Brien also stated that she just received the RFP and hadn't had a chance to review it as closely as she would have liked. Superintendent Ritz stated Board members can give input through Board staff.

### **Review RFP Procurement Timeline- Dr. Walker**

Dr. Michele Walker, Director of Student Assessment for the Department, presented to the Board. She began by stating they would be giving the boilerplate language with all the components to the DOA by July 25, 2014. She stated they will then add additional pieces related to Indiana economic impact as well as other boilerplate pieces. Dr. Walker said the DOA informed that the RFP would be posted by July 31, 2014.

Ms. Whicker pointed out that the Board had previously voted unanimously in March that the Board Director would turn in the RFP for procurement. Dr. Walker stated she and Dr. Michelle McKeown, General Counsel to the Board, have been working closely together on the RFP. Ms. O'Brien commented that she wanted to make sure that everyone was on the same page that there needs to be feedback from the Board. Dr. McKeown clarified the resolution in March the Board passed stated the Executive Director would manage the RFP process. She went on to state that Board and Department staffs had agreed that Lisa Acobert, Executive Director of Finance and Business Operations at the Department, would physically submit the RFP, but that Dr. McKeown would be able to give final approval since the Executive Director to the Board had delegated that authority to her. Superintendent Ritz responded that she would have further discussions about that later.

Dr. Walker continued to explain the process, saying vendors need to be given six weeks to respond. She also said there is time allowed for educator subcommittee input. Dr. Walker said then they will be recommending the top two to the assessment subcommittee in mid-October. Dr. Walker said the vendors would present to the full Board in November if all goes as planned.

#### **RFP Outline of Components- Dr. Walker**

DR. Walker explained the components are based on the Roundtable resolution adopted by the Board. She stated Indiana is looking for a fixed form grade 3-10 assessment with a vertical scale. She said the second component is the IREAD-3, looking at foundational reading skills at the elementary level which is not a part of the new ISTEP. She then moved on to the third component, which is to phase out of End of Course Assessments ("ECAs"). She commented there is interest to look at a more domain oriented test. The fourth component is the grade 11 and 12 assessments, she explained. She said this component is all about readiness after high school. Dr. Walker then outlined components five through seven; the college and career readiness standards, formative assessments (exploring an adaptive version), and an alternative grade 3-10 assessment, respectively. She added that component seven was not from the resolution.

### **Overview of RFP Format- Lisa Acobert**

Ms. Acobert clarified one issue; she explained that there are a few technical things negotiated with DOA, but once submitted DOA pretty much takes over the process in terms of format.

### **Review of Technical Components- Dr. Walker**

Dr. Walker said the technical portion is what the assessment subcommittee will focus on. Regarding component one, she explained the ISTEP replacement for grades 3-8. She said now in multiple choice it will not only be multiple choice; there will also be technology enhanced items. She asked the subcommittee to think about the title of the portions of this test. Mr. Albert suggested Part one and Part two. Ms. Whicker suggested the use of the word progress sounds more adaptive and recommended against it. Ms. O'Brien agreed and also liked the Part one, Part two titles. Dr. Walker said she would title it Part one/Part two as placeholders for now.

Dr. Walker moved on to explain the grade ten version of this assessment. She asked the subcommittee what class of students should be the first to participate in the grade ten summative assessment. She explained under the current plan 10<sup>th</sup> graders would take it in 15-16 but it wouldn't be their graduation test; this gives the field the opportunity to see the test before it becomes the graduation test. Mr. Albert recommended 18-19 being the first year and Ms. O'Brien agreed with Mr. Albert's rationale.

The subcommittee then moved on to component three; Dr. Walker commented that it is phasing out ECAs for Algebra I and English 10. The subcommittee discussed which class should be the last to take the ECA as their graduation exam. Dr. Walker explained how the timeline would occur as planned. Dr. Walker recommended, for 5<sup>th</sup> year seniors, to carry the ECA one year beyond the graduating class that would finish that assessment as their graduation test; making ECA available for one more year before it is phased out. Dr. Walker stated another decision that will have to be made is whether to offer the ECAs to younger students since it will not be used for their graduation; her recommended was not to give it unless to a student who needs it for their requirement. The subcommittee agreed that the ECA will be extended one year beyond the class that would actually use it as a senior.

Dr. Walker then moved on to discuss the science exam, currently given in grades 4, 6, and 10, using Biology I for 10. She stated the question is would it make more sense to drop the ECA for Biology rather than having just one ECA for the future. She recommended keeping the test at 10<sup>th</sup> grade and make that a domain test where we would bring educators in to determine the standards that should be tested on the 10<sup>th</sup> grade science. Dr. Walker clarified the recommendation would mean giving the Biology ECA this year and that would be the last time for the Biology I ECA. Dr. Walker said social studies is also a requirement; she said social studies and science is not tested together during the same grade level. Ms. Whicker recommended possibly bumping the science test up a year so it would be given in grades 5, 7, and 10 to reduce the gap. Dr. Walker responded that could not be done right away because Indiana has items that it owns. Superintendent Ritz summarized the subcommittee's desire to keep the domain base and keep Biology so that there is flexibility when students actually take the test.

Dr. Walker moved to component four – grades 11 and 12 post-secondary readiness assessments. She explained this stems from a desire in the resolution to offer an assessment to assess readiness after high school. Dr. Walker posed the following issues: 1) are we going to offer them when the students are both in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade; and 2) industry certifications. The subcommittee agree on one assessment for either grade 11 or 12. Mr. Albert stated this is good flexibility so students will take it when they are ready. Dr. Walker stated that vendors will decide if they want to bid on the industry certification component, and if they do they will state what they can offer. She said it's hard to predict what the responses will be with regard to certifications. Ms. O'Brien stated it's important to explore these areas so pathways are not limited; the subcommittee agreed.

Dr. Walker then discussed component 6, the formative assessments. She commented that the resolution was looking at grades K-10. She stated the issues are what content areas are we interested in and what grade levels. Vendors need to know this information, she said. Ms. O'Brien said the RFP shouldn't be exclusionary so we aren't limiting ourselves; Dr. Walker suggested language essentially stating we are looking for formative assessments in English/language arts and mathematics and possibly science and social studies. The subcommittee agreed on zeroing in on English/language arts and math and possibly the other two, and looking at a solution from K-10 in any combination of grade levels.

### **Next Steps- Superintendent Ritz**

Dr. Walker said the next steps are for her and Dr. McKeown and to finalize what was discussed today and that will be done within the next 24 hours. Ms. Whicker stated that she would have liked to have had the RFP sooner and clarified that Dr. McKeown get a final review before it's submitted. Dr. Walker then gave an update on the CTB Indiana contract. Dr. Walker explained that you can never let a contract expire, even if you have to amend it after renewed. She went on to explain they renewed the CTB with terms but are descoping and rescoping the contract based on a change in the Department's understanding of what is required for the transition to new standards and assessments after discussions with the United States Department of Education. She commented on some other substantive terms of the contract, like a built in vertical scale, an operationalized field test, and teacher support.

Ms. O'Brien commented on the confusion surrounding whether there would be one test or two tests and concerns about the settlement agreement stemming from the ISTEP interruptions. Ms. O'Brien wanted to make sure there was nothing in the settlement agreement that would affect this procurement project. Dr. Walker responded that there would only be one test for 14-15. She also explained some of the terms of the settlement agreement, like art projects at selected schools, and in-kind services to reduce costs in the coming school year extension.

The subcommittee adjourned.