

## No Child Left Behind Waiver Workgroup October 21 Meeting Summary

The NCLB Waiver workgroup met for the second time on Friday, October 21 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. to discuss Minnesota's waiver request. Following up on questions from the previous week's meeting, the Workgroup was given information on the status of various provisions under the waiver opportunity. Specifically, the group went through a list of what the U.S. Department of Education is waiving and what they are not waiving.

Following this expectations-setting discussion, the workgroup moved on to a discussion of Minnesota's options for setting new Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) to replace the 100 percent by 2014 goal that was set by NCLB. Option A would require the State to set the goal of reducing non-proficiency in each subgroup within six years. Option B would require 100 percent proficiency by 2020. Option C allows states to come up with their own goal. The workgroup generally agreed that Option A was preferable to Option B. The workgroup also asked that the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) look at using Option C to set the goal that within a certain period, each subgroup meet the proficiency levels of the top-performing schools in the state. MDE will be generating these numbers in preparation for next week's meeting.

In the afternoon, the discussion shifted to how Minnesota should identify schools as Priority, Focus and Reward. MDE presented its proposed, "Minnesota Values Chart" which would award points to schools based on proficiency, growth, achievement gap closure, graduation rate, and (potentially) percentage of students testing or growing toward the exceeding proficient category on the statewide tests.

Following an explanation of how each of the values would be calculated, the workgroup engaged in small group discussions on the details of this proposal. Small groups submitted written responses to questions on several outstanding issues, which MDE collected in order to run several scenarios using the input of the workgroup. The result of these simulations will be presented at the October 28 meeting.

During a final discussion of the Values Chart, the workgroup expressed strong reservations about the use of the term "Values" in the chart. The workgroup explained that because the metrics that can be included in the chart are limited by what the federal government will allow states to consider in identifying Priority, Focus and Reward schools, the chart does not necessarily reflect Minnesota's values. MDE noted this and will be presenting alternative options for naming the table at the October 28 meeting. Some members of the workgroup also expressed concerns that

this method of identifying schools would be too complicated for schools and the public to understand. MDE will be providing various options for presenting this information at the October 28 meeting, with the goal of finding a method that is understandable to schools and the public.

In addition to the subjects mentioned, at the October 28 meeting, the workgroup will be making final recommendations on the methodology for identifying Priority, Focus and Reward Schools. The workgroup will also be discussing what to report on the School Report Card and how to incentivize and promote continuous improvement at schools not identified as Priority, Reward and Focus Schools.